

TOWN OF PEACHAM
MINUTES OF THE SELECTBOARD MEETING
Wednesday, December 1, 2021
APPROVED

Selectboard Members: Beatrice Ring, Peter Craig, Richard Browne
Public: Town Clerk/Treasurer Thomas Galinat, Road Foreman Jeremy Withers, Selectboard Clerk Rebecca Washington, Janie Carle, Dave Stauffer, Laurie Kozar, Neil Monteith, Josh Kantrowitz, Jeff Lane, Joanne Garton

1. The meeting was called to order by Chair of the Selectboard Beatrice Ring at 7:00pm.
2. Additions to the agenda
 - a. Gym use requests
 - i. Moved to agenda item 5.
3. 2022 budgeting
 - a. The Selectboard reviewed a draft of the 2022 budget, which was the result of a budgeting meeting between Galinat, Craig, and Withers. The draft as presented was \$37,000 (4.5%) higher than the current budget.
 - b. Discussion followed on specific line items in the budget. Line items discussed included the paving projects on East Peacham Road and the section of Bayley Hazen going through the village, budgeting for a Town Hall renovation project, cost-of-living salary increases across the board, an increase in the IT services budget for cybersecurity, increases in Selectboard and Auditor stipends, the possibility of family health care plans, budgeting for the three elections in 2022, and the Tree Board's budget request.
 - c. The Selectboard will review the budget draft more closely and discuss it further at the December 15th Selectboard meeting.
4. Mask mandate discussion
 - a. Health Officer Josh Kantrowitz explained that, although no intervention is 100% effective, face masks are a useful tool in helping prevent the spread of COVID-19. The delta variant is highly contagious and masks are low-cost, easily-accessible, and effective.
 - b. Discussion ensued and the Selectboard decided that the face coverings rule would not include fines and that the only exemptions would be for children under the age of two and any person while eating or drinking inside any establishment that serves food or beverage.
 - c. Schools are still under the control of school boards for masking requirements.
 - d. The Selectboard reviewed the model face coverings rule, as written by VLCT.
 - e. **Browne moved to approve the rule requiring face coverings in public spaces as presented. Craig seconded. All in favor. So moved.**
5. Gym use requests
 - a. There have been requests from Peacham School, Danville School, and a few Peacham residents to use the Town Gym for basketball.
 - b. Kantrowitz explained that, although there may be risks when mixing populations, having a way for kids to participate in sports through the winter is important for their well-being.
 - c. The Selectboard agreed to let the gym be used for basketball. All participants must wear masks and sign COVID-19 release waivers.
6. Highway department update
 - a. The paving quotes came in lower than expected at \$277,056 for East Peacham Road and \$51,000 for a shim and overlay through the village.
 - i. Withers will find out how long the quotes are good for.
 - b. There was a request from a Road Crew member for the Town to consider offering family health insurance plans.
 - c. The boot allowance is currently at \$100 per year, which does not cover the cost of steel-toed boots. Withers and the Selectboard would like that line to be increased and Withers will present a budget number during the budgeting discussion on December 15th.
7. Committee updates
 - a. Emergency Management Coordinator
 - i. Emergency Management Coordinator Neil Monteith presented an update to the Selectboard.
 - ii. At the beginning of the pandemic, Monteith activated Peacham's Emergency Response Team, which helped get groceries and supplies to vulnerable residents until stores and the state had systems in place.
 - iii. Monteith completed and submitted Peacham's Local Emergency Operations Plan (LEOP) to the state and he will be able to update Peacham's Hazard Mitigation Plan after the Selectboard members take the ICS 100 course.
 - b. Tree Board
 - i. Tree Board Chair Laurie Kozar presented an update to the Selectboard.
 - ii. The Tree Board's role is dictated by the Tree Board bylaws and follows the Village Tree Plan and the Peacham Tree Policy.

- iii. Discussion followed on the work that Tree Warden Neil Monteith and the Tree Board have been doing, the ash tree inventory completed by the Tree Board, managing Emerald Ash Borer (EAB), and the Tree Board's \$3,000 budget request for 2022.
 - iv. Craig noted that the wood from trees in the town's right-of-way belongs to the property owner and asked about the difference between dead ash trees in the right-of-way and any other type of dead trees in the right-of-way.
 - a) Kozar and Garton responded that ash trees infested with EAB become brittle and a liability and that there may be many ash trees in the right-of-way that are dying at once.
 - v. Joanne Garton, from Urban and Community Forestry, presented information on Shade Tree Preservation Plans to the Selectboard.
8. Approve minutes
 - a. **Craig moved to approve the minutes of November 17, 2021 as written by the Selectboard Clerk. Browne seconded. All in favor. So moved.**
 9. Review and approve bills
 - a. **Craig moved to approve and pay the bills as presented and, since Selectboard meetings are via zoom, to allow just one Selectboard member to sign the warrants. Browne seconded. All in favor. So moved.**
 10. Review correspondence
 - a. Correspondence included emails received from John Reiss.
 11. Adjourn
 - a. **Browne moved to adjourn. Craig seconded. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 8:55pm.**

These minutes were approved as written by the Peacham Selectboard at its regular meeting on 12/15/21.

Rebecca Washington, Selectboard Clerk

