

TOWN OF PEACHAM

Selectboard Meeting

Wednesday, May 3rd, 2023 at 6:30pm

Location: Hybrid meeting in Peacham Library Community Room and via Zoom

Attendance In-Person: Richard Browne, Selectboard, Peter Craig, Selectboard, Alfred Dedam, Selectboard, Jeffrey Berwick, Doug Morrison, and Nikki Barrett

Attendance via Zoom: Dave Stauffer, Janie Carle, John Reis

MINUTES

1. Call to order by Richard at 6:30pm on May 3rd, 2023
2. No Additions to the agenda
3. Highway Department update – communication with Jeremy Withers
 - a. Took care of Peacham pond maintenance
 - b. No advice from the state about how to deal with beaver issues on Willow Brook Rd, so he is still trying to figure out how to take care of it.
4. Town Clerk/Treasurer update
 - a. Going well with new assistant, Jen Surat
 - b. Board ok with adding Jen to the weekly cleaning
 - c. Signatures for mowing contract.
 - d. Contract from Casella is coming.
5. Jeff Berwick – Fire Chief
 - a. Equipment update – there have been frequent issues with the cab and chassis on the rescue truck, so it will need to be replaced sooner rather than later. We have \$50,000 payments on the tanker until 2026. Jeff applied for a \$280,000 rescue grant, but it's unlikely we get it. Equipment grant requests have been sent too. He's looking into options to keep the expenses as balanced as possible. One option is replacing just the cab and chassis and keeping the body for about \$60,000. A new unit is too expensive while we are paying for the tanker, but he's looking into finding used. Also, the engine is 20 years old, so he's looking into upgrading to a new engine. It takes years to get them, so he's thinking of ordering it in 2024 so that the first payment is in 2027 after the tanker has been paid off. A basic engine cost half a million dollars. Peter asked what he has found for rescues so far, and suggested looking into using ARPA funds.
 - b. He got an estimate to put a heat pump on the second floor of the old part of the fire station (as suggested by energy audit) for \$6,000, so he suggested waiting until next year. Board will look into adding it to the town hall package.
 - c. Members numbers are up, so they are looking into options for increasing parking. Discussion about putting cracked sealer onto the tar in the parking lot.
 - d. As the insurance agent for the fire department, Jeff explained that we have coverage through VFIS. He suggested an umbrella policy which would extend liability coverage by a million dollars. It would cost \$750 annually for the umbrella policy. The accident/sickness policy went down about \$300, which would offset the cost a bit.
 - i. **Peter moved to purchase the umbrella policy for the fire department, seconded by Alfred, all in favor, so moved.** Jeff will add it as soon as allowed. If not now, it can be on the renewal.
6. Town Hall update

- a. Rusty sent an update. Richard explained that it's unclear whether the Town Hall has enough electrical capacity for the heat pumps. Rusty will try to develop a more accurate schedule once he receives all the quotes. No word from Robert Campbell, post master.
 - b. Richard sees it as a 3-stage process, starting with the back wall, then heat pump installation, and then the interior renovation. If the project can get underway fast enough, there is a possibility of painting the outside as well. He hopes to have a more complete picture by June.
7. Soccer field
 - a. There's an old hole at the edge of the soccer field. Alfred had put up some caution markers, but he noticed recently that it was filled with water, and caution markers had faded. He wants to confirm that it's not part of another system, then have it filled. It appears to be a dug hole, but it could be dangerous because it's hard to see. Richard suggested reaching out to Chase and Chase to confirm it's not anything essential. Peter said Jeremy could fill it.
8. Public Comment
 - a. Doug Morrison returned to discuss Cow Hill right of way. Richard noted that there are two issues: a parking area so people aren't parking in the right of way, and a resident who is blocking the right of way to other properties and the town access. Board agrees to try to speak to the property owner first, then follow up with a letter. They will ask Jeremy whether it's feasible to put some gravel for a parking lot. Discussion with Doug about the location, the specification, and usage. Doug asked how to stay updated. Alfred will try to speak to the resident so he can give a report at the next meeting. Richard clarified that this way they can keep it in the public record and he noted that if he emails them with any updates, that would be in the public record as well.
9. Approve minutes
 - a. Confirmed that the change from State to Town forest had been made.
 - b. **With the name Beth removed in 3f, Peter moved to approve the minutes from Wednesday, April 19th, 2023, seconded by Alfred, all in favor, so moved.**
10. Review and approve bills
 - a. **Peter moved to approve all bills as presented, seconded by Alfred, all in favor, so moved.**
11. Review correspondence
 - a. A correspondence from Rebecca about the deputy health officer term length. They will confirm and then address the next meeting.
 - b. A request from the state of Vermont regarding their new online procurement system related to the authority to sign contracts.
 - i. **Peter moved to give Rebecca Washington, town clerk, the authority to sign for the State procurement system, seconded by Alfred, all in favor, so moved.**
 - c. Received another certified letter from the post office. Peter will follow up with Bob Campbell.
 - d. Members signed mowing contract.
 - e. Richard shared that a comment from the democracy meeting stating a concern that the selectboard was too reactive and not proactive enough. When Susan Clark delivers the final report from those meetings and surveys, Richard suspects there will be items to discuss, and suggested the board prepare to give plenty of time to discuss it.
 - f. Discussion of VLCT portals and access to tools and services.
12. Adjourn
 - a. **Peter moved to adjourn at 7:14pm, seconded by Alfred, all in favor, so moved.**

Documents provided to the Selectboard and documents to be discussed at this meeting are available by request to the Town Office. Requests must be made before 11am on the date of the meeting in order to be fulfilled before the meeting.