

# TOWN OF PEACHAM

## Select Board Special Meeting

Wednesday, May 17, 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, Jeremy Withers, Road Foreman, Anna Carvalho, Selectboard Clerk, Robert Bartell, Julie Morrison, and Katherine Siner.

Attendance via Zoom: Dave Stauffer, Janie Carle, and 2 unnamed users.

## MINUTES

1. Call to order by Richard at 6:30pm on May 17th, 2023
2. Additions to the agenda
  - a. Executive session
3. Katherine Siner – 4<sup>th</sup> of July parade input and support.
  - a. Deficit from previous years due to the price of fireworks. \$2700 deficit, plus an additional \$1000 or so to run parade this year. The Town Clerk's office is sending out letters asking for donations. Katherine hopes to cover the deficit and this year's parade, which amounts to about \$4000 in fundraising.
  - b. It's a town sponsored event, so she asked for selectboard input. They agree that the tractor parade should continue, but don't think we can afford fireworks. Katherine reported that basic fireworks are upwards of \$10,000 so she does not plan to fundraise for that. Peter suggested the fireworks planning should be transferred to the recreation committee to plan and organize if they were to continue to take place at the end of the summer.
  - c. The plan is to continue to do the bicycle parade (Sunday), and contra dance. It would be about \$600 for musician and caller.
  - d. Discussion about other event options and ideas, participating groups, and possible people to contact.
  - e. Town budget absorbed deficit from last year, so the Selectboard encouraged her to raise enough money to pay that back, but encouraged her to focus on getting this year paid for first.
  - f. *Katherine is looking for volunteers to help down at the school to organize tractors. She also needs people to help manage traffic.* It was suggested adding request to FPF and Facebook.
  - g. Discussion of which roads should be blocked off.
4. Highway Department update with Jeremy Withers
  - a. Everything going well with brush cutting, grating, clean up, and annual trainings.
  - b. The radar sign in East Peacham village has been set up, but it is not working well. Jeremy is in contact with Traffic Logics, the sign company, and suspects a battery issue. It's set up so it can charge, but it may not always work. Jeremy is working on getting it fixed.
  - c. Pedestrian signs in the crosswalks didn't withstand being driven over last year. Jeremy explained the different options and prices. Discussion of semi-permanent being more ideal since ones in road are not sustainable. Tractors and trucks with equipment have a difficult time navigating the signs in the middle of the road.
    - i. **Peter moved to purchase signs to put on the sign post, seconded by Alfred, all in favor, so moved.**
  - d. Jeremy is in touch with the state about getting crosswalks painted. Selectboard requested we get on the schedule before the 4<sup>th</sup> of July.
5. Town Clerk/Treasurer update – via email from Rebecca Washington

- a. Needs letter signed for NEMRC
    - i. Peter moved to approve letter and sign it making Rebecca Washington the administrator for NEMRC, seconded by Alfred, all in favor, so moved.
  - b. Cemetery deed to sign.
    - i. Peter moved to approve the cemetery deed, Alfred seconded, all in favor, so moved.
  - c. Sign Casella contract.
    - i. Peter moved to have the chair signed, seconded by Alfred, all in favor, so moved.
  - d. Adjustments to school budget will flow back into the town general fund.
6. Town Hall update
- a. There was a boiler inspection by insurance company. Town recently upgraded the boiler, so the regulations that had been grandfathered in no longer apply. Richard talked to Andy Tomilson, and he will take care of it in June. Rebecca Washington has advised to the inspector.
7. Peacham/Groton Cemetery agreement
- a. Peter will talk to the sexton to get an agreement down on paper. Peacham responsible for odd years. Groton responsible for the even years. He will find someone to draw up the paperwork. It's been going on for years, but selectboard is in agreement that it should be on paper.
8. Cow Hill Right-of-Way update
- a. Alfred took a look at the road and the deeds looking for description of the right of way. He came up with a list of questions:
    - i. Road was discontinued in 1955. Not sure if it's reserved status as a legal trail. What are the implications of a discontinued road?
    - ii. The language describing the right-of-way for the Morrison property is vague.
    - iii. He tried to find a deed for town forest, but yet to find a description of a legal right-of-way to town forest. Alfred suspects legal description for the right-of-way may have been missed when it changed. Because it's not clear, the issue appears to be that the discontinuation of the road means different things to different people.
    - iv. Reports that Robert (Bob) Bartell and Julie Morrison question why their gate must be open, if the other end (end of Penny St.) is always locked, and Alfred did not find an answer to this.
    - v. Discussion as to whether it's listed as discontinued road or legal trail, what that means, and which map is most up-to-date. There were conflicting opinions, but acknowledgement that opinions are not sufficient.
    - vi. Selectboard members feel they do not have the qualifications to make progress or decisions on this matter. The selectboard agrees that legal support will be necessary. They will reach out to an attorney who is knowledgeable in real estate and deeds. Toby Balivet was suggested.
    - vii. Agreement that gates at both ends should have the same rules once this is resolved.
    - viii. Bob clarified that the gate was put up 25 years ago by Bayley-Hazen Road Snowmobile Club, who got permission from the town to put it up to help control misuse of the town forest. It was originally going to be placed where the town forest starts, but this would have created turnaround traffic issues on Bob's land, so it was placed at the beginning of his property. Bob is not the owner of the gate.
    - ix. Bob also stated that he has been taking care of that section of the road for years, and no one has asked or offered to take care of it, despite being problematic at times.
    - x. The area is highly used, but Bob reports that there has never been a parking issue, so he doesn't feel a parking area is necessary.
    - xi. David Stauffer asked if he, Tim, and Greg could go up to do work in the forest. It was confirmed that the gate is not up anymore, so it's not an issue for that crew.

- xii. Selectboard hopes the Morrison concern will be resolved based on the legal counsel they are going to seek.
  - xiii. For transparency, Bob mentioned that he has used Toby for legal counsel before.
  - xiv. Alfred will contact Toby Balivet.
9. Deputy Health Officer – will be covered next meeting
  10. Soccer field hole update
    - a. Alfred spoke to Jack Thomas – the hole is an artifact, not part of an active system.
    - b. Jeremy concerned about structural strength for bringing in a heavy piece of equipment, so Alfred will mark it, and Jeremy will go take a look.
  11. Public Comment
    - a. Peter said the town mowing company contracted has completed a full mowing. Requested cemetery sexton be a point of contact for the mowers in regards to the cemetery mowing. Selectboard agreed.
  12. Approve minutes
    - a. Peter moved to approve the minutes from Wednesday, May 3rd, 2023, seconded by Alfred, all in favor, so moved.
  13. Review and approve bills
    - a. Peter moved to approve all bills as presented by town treasurer, seconded by Alfred, all in favor, so moved.
  14. Review correspondence
    - a. Packets from Vermont League of Cities and Towns
    - b. New coordinator for NEKWMD starting next week. Peter reported that since swap to Casella, bulky dumpster has been emptied twice. Amber reports there has been a lot of “spring cleaning”. Peter will reach out to Jeff Berwick about the wood dump for a fire training event because it’s so large. They would need permit.
  15. Executive Session
    - a. Peter moved to enter executive session for personnel for 7:32pm, seconded by Alfred, all in favor, so moved.
    - b. Peter moved to exited executive session at 7:40 pm, seconded by Alfred, all in favor, so moved.
    - c. No action taken
  16. Adjourn
    - a. Peter moved to adjourn at 7:40pm, 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.