

TOWN OF PEACHAM  
Wednesday, October 4, 2023  
Selectboard Meeting  
Hybrid meeting in the Peacham Library Community Room and via Zoom

Attendance

In-person: Richard Browne, Selectboard, Peter Craig, Selectboard, Alfred Dedam, Selectboard, Jeremy Withers, Road Foreman, Rebecca Washington, Town Clerk

Via Zoom: David Stauffer, Tim McKay, Mark Elliot, David Edwards

Minutes

1. Call to order by Richard at 6:30pm on October 4<sup>th</sup>, 2023
2. Additions to the agenda - none
3. Highway Department Update – with Jeremy Withers
  - a. New truck – May be February before we get it. The current truck lease is up October 15<sup>th</sup>. Options are to give it up, buy it out, or rent it. Jeremy is concerned that despite the truck arriving late, the new lease would not get pushed out. Discussion about renting and concerns with the company's position. Despite his reservations about the situation, Jeremy feels the situation would be the same with any companies at the moment. Jeremy will speak to the salesman to get some clarification and invite him to the next meeting for a decision.
  - b. Peacham Pond Road plowing – Jeremy measured to the end of the road. State road maps may be incorrect, so he and Rebecca did more digging. Found surveys that show the current turnaround is where the road stops. A deed based on a survey by Richard Bohlen in June 1960 clearly shows the boundary at the turnaround. The State milage chart needs to be revisited, so Jeremy will reach out about that. Beyond the turnaround was determined to be a private road, so plowing would be the responsibility of the resident. Richard thanked Rebecca for helping them finding the documentation.
  - c. Peacham Pond plowing of boat access – Jeremy asked about the plowing subcontractor. Richards said that they are in general agreement that they would prefer that the State plow, but that they expect to discuss it further next meeting.
  - d. Grants in Aid project on Green Bay Loop completed.
  - e. Regarding underground fiber cables on County Road, just beyond Green Bay Loop intersection, Jeremy doesn't see any issue. Selectboard agrees with Jeremy.
  - f. Fall grading happening. Started on FEMA project on Mack's Mountain. Subcontractor coming in next week to help lay piping. The road will be closed for a day or two, but he doesn't know the exact day or times. When he does, he will

let Rebecca Washington know so she can notify the town. He's hoping to be done with whole project by the end of October. Jeremy thanked Rebecca and Jen for their help with dealing with all the paperwork and documentation.

- g. Cold weather approaching so starting to think about preparations.
  - h. Jeremy says the highway budget is not looking great due to extra expenses this year, so he'd be happy to discuss any of it moving forward. Richard said he had been expecting the situation to be far worse.
4. Town Clerk/Treasurer Update – with Rebecca Washington
- a. They have been dealing with a lot of paperwork and data for FEMA. Jen and Rebecca will get paid for the FEMA hours they put in, then the town will be reimbursed at the end by FEMA. Project contact at FEMA told Rebecca that it should be their regular hourly rate.
    - i. **Peter moved that Rebecca and Jennifer be reimbursed through FEMA for their FEMA work, seconded by Alfred, all in favor, so moved.**
- They had a meeting last week, and there is another one scheduled for this week. She doesn't expect the FEMA reimbursement to come until next year, which will affect the budget.
- b. Taxes are rolling in. Collected a little over \$700,000, which is about 30%, which is at or above the normal rate. She has answered questions from residents about why tax the rate went up.
  - c. VLCT renewal packet can be submitted.
  - d. *Free COVID tests are available in the Town Office if anyone needs some.*
  - e. She asked how the SB wanted to handle to budget this year. She will send email to department heads to submit their budgets by Nov. 15<sup>th</sup>. Selectboard agrees that this year it would be useful to have the full Selectboard involved rather than just the chair, which would require of a warned meeting. They will schedule a special meeting towards the end of November.
  - f. Regarding the budget status, we are at 62% of budgeted spending. There are big bills coming up, like insurance, truck payments, and FEMA. There will be places we are over budget, but other places we will be under. Jeremy and Rebecca still not certain what the total expenses will be for the FEMA project. Rebecca expects 75% will be reimbursed by FEMA, then up to 17.5% reimbursed by the State because our paperwork shows our flood and hazard mitigation plans in place. We will likely have to cover the rest of the costs, which Rebecca expects to fall under truck time and labor because the \$27,000 so far is just subcontractor payments and materials.
  - g. Discussion of 911 Coordinator and role. The 2022 VTE Annual review form needs to be signed and submitted. Discussion determined that it can be signed by someone other than the 911 Coordinator.
    - i. **Richard moved to have the Town Clerk sign and submit the 2022 VTE Annual Review, seconded by Alfred, all in favor, so moved.**

Selectboard members available to sign it as necessary. Rebecca will confirm with Nancy Reilly that this will be acceptable.

5. Selectboard Expansion Discussion
  - a. Richard contacted VLCT. If a vote to expand the Selectboard from 3 to 5 members (with staggered 2-year terms) is included in the Town Meeting warning, the two new terms can be added at Town Meeting agenda the same year if the expansion is approved. Selectboard feels this change would be beneficial, looking at other towns and the School Board. Richard will confirm that the correct language is used in the warning. Moving forward, the town would elect two member per year. Tim McKay asked to be included in the correspondence related to the wording of the articles. Commentary about the current workload for the Selectboard members and how 5 would alleviate some of that.
6. Public comment
  - a. Tim McKay thanked Jeremy for cleaning up the mess on Morrison Hill Road.
  - b. Dave Stauffer provided a name of a resident who came up in the Selectboard expansion discussion.
7. Approve minutes
  - a. **Peter moved to approve minutes from September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023, seconded by Alfred, all in favor, so moved.**
  - b. Richard asked Rebecca if they were supposed to sign the approved minutes. Rebecca clarified that it was not legally required, but it would be beneficial in general.
8. Review and approve bills
  - a. **Peter moved to pay bills as presented by the Treasurer, seconded by Alfred, all in favor, so moved.**
9. Review correspondence
  - a. There is someone who might be willing to be the Keeper of the Pound for Peacham and Barnet, and the Town of Barnet is interested too, but it's still up in the air. Peter will see if it can be resolved by next meeting.
10. **Peter moved to adjourn at 7:17pm, seconded by Alfred, all in favor, so moved.**

Documents provided to the Selectboard and discussed at this meeting are available by request to the Town Office.