

TOWN OF PEACHAM
Wednesday, November 6, 2024
Selectboard Meeting

Location: Hybrid In-person at the Peacham Library Community Room and via Zoom

Attendance

In-person: Alfred Dedam, Selectboard Chair, William Kempton, Selectboard, Peter Craig, Selectboard, Jeremy Withers, Road Foreman, Alex and Suzanne Schoenfeld, Rusty Barber

Via Zoom: Molly Willard, Selectboard

Minutes

1. Call to order by Alfred at 06:30pm on Wednesday, November 6, 2024.
2. Additions to the agenda
 - a. 2025 mowing – Peter suggested taking care of this matter sooner rather than later, so we are not rushed in the spring and have a defined item in the budget. Board agrees. Peter will ask Rebecca to put out the bid in order to have them back in time to make a decision in the second meeting in December. Alfred noted that 2025 will include the Peacham/Groton cemetery. Alfred noted the Worcester Cemetery that needs maintenance, but tabled it.
 - b. Allen Thresher Sr's photo
 - i. Alfred suggested delivering it on Veteran's Day. Peter will try to get that organized.
3. Highway Department Update from Jeremy Withers
 - a. Crew has been grading recently to prep for winter and working on getting culverts ready for spring. Starting to get trucks ready for winter. Sand pile has been prepped.
 - b. Kyle Bellavance's crew cleared out. A few last things to be done by next week, plus a walk through to confirm completion. Alfred asked about a piece of guardrail.
 - c. FEMA projects winding down for *this* year. Others will have to be done next year. They got the turn around done on Gov Maddocks, and Willow Brook Rd is now open.
 - d. No news on the new 10-wheeler.
 - e. Jeremy will start working on budget numbers. He hopes to have a preliminary budget discussion by the end of the month.
4. Town Clerk/Treasurer Update – email from Rebecca Washington
 - a. Election went smoothly. 543 votes cast which is 77% of registered voters.
 - b. Most taxes paid on time. \$106,654 left to be collected, but this is normal.
 - c. Requested budget meeting be scheduled. Big items to be discussed include paving, the future of truck purchases/leases, and the renovation.
 - i. Tentatively scheduled for Nov 25th at 3:30pm at the Town Offices.
 - d. Remaining \$86,569.77 ARPA funds need to be obligated by 12/31/24.
 - e. Just received FEMA reimbursement for *last* year's flood-related administrative costs. Still waiting on State's share. Town's percentage of funding to be contributed was reduced due to recent changes.
 - f. Zoning bylaws must be adopted by 01/31/25 in order to received a match forgiveness incentive for the grant that funded the project.
 - g. Tonight's AP is large because it includes the annual check for the Peacham School District and appropriation payments.
5. Development Review Board – Rusty Barber

- a. Increased the size from 5 to 7 and encouraged younger membership. Rusty has recruited Adam Dobson to replace him at chair of the DRB. Rusty finds him very qualified, but he's busy and will have to Zoom in quite a bit, so Rusty asked Marilyn Magnus to help with the administrative stuff. Rusty requested the Selectboard appoint Adam to the DRB. Morris McCain has already resigned, leaving a spot open.

i. Peter moved to appoint Adam Dobson to the DRB, seconded by William, all in favor, so moved.

6. Town Hall renovation check-in - Rusty Barber

- a. The entrance structure will use pressure treated fir, but it takes a while to dry out enough to paint, so Rusty suggested buying it now and letting it dry until it's ready to be used.
- b. Renovation project was put on hold to wait for MERP grant. The grant request has been submitted, but still waiting on a decision.
- c. Electric – GMP has offered to upgrade the service for free, and may have incentives for changing to the heat pump system. He will look into it.
- d. Applied for a grant from the preservation trust for help restoring the historic windows. If we get it, it will be a small amount only. Other preservation money may be available for other parts of the building, but Rusty doubts we will qualify.
- e. Air conditioning: 2 years ago, the energy committee hired Andy Tomlinson to provide design for installation of the heat pump system. Rusty and Dick Browne have been working with Tomlinson to define the system and get some prices. Still don't have what they need yet as he's been busy. Rusty is concerned Tomlinson's experience is limited to residential, whereas we need a commercial design. Rusty suggested either hiring an electrical engineer to do the job or to oversee it. He has a contact he'd like to reach out to, and board agrees.
- f. Efficiency Vermont – Municipality specific incentive program may help us with air conditioning system recommendations.
- g. Shane Stevenson has been hired to do some site work on the back of the building. He can start as soon as the ground thaws enough. Discussion of timeline working back from that date.
- h. Dick Browne is stepping back, and Alfred offered to take his place.

7. Penny St parking area

- a. Suzanne and Alex Schoenfeld came to the meeting to discuss a letter they'd sent about putting a parking area by their property on Penny St for Peacham town forest access. When they first moved here, there was room for parking, including a sign leading to the kiosk that is the start of the town forest. There has since been a sign up that has dissuaded hikers from accessing it. Suzanne asked why the town forest access has been a topic of discussion recently. Their main interest is for the hikers who want to use to the trails in the town forest, and wondered if there could be a sign allowing for Peacham Pathways usage. Alfred explained how it started and how the town has been pursuing the access question and a clear definition. Discussion about different access points (previous and current), clarifying the types of access concerned, and existing roads and properties.

8. Public comment

9. Approve minutes

- a. **Peter moved to approve minutes from Wednesday, October 16th, 2024, seconded by William, all in favor, so moved.**

10. Review and approve bills

- a. **Peter moved to approve bills as presented, seconded by William, all in favor, so moved.**

11. Review correspondence
 - a. Letter from John Reiss about access and right-of-way to the town forest.
 - b. Selectboard luncheon at the school to show appreciation.
12. Peter moves to adjourn at 7:45pm, seconded by William, all in favor, so moved.

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