

TOWN OF PEACHAM
Wednesday, February 5, 2025
Selectboard Meeting
Hybrid meeting in the Peacham Library Community Room and via Zoom

Attendance

In-person: Alfred Dedam, Selectboard Chair, Peter Craig, Selectboard, Christian Snow, Selectboard, Jeremy Withers, Road Foreman, Rusty Barber, Justin White, Greg Burt, David Edwards

Via Zoom: Molly Willard, Selectboard, Janie Carle, Richard Greenwood

Minutes

1. Call to order by Alfred at 06:30pm, on Wednesday, February 5th, 2025
2. Additions to the agenda
 - a. Dave Edwards – PERF update
 - i. Dave summarized the fund history up to this point. Explained that they received more money than they were expecting that can only be used for fund relief, so the suggestion was to disperse the funds on a pro-rated basis to the original applicants. If applicants do not need the funds, they have been asked to consider adding back into the original fund for future use.
 - ii. Jim Minichiello has resigned from the committee, so they need a new member. There is a requirement of 7 members to make decisions. Mark Washburn was recommend, and he has agreed. Dave asked if the Selectboard would appoint him.
 1. **Peter moved to appoint Mr. Washburn as the 7th member of the Peacham Emergency Relief Fund committee, seconded by Christian, all in favor, so moved.**
 - iii. Dave encouraged anyone who might need help to reach out to the fund.
 - b. Rusty Barber – Town Hall Renovation
 - i. Rusty presented his drawings of the renovated entrance and an alternative walkway design to help prevent the potential wind tunnel. Peter expressed his concern about the snow accumulation, so Rusty agreed to go with the original drawing. He will look into a solution to help block the wind. Molly asked about this would be funded. We did not get the grants we applied for, so it would come out of the construction budget.
 - ii. Regarding the gym, Rusty has done the measurements to draw a plan and cross section. He needs to know about the installation, but he has enough information to give engineers. He feels both the heating cooling system

and replacing the floor will be very expensive, so the board will have to decide what to do.

3. Highway Department Update – with Jeremy Withers
 - a. Selectboard information from the State needs to be signed. Jeremy recommended waiting until after Town Meeting.
 - b. Roads and Bridges form needs to be signed. He will get that too them.
 - c. Winter roads – Plows ready to go for upcoming snow events.
 - d. In recent down time, he got the backhoe broom fixed, so it's ready for spring.
 - e. Finding frozen culverts and pipes, so they are out working on them daily.
4. Town Clerk/Treasurer Update – Email from Rebecca Washington
 - a. Physical copies of the Town Report will be available February 14th. It is already on the website.
5. Gym update – with Justin White, gym manager
 - a. Took over for Rachael Moragues. Going well so far. He ask about the cleaning that has been budgeted. Alfred said he has gotten a quote, and that they will coordinate getting that going. Regarding trash, discussion about adding bathroom trash to the rest of the Town Office trash (event trash should be removed by the event organizer), and Peter offered providing Justin a dump key if he needs it.
6. Public comment
 - a. Greg Burt, State Representative, introduced himself to those present. His email is on the State website, so people can reach out.
7. Approve minutes – approved only by the members present at each meeting.
 - a. **Christian moved to approve minutes from January 15h, 2025, seconded by Molly, all in favor, so moved.**
 - b. **Christian moved to approve the minutes from the special meeting on January 29th, 2025, seconded by Alfred, all in favor, so moved.**
8. Review and approve bills
 - a. **Peter moved to approve bills as presented by the town treasurer, seconded Christian, all in favor, so moved.**
9. Review correspondence
 - a. Marit Danielson - Letter to the Selectboard requesting a resolution to her question regarding Peacham town road policy regarding road bed width for lightly used class 3 roads. Having not received documentation of an amended policy, she can presume the previous standard stands, dictating that the road width must be 14 feet. She believes Alfred will request to amend this, as he has right-of-way off of this road. She doesn't feel there has been a clear and coherent argument for the wider roads, he requests that the 14 foot standard is maintained. She argues that increasing to 18 feet would require all class 3 roads to that standard, which she feels would meet a lot of resistance. She does not support the wider road, as she feel it jeopardizes the trees and encourages

reckless driving. Jeremy responded by expressing confusion and frustration because they are maintaining the road properly, and while the road may be wider than 14 feet in sections, their intention is not to make it wider. Per the Municipal Roads General Permit, the state requires certain standards for how water sheets off the road. So, when the residents built up the edges, it prevents the water sheeting off, so he was required to correct it. He says they don't grade wider, although they do have to pull edges in, but it grows back, and his crew does not wreck it. He believes that 14 feet was the standard in the 70s or 80s, but everything changes. Peter commented that we have adopted a lot of new standards since then. Jeremy commented that when they address updating the road policy and codes, there are a lot of changes that need to be made, but they are not made to offend anyone. The Municipal Roads General Permit comes from the State, and it shows the town road going out straight all the way to Alfred's house. That has not been kept to State code, as the town has changed it. Peter commented that there had been a discussion about the changes made in the 90s a few years back. Molly clarified that the letter is stating that the road is being maintained at a greater width than the regulation they are referencing. She asked about reaching out to someone on the State level to get clarity on the width. Jeremy noted that he has not measured the road, but commented that the grader has 14 foot width, and that there are ditches on either side, so it can't really get wider. The road may be wider than 14 feet, but it can't get any wider. Alfred commented that the last minutes failed to note that 14 feet is the minimum standard. Molly noted that she thought she had included that in the email response. Peter commented that roads might be wider or narrower at any given section due to the nature of the surrounding area. Molly also commented that their email response had stated that the town maintains a 25 foot right-of-way on either side, which Jeremy confirmed. She does not understand the argument about the width because the town can use the right-of-way as needed, whether it is the width variation or tree removal. As everything that's being discussed is within the right-of-way, she asked if there was some legal language that could be provided to the resident. Jeremy explained that that language is explained in "roads", and that 25 feet is the minimum, depending on the road, but that language is in documents in the town offices. Jeremy will reach out. Molly commented that the angle of the letter seemed to be that if the town maintains the greater width on Worchester Road, that all class 3 roads must be maintained that way, but she disagrees explaining that we maintain roads differently within that 25 foot right-of-way based on what needs to be done or doesn't need to be done on the road, and that's how she feels they should respond. Molly will work on drafting another response.

- b. Molly had a call from Bob Bartell, requesting a conversation about Cow Hill Road after Town Meeting.

- c. Email from Logan Perrin about availability of grant applications. Jeremy will apply for the grant, and although we are not on schedule to get it, he will take a shot.
 - d. Email from Janie Carle expressing her lack of support for the budgeted \$10,000 for the afternoon child care. John Reiss also emailed his concern about the procedure for this item, which Alfred explained was tidied up during the special meeting.
 - e. Emails from Tim McKay and Neil Monteith about walking the town forest, which will occur on February 11th, at 9:00am.
 - f. Margaret McLean email updates about the coalition discussed last regular meeting.
 - g. Fire Department held their annual meeting, and they are looking to appoint Jeff Berwick as Fire Chief again.
 - h. NEKWMD variance for the collection of leaf and yard waste.
10. Peter moves to adjourn at 7:45pm, seconded by Christian, all in favor, so moved.

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