

TOWN OF PEACHAM  
Wednesday, May 7, 2025  
Selectboard Meeting  
Hybrid meeting in the Peacham Library Community Room and via Zoom

Attendance

In-person: Alfred Dedam, Selectboard Chair, Peter Craig, Selectboard, William Kempton, Selectboard, Christian Snow, Selectboard, Jeremy Withers, Road Foreman, Rusty Barber, Bruce Berwick, Jeff Berwick, Larry Ruggles, Jutta Scott, Katherine Siner, Neil Monteith, Robert Starbuck

Via Zoom: Molly Willard, Selectboard, Rebecca Washington, Town Clerk, Doug and Michelle Morton, Janie Carle

Minutes

1. Call to order by Alfred at 06:30pm, on Wednesday, September 4, 2024
2. Additions to the agenda
  - a. Change order for the new fire truck – Jeff Berwick, Fire Chief
    - i. Pumper has had a leak in the poly tank, so they decided to remove the tank themselves with the road crew. It has a lifetime warranty, so it won't cost extra. He hopes to have it back in service next week.
    - ii. He has the final specs on the new truck (which might be coming sooner rather than later.) Had to make some adjustments due to the equipment and safety. It's a \$10,527 change. It was higher, but he cut out some things. Jeff explained the finalization and delivery process.
      1. **Peter moved to accept the change order for the new fire engine, seconded by Christian, all in favor, so moved.**
    - iii. The Fire Department has 18 members currently, with two more EMTs coming on board soon.
3. Highway Department Update- Jeremy Withers
  - a. Thanked the board for meeting last week about Governor Mattocks. A lot of helpful information came of it. There is work to be done there regardless of the decision about the final outcome. Alfred reviewed the three pronged decision. First, if they rebuild back to how it was in order to get FEMA support, there could still be instability in the area. He would like to see the numbers for the associated costs. Second option would be to throw it up, but he would like to seek some advice from a lawyer about the legal ramifications. And third, stabilization of the banks and the river to prevent further damage. The river needs attention regardless of the road. Alfred suggested ordering an engineering study. Molly added that throwing up the road will completely eliminate the possibility of FEMA funding. It cannot just be left as is because it is still a danger to homes. Some of the stabilization could be covered by FEMA if they build back the road, so Molly feels the option that is the least expense to the town is what they should pursue. Jeremy says he's waiting for figures from FEMA since their site visit. Molly agrees that the next step is waiting for a number from FEMA, but she encouraged Jeremy to get a contractor quote. Jeremy reminded them that some of it will fall under mitigation, which is another challenge for funding. Discussion about different spots that will be covered by FEMA or not. Discussion about identifying further mitigation work.

Alfred feels that without the proper mitigation, building the road back would be unwise. Jeremy added that while two houses got hit last time, now we are looking at 5-6 houses that are vulnerable. Alfred suggested hiring Patrick Ross to do a study and a proposal for mitigation steps for the lower portion. He emphasized that rebuilding the road without knowing the necessary mitigation steps might prove to be wasteful. Doug Morton encouraged the board to reach out to Emily Finnegan for grant possibilities.

- i. Peter moved to have Alfred reach out to Patrick Ross, seconded by Christian, all in favor, so moved.**
  - b. Green Mountain Power reached out to install approximately 700ft of underground power along the shoulder of Stevenson Rd, so in the town-right-of-way. Doug Morton explained that he has requested that GMP move the line from across their field. The current pole is very outdated and is a safety concern. This is the proposal he received, so Doug is requesting town's support. It should not go through the wetland. Jeremy explained that generally he prefers to avoid underground lines near where they have to work, but that he's OK with this request.
    - i. Peter moved to allow Green Mountain Power to put down their in-ground utilities on Stevenson Rd, seconded by Christian, all in favor, so moved.**
  - c. Roadside mowing- only one bid came in from Walt Nebrosky for 2-3 passes in June and 1-2 passes in July for \$6600. This is same price as last year. Rebecca explained that for anything between \$1,000-\$15,000, they do not need to go to bid, but they are supposed to try to get at least 2 prices. Jeremy attempted this, but only one came through.
    - i. Peter moved to accept Walt's bid for roadside mowing, seconded by Christian, all in favor, so moved.**
  - d. One of the 10-wheelers is out of service at the moment. It's getting repaired.
  - e. Pushed through some FEMA projects so we can get some reimbursement, and working on a few more.
  - f. Alfred asked about debris blockage on streams out of our right-of-way. Jeremy suggested reaching out to the state for advice.
4. Town Clerk/Treasurer Update
  - a. Regarding renovation line of credit, she needs a motion to borrow the \$350,000 the voters approved at last year's town meeting and authorize her to advance the funds as invoices come in.
    - i. Peter moved to borrow \$350,000 in the form of a line of credit, and authorize the town treasure to use the funds as invoices come in for the work, seconded by William, all in favor, so moved.**
  - b. Regarding the grant agreement for Peacham Pond Greeter Program, she needs motion allowing her to be the authorized signer.
    - i. Peter moved to make Rebecca the authorized signer for the Peacham Pond Greeter grant agreement, seconded by William, all in favor, so moved.**
5. 4<sup>th</sup> of July – Katherine Siner
  - a. Requesting permission from town for 4<sup>th</sup> of July parade, including shutting down the necessary roads. Changes include eliminating the children's bike parade, and adding a farmer's market. Committee is looking for help for the tractor line-up. The committee has raised some money, so they have a balance, not a deficit.

The parade is for tractors and horses. All tractors are welcome, but they must be road-compliant with rubber tires. Board all in agreement.

6. Renovation Bids – Rusty Barber

- a. Graves Builders – Acknowledges all 4 addendum that have come out. Base bid price is \$569,370, and post office work is \$10,230. Beginning work August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025 with completion date February 15<sup>th</sup>, 2026. Included insurance certificates. Some possible additions for \$7980.
- b. Ruggco - \$408,192, and alternate \$5,588. Insurance certificate included. Proposed to start June 1<sup>st</sup> and finish October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025.
- c. Rusty reviewed the breakdown of costs based on the bid prices, direct contracts with the town, and additional expenses. With the lower bid, we would still be \$24000 over budget. Discussion of HVAC construction possibilities. Discussion of pellet boilers or other biomass options. William will reach out to some contacts. Discussion of bid being tabled until Rusty can discuss lowering costs to fit the budget. Larry Ruggles, representative from Ruggco, explained that he has worked carefully to provided the lowest possible bid, but with a letter of intent, he would be willing to work on finding grants and going through bids to find ways to cut it down to budget. He gave a suggestion for how to reduce HVAC costs. Molly will provide some contacts for William about municipal grants and pellet boiler installers.
  - i. **Peter moved to get letter of intent to Ruggco and to move forward with this project if we can find the cuts we need to, seconded by William, all in favor, so moved.**

7. Emergency Management – Robert Starbuck & Neil Monteith

- a. Neil is going to work with Robert to help him learn the role. Robert explained that he is the director, but we need a representative for the emergency services.
  - i. **Peter moved appointment Neil as the Emergency Services Officer, seconded by William, all in favor, so moved.**
- b. They need to identify the contact point person from the Selectboard and road crew. Alfred is listed as the chair, so he will be the contact for the Selectboard. They will need to finalize some details over the next few weeks, then the board will need to approve the plan to be submitted. They are working on the Hazard Mitigation Plan grant. Neil will be meeting about it, and invited a Selectboard member to attend. It's not a public meeting, so it does not need to be warned.

8. 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Resolution – Jutta Scott

- a. Next year is the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of the declaration of independence. Vermont Commission appointed by the governor trying to get all the towns participate. Asking Selectboards to sign a resolution to participate. Historical Society will be involved. There is no obligation to the town. Commission will provide resources for publicity.
  - i. **Peter moved to accept the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary resolution, seconded by Christian, all in favor, so moved.**

9. Jean Berwick Tent waiver
  - a. Alfred provide a waiver and briefly explained it. All members find it acceptable. Selectboard decided it will a rec committee responsibility to keep track of the tent usage and wavier. Rebecca suggested opening it up and inspecting it before lending it for the first time.
10. 911 Coordinator appointment
  - a. Alfred spoke to Clarissa Kendall who is a Lister and willing to take on the role.
    - i. **Peter moved to appoint Clarissa Kendall as 911 Coordinator, seconded by Christian, all in favor, so moved.**
11. Public comment – none
12. Approve minutes
  - a. **Peter moved to approve minutes from Wednesday, April 16, 2025, seconded by William, all in favor, so moved.**
  - b. **Peter moved to approve the minutes from Friday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2025, seconded by Molly, all in favor, so moved.**
13. Review and approve bills
  - a. **Peter moved to approve bills as presented, seconded William, all in favor, so moved.**
14. Review correspondence
  - a. Molly is trying to schedule a time to meet at Worcester Rd with Mike Tarrant and Jeremy. Either Christian or William will attend too.
  - b. Mike Tarrant also sent a document for the Selectboard to sign regarding the Cow Hill project.
  - c. Letter from Jeff Berwick notifying the Selectboard regarding the poly tank.
  - d. NEKWMD letter advising that mattress prices will increase to \$50 per mattress.
  - e. Ken Danielson emailed about being appointed to the Tree Board, stating he had reached out to William and Christian. William said he did not see any correspondence, neither did Christian. Molly let him know that Seth Chapel had been appointed.
15. Peter moves to adjourn at 8:27pm 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.