

Town of Plainfield
Plainfield Select Board Meeting
March 27, 2017
Approved Minutes

PRESENT: Ross Sneyd (Select Board Member), Betsy Ziegler (Select Board Chair), Alexandra Thayer (Select Board Member), Joe Staab (Videographer), Cindy Wyckoff (Minutes Recorder), Eric Blaisdell (Times Argus), Ben Graham (Resident), Janice Walrafen (Resident, Development Review Board Chair), Daniel Caddy (Resident), Alice Merrill (Resident), Andrea Day (Dufresne Group), Bram Towbin (Road Commissioner), Laura Ziegler (Resident), Rich Rubin (Resident), Erik Gillard (Resident), Ryan Gillard (Resident), Amy Lester (Resident), Dana L. Woodruff (Resident), Jean Hamilton (Resident), Karen Starr (Resident), George Cushing (Constable), and Rick Levy (Resident).

Betsy Ziegler called the Select Board meeting to order at 7:03pm.

AGENDA

- Election of Chair
- Public Comment and Announcements
- Appointments
- Town Clerk's Report
- Road Report
- Lower Village Pedestrian Pathway Engineering Study
- Resiliency Committee Update
- Town Constable
- Update on Town Projects Under Way – Pedestrian Bridge, Rec Field Shelter, Bus Shelter, etc.
- Minutes
- Adjourn

Ziegler noted that the first item on the agenda was to elect a Select Board chair. **Ross Sneyd made a motion to elect Betsy Ziegler to be Select Board chair. Alexandra Thayer seconded the motion. The motion was approved.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS/PUBLIC COMMENT

- Sneyd noted the quality schedule of events coming up at the Town Hall Opera House and encouraged people to visit its website for a program listing. Ziegler noted that the schedule is also posted on Front Porch Forum.
- Ziegler announced that the deadline for licensing dogs is 4/1/17.

AGENDA

- Ziegler asked if there were any additional items to add to the agenda. Thayer stated that she would like to make sure that the Town Constable discussion centers on process and not on individuals. Sneyd noted that there would be a number of people present for the discussion, but his intention of

putting it on the agenda was to focus on the process. A brief discussion followed on the amount of time devoted to the item at the meeting.

APPOINTMENTS

- The Select Board made the following appointments (all appointments are for one year unless otherwise notated):
 - Auditor: Mary Etta Chase
Sneyd made a motion to appoint Mary Etta Chase as Auditor. Ziegler seconded the motion. The motion was approved.
 - Central VT State Police Advisory: George Cushing
Sneyd made a motion to appoint George Cushing to the Central VT State Police Advisory. Thayer seconded the motion. The motion was approved.
 - Central VT Solid Waste Representative: Laura Zeisel
Sneyd made a motion to appoint Laura Zeisel as Central VT Solid Waste Representative. Clarification was made regarding the fact that Zeisel had not indicated that she wanted to step down from the position, but rather that she had recommended an alternate to serve. Sneyd noted that Bram Towbin had expressed interest in the alternate position. **Thayer seconded the motion. The motion was approved.**
 - Conservation Commission (4 years): Sarah Albert (Term 2021), Julie Hackbarth (Term 2021), Kim Sudol (Term 2021)
Sneyd made a motion to appoint Sarah Albert, Julie Hackbarth, and Kim Sudol to the Conservation Commission with terms expiring in 2021. Ziegler read aloud a letter of interest sent to the Select Board from Kim Sudol, who is a new appointee to the Conservation Commission. A brief discussion followed on the term length of appointments. **Thayer seconded the motion. The motion was approved.**
 - E-911 Coordinator: Sandra Ross
Sneyd made a motion to appoint Sandra Ross as E-911 Coordinator. Thayer seconded the motion. The motion was approved.
 - Emergency Management Coordinator: Michael Billingsley
Sneyd made a motion to appoint Michael Billingsley as Emergency Management Coordinator. Thayer seconded the motion. The motion was approved.
 - Energy Coordinator: Bob Atchinson
Sneyd made a motion to appoint Bob Atchinson as Energy Coordinator. Thayer seconded the motion. The motion was approved.
 - EMT Captain: Greg Light
Sneyd made a motion to appoint Greg Light as EMT Captain. Thayer seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

- Fire Chief: Patrick Martin; First Assistant Fire Chief: Dennis Blair; Second Assistant: Andy Hebert; Deputy Chief: Gary Graves
Sneyd made a motion to appoint Patrick Martin as Fire Chief, Dennis Blair as First Assistant Fire Chief; Andy Hebert as Second Assistant; and Gary Graves as Deputy Chief. Thayer seconded the motion. The motion was approved.
- Development Review Board (3 years): Elaine Parker
Sneyd made a motion to appoint Elaine Parker to the Development Review Board for three years. Ziegler noted that a letter of interest had been received by Elaine Parker. **Thayer seconded the motion. The motion was approved.**
- First Constable: George Cushing
Sneyd made a motion to appoint George Cushing as First Constable. Thayer seconded the motion. The motion was approved.
- Hazard Mitigation: Theresa Bienz, Michael Billingsley, Dan Gadd, Susan Grimaldi, Amos Meacham, George Springston, Bram Towbin
Sneyd made a motion to appoint Theresa Bienz, Michael Billingsley, Dan Gadd, Susan Grimaldi, Amos Meacham, George Springston, and Bram Towbin to the Hazard Mitigation Committee. Thayer seconded the motion. The motion was approved.
- Pedestrian Bridge Project Advisory Committee: Karl Bissex, David Diamantis, Tim Phillips, David Strong, Laura Ziegler
Sneyd made a motion to appoint Karl Bissex, David Diamantis, Tim Phillips, David Strong, and Laura Ziegler to the Pedestrian Bridge Project Advisory Committee. Thayer seconded the motion. The motion was approved.
- Planning Commission: Vacancy
Noting that there were no applicants, Sneyd solicited for candidates to serve on the Planning Commission.
- Recreation Committee (1-year term): Dan Gadd, Nick Hooker
Sneyd made a motion to appoint Dan Gadd and Nick Hooker to one-year terms on the Recreation Committee. Thayer seconded the motion. The motion was approved.
- Registrar: Linda B. Wells
Sneyd made a motion to appoint Linda B. Wells as Registrar. There was a brief discussion on the role of Registrar and the need for three Deputy Registrars. **Thayer seconded the motion. The motion was approved.**
- Deputy Registrars: R. Brent Whitcomb, Bruce Judd, Nicholas Whitcomb
Sneyd made a motion to appoint R. Brent Whitcomb, Bruce Judd, and Nicholas Whitcomb as Deputy Registrars. Thayer seconded the motion. The motion was approved.
- Revolving Loan Committee: Karl Bissex, Dave Boynton, Erica Dacosta

Sneyd made a motion to appoint Karl Bissex, Dave Boynton, and Erica Dacosta to the Revolving Loan Committee. Thayer seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

- Road Commissioner: Bram Towbin

Sneyd made a motion to appoint Bram Towbin as Road Commissioner. Thayer seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

- Road Foreman, Highway Administrator: Mike Nolan

Sneyd made a motion to appoint Mike Nolan as Road Foreman and Highway Administrator. Thayer seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

- Social Concerns Committee: Mary Niebling, Gail Falk, Sarah Albert

Sneyd made a motion to appoint Mary Niebling, Gail Falk, and Sarah Albert to the Social Concerns Committee. Thayer seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

- Town Grand Juror: James Jamele

Sneyd made a motion to appoint James Jamele as Town Grand Juror. Thayer seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

- Tree Warden: Nicko Rubin

Sneyd made a motion to appoint Nicko Rubin as Tree Warden. Thayer seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

- Water and Wastewater Commissioner: Vacancy

Sneyd noted that he believes there is a candidate for the vacant Water and Wastewater Commission position, but that the Select Board has not yet received a letter of interest. Development Review Board Chair Janice Walrafen stated that there are two more vacancies on the Development Review Board and requested that they be included in any solicitation for interested candidates.

- Karen Storey (3 years): Karen Storey (Term 2020)

Sneyd made a motion to appoint Karen Storey for a term of three years as Zoning Administrator. Thayer seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

- Ziegler thanked everyone who has stepped forward to serve on committees, which makes it possible for the community to function.

TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

- Sneyd presented the following list of Fleet permits for approval:
 - Agrimark DBA Cabot Creamery
 - Scott Brown
 - Chevalier Drilling
 - Curtis Lumber Co.
 - DuBois Construction
 - Gould Well Drilling

- LePage Gravel Pit
- Limlaw Chipping and Land Clearing
- Pike Industries
- SD Ireland Concrete
- Suburban Propane
- United Natural Foods

Sneyd made a motion to approve the above list of Fleet Permit requests. Thayer seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

- Sneyd presented the following Single Vehicle permit for approval:
 - Kennedy Excavation

Sneyd made a motion to approve the Single Vehicle permit request from Kennedy Excavation. Thayer seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

OTHER BUSINESS: DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD (DRB) CHAIR JANICE WALRAFEN

- Chair Janice Walrafen was present on behalf of the DRB to request that the Planning Commission and the Select Board move forward in the process of finalizing Plainfield’s Unified Zoning Regulations. Noting that the rewriting process has already gone on for three years, Walrafen stated the difficulties the DRB faces in solving zoning issues using current regulations, some of which no longer apply, and for which the DRB needs to continually give variances. Sneyd noted that Planning Commission Chair Will Colgan had recently indicated to the Select Board that the necessary public hearings would begin in a matter of months. Thayer suggested holding an informational public meeting to help move things forward. Walrafen suggested possibly adopting interim zoning regulations after holding public hearings so the revised regulations could be in use prior to the official Town-wide vote at Town Meeting in March 2018. After a brief discussion on possible reasons for the delay and investigating whether term limits apply in the Planning Commission, the Select Board decided to invite the chairs of both the Planning Commission and DRB to its next meeting.

ROAD REPORT

- Road Commissioner Bram Towbin noted plans to meet with everyone on a monthly basis to provide uniformity and a more professional way of going about things, stating the need for stricter documentation and conducting inventories of Town infrastructure.

OTHER BUSINESS: CAMERON ROAD PROPERTY

- Former Select Board Chair Towbin gave an update on the property at 280 Cameron Road that is going to fall into the Great Brook in the near future. He noted that significant progress has been made in terms of the buyout process and is hoping that the closing will take place by late April. He presented the buyout paperwork approved by Town Attorney James Jamele and the property owner. Towbin requested authorization from the Select Board to: 1) sign the closing agreement; and 2) solicit for bids to perform asbestos testing on the house prior to demolition. Thayer stated the need in the closing document for a specific statement declaring that there is a restriction on the property that it cannot be used for any other purpose. **Sneyd made a motion to authorize Towbin to sign the closing contract document on the Select Board’s behalf, and to authorize Towbin to**

seek bids for asbestos testing on the building. Thayer seconded the motion. Ziegler requested that Towbin keep the Select Board in the loop on the process going forward as well as confirm that it is officially stated that there be no future building on the site. **The motion was approved.**

LOWER VILLAGE PEDESTRIAN PATHWAY ENGINEERING STUDY

- Ziegler introduced Andrea Day, the Dufresne Group engineer who is overseeing a scoping study to explore the potential of extending the Village sidewalk network. Ziegler emphasized that the purpose of the study, which was funded by a VTRANS grant, is to determine the best alternative if the project were to move forward, but does not obligate the Town in any way. Using a Powerpoint presentation, Day described the study process to date, study area, selected alternatives, and project phasing and costs, followed by a solicitation for questions and comment from the public. Ziegler noted that if the Town decides to move forward, it could apply for a grant to cover 80% of the project cost. Any additional comments may be directed to Ziegler and other committee members, and copies of the study's report are available.

RESILIENCY COMMITTEE UPDATE

- Ziegler introduced Jean Hamilton, one of several Resiliency Committee members that attended the recent Leahy Environmental Summit at the ECHO Center in Burlington. Hamilton reviewed the conference proceedings and how the information gathered and networking at the event served to inspire and will enhance the community's efforts to foster climate resilience. Ziegler announced that the next step of the Resiliency Committee is to plant a riparian buffer zone along the Winooski River at the Recreation Field where the picnic shelter once stood. The planting is scheduled for late April and volunteers are needed. There may also be extra saplings available for distribution to residents living along a waterway.

TOWN CONSTABLE

- Ziegler noted that the Select Board has reappointed Georg Cushing as Town Constable until a new Constable assumes the position. She thanked Cushing for his many years of service and noted that he will be a good source of insight regarding what the position involves. Sneyd noted that many issues relating to the position need to be thought through, including budget, what the Town would like the position to entail going forward, writing a job description, and advertising it. Opinions varied regarding the testing and training requirements for different levels of law enforcement authority for the position and the Select Board decided to further explore what is needed. Numerous residents were present and discussion followed, including the appropriate order of steps involved in the process, the current role Plainfield's Constable plays, and whether the Constable should be armed. Cushing gave background on his work as Constable and how it has evolved over time. Daniel Caddy, who has expressed interest in the position, introduced himself and described the experience and expertise he would bring. Thayer suggested holding a meeting expressly for the purpose of hearing from residents and hashing out some of the issues. Sneyd agreed with Ziegler that a committee might be formed to further explore the issue over the next month. Discussion followed on the possibility of conducting a town survey to gather thoughts on the issue from the greater community and gaining a better understanding of what issues the Constable has previously dealt with to determine if a stronger law-enforcement presence is needed going forward. Sneyd noted that anyone interested in either serving on the committee or in the Constable position itself

should contact any of the Select Board members or the Town Clerk. Ziegler tabled the issue to the next meeting to allow time for more information to be gathered.

UPDATE ON TOWN PROJECTS UNDER WAY – PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE, REC FIELD SHELTER, BUS SHELTER, ETC.

- Sneyd suggested having people weigh in one more time on the non-binding Sanctuary Town resolution that was approved at Town Meeting so the Select Board can decide whether to leave it as it stands or proceed in adopting it as a binding resolution. Thayer presented a proposed letter that she had drafted to Vermont's Congressional Delegation, which the Select Board decided to post to local social media for the community to review prior to discussion at the next meeting.
- Sneyd noted a number of projects in progress, including the Pedestrian Bridge, rebuilding the picnic shelter at the Recreation Field, the new bus shelter, and revamping the Town's website.

OTHER BUSINESS

- Thayer presented hard copies of items she had previously emailed to the other Select Board members.
- The Select Board reviewed agenda items for the next meeting, including further discussion on the Sanctuary Town resolution, Town Constable, Town website, discussion with the Planning Commission regarding the draft Unified Zoning Regulations, projects that Dave Strong is working on, and possibly term limit guidelines.

MINUTES

- **Sneyd made a motion to approve the minutes from the 2/27/17 Public Information Hearing on Australian ballot items and regular Select Board meeting as written. Ziegler seconded the motion. The motion was approved.**
- Noting that the minutes from the 3/7/17 Town Meeting had not yet been reviewed, Sneyd tabled consideration of them until the next meeting.
- **Sneyd made a motion to approve the minutes from the 3/5/17 special Select Board meeting as written. Ziegler seconded the motion. The motion was approved.**

The meeting adjourned at 9:07pm on a motion by Sneyd. Thayer seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

Respectfully submitted by Cindy Wyckoff