

**Town of Plainfield
Select Board Meeting
May 8, 2017
Draft Minutes**

PRESENT: Ross Sneyd (Select Board Member), Betsy Ziegler (Select Board Chair), Alexandra Thayer (Select Board Member), Keith Swann (Videographer), Cindy Wyckoff (Minutes Recorder), Eric Vornald (Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission), Eric Blaisdell (Times Argus), Jan Waterman (Resident), Andy Robinson (Resident), Sarah McShane (Lake Champlain Basin Program Resiliency Project), and Dana Woodruff (Resident).

Betsy Ziegler called the Select Board meeting to order at 7:00pm.

AGENDA

- Review Agenda
- Public Comment and Announcements
- Town Clerk Report: Approve Warrants, Other Items
- Road Report
- Lake Champlain Basin Program Resiliency Grant Report: Sarah McShane
- Central Vermont Regional Planning: Project Proposal
- Constable Position
- State Police Forum Proposal
- Town Meeting Specially Warned Article
- Website Update
- Approve Minutes 4/24
- Other Business
- Adjournment

REVIEW AGENDA

Ross Sneyd suggested postponing discussion on the Website Update agenda item until the 5/22/17 meeting, after the deadline for applicant submissions has passed. **Sneyd made a motion to adopt the agenda as amended. Ziegler seconded the motion. The motion was approved.**

PUBLIC COMMENT/ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Sneyd thanked all those who participated on Green-Up Day.
- Ziegler announced that the Wastewater Assessment is due on 5/10/17, which can be left in the Town Office's drop box.
- Ziegler noted that a plant sale and flea market will be held on 5/13/17 from 9am to 3pm at the Twin Valley Senior Center.
- Ziegler thanked the stonemason who is helping to restore the stone wall in front of the Grace Methodist Church. The cost will be much higher than expected — as much as \$4,000. Those

interested and able to make a donation should contact Melvin Chase at the Grace Methodist Church.

- Alexandra Thayer announced a performance at the Town Hall Opera House on 5/21/17 by classical pianist and composer Diane Huling Reed.
- Ziegler noted the great turnout at last week's tree planting in the riparian area at the Recreation Field.
- Ziegler noted that the Conservation Commission's tree sale was a success.

TOWN CLERK'S REPORT: APPROVE WARRANTS, OTHER ITEMS

- Town Clerk/Treasurer Linda Wells was not present.
- Ziegler presented the Annual Financial Plan for Town Highways to be submitted to the State, which helps to offset the maintenance costs of roads. The Plan indicates the cost that the Town will incur in maintenance and general repairs in the 2017-18 fiscal year. Thayer noted that the State provides only \$91,000 of the Town's overall cost of almost \$624,000. Ziegler stated that road costs are almost two-thirds of the Town's annual budget. **Sneyd made a motion to approve the Annual Financial Plan for Town Highways. Thayer seconded the motion. The motion was approved.**
- Ziegler noted that a meeting took place last week to hear comments on the current draft of the Town's Zoning Regulations. The next draft will incorporate suggestions from that meeting and be followed by a public hearing before the next draft is presented. Ziegler briefly discussed the nature of some of the changes that have been suggested since the last draft.
- Sneyd presented the dates of the warrants for Select Board approval: 5/8/17, 5/5/17, 4/28/17, and 4/26/17. **Thayer made a motion to approve the warrants for 5/8/17, 5/5/17, 4/28/17, and 4/26/17. Sneyd seconded the motion. The motion was approved.**
- Ziegler read aloud a letter from Paula Ackel, who is interested in serving on the Cemetery Commission through March of 2018. **Sneyd made a motion to approve the appointment of Paula Ackel to the Cemetery Commission. Thayer seconded the motion. The motion was approved.**
- Ziegler noted that Plainfield Constable George Cushing is still available to attend the semi-annual constable training. The Select Board agreed that he should attend. Cushing had stated that there were no new problems on Spruce Mountain Road, but that there were two break-ins in the community in the past two weeks: one at the Grace Methodist Church and the other at a residence on East Hill Road.

ROAD REPORT

- Road Foreman Mike Nolan was not present.
- Sneyd noted that he has contacted the League of Cities and Towns requesting clarification on whether the Town assumes any kind of liability or responsibility in posting a "no littering" sign. Sneyd is waiting to hear back.
- **Sneyd made a motion to approve a Single Vehicle permit application from K. Bellavance. Thayer seconded the motion. The motion was approved.**

CENTRAL VERMONT REGIONAL PLANNING: PROJECT PROPOSAL

- Eric Vornald from the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission (CVRPC) was present to provide information about a grant that CVRPC is pursuing that would impact the Towns of Plainfield, Marshfield, and Cabot. The High Meadows Fund has approximately \$180,000 to fund between four

and six projects concentrating on resiliency in a specific watershed. CVRPC is proposing a project that will focus on the upland forest areas in the Winooski River watershed. The headwaters of the Winooski are in this area and the proposed project will look at how maintaining an intact forest can enhance both water quality and quantity to the downstream reaches of the Winooski River as well as the smaller streams and tributaries in the headwaters area. The grant application requires the involvement and support of multiple towns. Vornald requested a letter of support from the Plainfield Select Board prior to the 6/1/17 grant application deadline and potentially for the Town to participate, if the project is funded, by forming a steering committees and providing outreach to the community about the project and its benefits. CVRPC is also involving the Friends of the Winooski as a partner in the project. Thayer requested that the grant application be provided to the Select Board prior to submission and suggested that Plainfield's Emergency Management Director might also provide a letter of support. Sneyd asked about the possibility of the project impacting zoning regulations, to which Vornald stated that some of the outcomes might result in the recommendation of some updated regulations that the Town might consider, but it would not be a requirement. Vornald stated that the grant application would be seeking funding between \$30,000 and \$40,000 and believes that the match can be completely handled through in-kind funds; however, if there were to be a monetary requirement, it could likely be handled through CVRPC funds before asking the participating towns to provide any support. Sneyd asked if there was model language for the support letter, which Vornald agreed to provide. It was decided that the letter would be drafted by Sneyd and presented for approval to the Select Board at the 5/22/17 meeting. **Sneyd made a motion to draft a letter of support to the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission for the High Meadows Fund grant application. Thayer seconded the motion. The motion was approved.** Thayer asked Vornald what new information will be learned from this project given the research that has already been done on forest fragmentation and water flow. Vornald noted that while the details of the grant application are still being worked out, new information may be learned regarding how forest fragmentation and water flow from the small streams and tributaries in the headwaters are impacting that area from the beginning. The project will also provide education and may look at possible areas to implement the research.

LAKE CHAMPLAIN BASIN PROGRAM RESILIENCY GRANT REPORT: SARAH MCSHANE

- Ziegler introduced Sarah McShane, project coordinator for the year-long Resiliency Awareness and Action Project, who presented draft copies of the final project report. McShane reviewed the initial formation of a local committee to implement the project and detailed the tasks that the Town was contracted to complete, including:
 - participating in the Resiliency Vermont conference at Norwich University to generate ideas on what they would like to see out of the project, what is working and not working, and learning what other towns and resiliency organizations throughout the state are doing;
 - carrying out a community assessment survey to gauge people's awareness of what local resources are available and ways to communicate in the event of an emergency, the results of which were used to generate a list of short- and long-term action projects;
 - holding several community events, including two neighborhood watch meetings, participating in Plainfield's Old Home Days, helping to dismantle the old picnic shelter at the Recreation Field; planning for and implementing a tree planting in the riparian area at the Recreation Field; and holding a well-attended Preparedness Party; and

- wrapping up the project by sending the final report to the Lake Champlain Basin Program.

Looking to the future and given the recent break-ins in the community, McShane noted the need to identify a local person willing to coordinate a neighborhood watch. She also recommended holding community dinners as well as having an umbrella event for individual municipal groups in the Town to share and connect with what each is doing in the area of resiliency. McShane stated that one of the last visible projects was the tree planting with the Friends of the Winooski along the Great Brook, and noted the importance of keeping all the recent plantings watered throughout the summer. In terms of finishing up the grant, McShane stated that the financial report needs to be submitted and that Alice Merrill should be consulted to make sure that anything else that is required has been submitted. McShane will make sure that the final report is printed up and available to the public at the Cutler Library, the Town Office building, and any other places that Ziegler recommends, along with making a PDF available for posting to the Town website. McShane offered to be a resource in connecting a local neighborhood watch coordinator to Jason Gould at the Washington County Sheriff's Office and will email Ziegler a list of those who attended the community watch meetings. She will also leave all the paper materials from the project at the Town Offices. Ziegler thanked McShane for all her work on the project.

CONSTABLE POSITION

- Discussion centered on various changes to the language in the draft version of the constable job description, including specific tasks cited and removing the word "anticipated" from the position announcement. The agreed-upon language read as follows:

Notice of Opening for Appointed Position of Constable for the Town of Plainfield

The constable for the Town of Plainfield is expected to treat all with fairness and consideration without regard to an individual's sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, race, color, religion, national origin, immigration status, age, social class, or disability.

Essential qualities for constable for the Town of Plainfield are good communication skills, attention to detail, willingness to be disturbed by calls for assistance any time of day (or night), ability to collaborate with other town officers and law enforcement officers, and an orientation to solving problems through negotiation. In the event that the constable is authorized to enforce municipal ordinances, the constable is also expected to prosecute ordinance violation tickets before the Vermont Judicial Bureau at a location in Washington County when a ticket is appealed. The constable will also prepare a written report to be included in the annual Town Report for the Town of Plainfield. Preference will be given to residents of the Town of Plainfield.

The constable for the Town of Plainfield does not have law enforcement authority, however s/he may be authorized by the select board for the Town of Plainfield to enforce municipal ordinances.

The authority of a constable set out in 24 V.S.A. § 1936a (b) includes:

- (1) the service of civil or criminal process, under 12 V.S.A. § 691;
- (2) destruction of animals, in accordance with the provisions of 20 V.S.A. chapter 193;
- (3) the killing of injured deer, under 10 V.S.A. § 4749;
- (4) provision of assistance to the health officer in the discharge of the health officer's duties, under 18 V.S.A. § 617;

- (5) service as a Criminal Division of the Superior Court officer, under section 296 of this title;
- (6) removal of disorderly people from town meeting, under 17 V.S.A. § 2659.

The constable for the Town of Plainfield may not be expected to carry out all of the responsibilities listed in 24 V.S.A. § 1936a (b) above.

Individuals interested in serving as constable for the Town of Plainfield are encouraged to obtain an application from the Town Clerk and return it for consideration and return it with a letter of interest which includes your skills, experience, and training and lists references. Please file this with the Plainfield Town Clerk, 149 Main Street, Plainfield, Vermont by May 22, 2017.

- Discussion followed regarding the hiring process, including the deadline for applications, where to publicly post the position, and when to conduct applicant interviews.

STATE POLICE FORUM PROPOSAL

- Ziegler noted that State Police Trooper Prack is ready to come to Plainfield to lead a public forum on community safety and has asked Ziegler to provide a list of stakeholders in the Town as well as anyone else interested in being part of discussing ways to make the community a safer place. After a brief discussion, it was determined that a Tuesday evening would be the best day to hold the forum. Ways in which the forum might be publicized included posting the event to Front Porch Forum and Plainfield People. Ziegler will get back to Prack to identify some possible dates for the forum.

TOWN MEETING SPECIALLY WARNED ARTICLE

- Ziegler noted that tonight's discussion would involve any other changes to the language in the Article and hopefully its formal approval/adoption. After discussion, the final agreed-upon version read as follows:

Town Resources and Policing Policy

In consideration of the commitment of the Town of Plainfield to treat all with fairness and consideration without regard to an individual's sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, race, color, religion, national origin, immigration status, age, social class, or disability, it is the policy of the Town of Plainfield, Vermont that:

1. Relating to all individuals, the Town of Plainfield will uphold the entirety of Vermont's Fair and Impartial Policing policy.
2. Relating to all individuals, the Town of Plainfield affirms compliance with Act 5, an act relating to freedom from compulsory collection of personal information, passed by the Vermont Legislature and signed by the governor on March 28, 2017 and that compliance with 20 V.S.A. Ch. 207, § 4651 as enacted by Act 5 is the policy of the Town of Plainfield for its employees, officers, and appointed officials.
3. The resources of the Town of Plainfield are to be directed to carrying out the work of the town. This includes financial resources, money, facilities, property, equipment, and personnel, whether employed, elected, or appointed.
4. When acting as an employee or officer, or appointed official for the Town of Plainfield, a person shall not:

- a. inquire about an individual’s religion or immigration status;
 - b. make or maintain records regarding an individual’s religion or immigration status;
 - c. respond to any request from a state or Federal agency which asks for or requires disclosure or identification of an individual’s religion or immigration status except as ordered in a warrant or subpoena issued by a Federal judge or magistrate;
 - d. in accordance with the provisions of the 1st, 4th, and 5th Amendment of the United States Constitution and Articles 1, 3, 9, and 11 of the Vermont Constitution, shall not detain any individual and shall not participate in the detention of any individual, notwithstanding any request or order to the contrary from any state or Federal entity, agency, or employee *unless* provided with a warrant lawfully issued by a Federal judge or magistrate;
5. This policy does not prevent the Town Clerk or the Assistant Town Clerk from confirming that a resident seeking to be added to the voter list for the Town of Plainfield is a United States citizen solely for the purpose of adding an individual to the voter list for the Town of Plainfield. The Select Board for the Town of Plainfield states its commitment to devote the resources of the Town of Plainfield to the needs of the Town of Plainfield and its residents and further states its commitment that such resources shall not be diverted to the enforcement of matters within the purview of the Federal government.

So adopted this this 8th day of May, 2017, at Plainfield, Vermont by the vote of the Select Board of the Town of Plainfield.

Select Board member

Select Board member

Select Board member

- **Thayer made a motion that the Select Board adopt the Town Resources and Policing Policy as amended. Sneyd seconded the motion. The motion was approved.**

MINUTES

- After noting the misspelling of two names in the draft minutes and including a change requested earlier by Thayer, **Sneyd made a motion to approve the minutes from the 4/10/17 regular Select Board meeting as amended. Thayer seconded the motion. The motion was approved.**

OTHER BUSINESS

- A brief discussion centered on various agenda items to be considered at the 5/22/17 Select Board meeting.
- There was discussion regarding clearly stating the employment status of the individual hired to manage the website as a contractor, not a Town employee, how to supervise and track the work that is done, and scheduling interviews with applicants.

- Ziegler noted the need to define the Select Board's long-term vision and what projects it can reasonably expect to accomplish in the next five years. It was decided that the issue might be addressed in June.
- Ziegler noted that a light at the Park and Ride is broken. Green Mountain Power has been notified.

ADJOURNMENT

- **The meeting adjourned at 8:55pm on a motion by Sneyd. Thayer seconded the motion. The motion was approved.**

Respectfully submitted by Cindy Wyckoff