

**Town of Plainfield  
Select Board Meeting  
June 26, 2017  
Approved Minutes**

**PRESENT:** Ross Sneyd (Select Board Member), Betsy Ziegler (Select Board Chair), Alexandra Thayer (Select Board Member), Linda Wells (Town Clerk/Treasurer), Keith Swann (Videographer), Cindy Wyckoff (Minutes Recorder), Eric Blaisdell (Times Argus), George Cushing (Constable), Bram Towbin (Road Commissioner), Meg Gourley (Brook Road Speeding), Dave Kelley (Needle Drop Off Proposal), Tina Gray Rand (Brook Road Speeding), Vivian Davis (Brook Road Speeding), Daniel Hardy (Brook Road Speeding), Dawn Clements (Brook Road Speeding), Tim Phillips (Bicycle/Pedestrian Grant Application Hearing), and Laura Ziegler (Bicycle/Pedestrian Grant Application Hearing).

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

**AGENDA**

- Review Agenda
- Public Comment/Announcements: Safety Forum Cancelled, Old Home Days Organizers, Skateboard Park Renovations
- Town Clerk's Report: Warrants
- Road Report
- Municipal Roads Grants in Aid Pilot Project Application
- Constable Report
- 2017 Bicycle/Pedestrian Grant Application: The Purpose of this Agenda Item Is to Inform the Public about this Year's Application to the Bicycle/Pedestrian Program
- Needle Drop Off Proposal
- Website Applicant Proposals
- Skateboard Ordinance
- Other Business: Approve Minutes
- Adjournment

**REVIEW AGENDA**

- Ziegler moved discussion regarding the Website Applicant Proposals agenda item to the executive session portion of the meeting. **Ross Sneyd made a motion to adopt the agenda as amended. Alexander Thayer seconded the motion. The motion was approved.**

**PUBLIC COMMENT/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- Sneyd reported on the committee working to come up with the paint colors for the Town Hall Opera House, which consists of David Strong, Chris Bellamy, Linda Wells, and Sneyd. He will inform the Select Board of the choice of colors once the committee decides.
- Ziegler noted that renovations to the skateboard park are coming along nicely. There was a good turnout of volunteers the weekend before last and two major pieces of the project are done. Town

Clerk/Treasurer Linda Wells raised concerns regarding safety in terms of using the skateboard park before the renovations have been fully completed. Wells noted that she has been in contact with Bram Towbin about posting signs requiring that helmets be worn when using the skateboard park. It was decided that the issue of skateboard safety in general would be further discussed later in the meeting under the Skateboard Ordinance agenda item.

- Ziegler reported that she is still looking for volunteers to work on this year's Old Home Days event. Anyone interested should contact Ziegler.
- Ziegler announced that the public safety forum has been postponed until the early fall.

#### **TOWN CLERK'S REPORT: WARRANTS**

- Town Clerk/Treasurer Linda Wells presented language needing to be included during the public hearing later in the meeting on the Bicycle/Pedestrian grant application.
- Wells noted that she has been busy completing everything that needs to be wrapped up by the end of the fiscal year. There has been a discrepancy in the number of streetlights ordered. Once the last one comes in, Green Mountain Power will come out to install them all. At that point, all the streetlights will have been upgraded to LEDs.
- Wells stated that work to demolish the Cameron Road house will begin on 7/17/17 and is scheduled to last one-to-two weeks.
- Sneyd noted that there will be a special Select Board meeting to set the tax rate on 7/5/17 at 7am.
- Wells reported that there was a very poor turnout for the Act 46 merger vote held last week. Plainfield had voted to pass the merger, but Danville and Cabot voted it down. It was noted that action needs to be taken by the end of this calendar year, therefore there will likely be another vote on the issue.
- **Sneyd made a motion to approve the warrants dated 6/9/17, 6/15/17, 6/16/17, 6/23/17, and 6/26/17. Thayer seconded the motion. The motion was approved.**
- Ziegler noted that the Town enters into a contract each year with the Washington County Sheriff's Department (WCSD). The contract up for renewal runs from 7/1/17 to 6/20/18. The hourly rate is \$28.75 with a mileage rate of 62.5 cents. After the Select Board signs the agreement, Wells will send both copies to WCSD with the Town's budget allocation for the service. Based on that budget figure, WCSD will enter the number of hours it will allocate to the Town and send back the signed agreement. Discussion followed regarding forwarding problem issues to WCSD, with the decision that the new Constable should be responsible for that task. **Sneyd made a motion to approve the contract with the Washington County Sheriff's Department for the period between 7/1/17 to 6/20/18 at a rate of \$28.75 per hour with a mileage rate of 62.5 cents. Thayer seconded the motion. The motion was approved.**

#### **OTHER BUSINESS: STOP SIGN DISCUSSION AT THE PLAINFIELD CO-OP PARKING LOT**

- Thayer noted that people are concerned about drivers not stopping at the end of the Plainfield Co-op parking lot when turning on to Main Street. Discussion followed on the idea of installing a stop sign at that location, the added factor of drivers not stopping at the stop sign at the intersection of Main and Creamery Streets, and whether the Town can move ahead on its own to install the sign without going through a lengthy State-involved process. It was decided that discussion on the issue would continue later in the meeting during the Constable Report agenda item.

## ROAD REPORT

- Road Commissioner Bram Towbin reported that, in general, he and the Road Crew have been working on culverts, roads, and the personnel matter. Additional Road Report topics will be discussed separately later in the meeting and in executive session.
- Towbin has gotten all the traffic signs made except for the “no-littering” sign, which is still being designed.
- Sneyd noted that the radar speed sign seems not to be working. Towbin responded that it was in need of battery replacement, which has not been done yet due to changes in personnel.
- Per earlier discussion regarding the need for a stop sign at the exit from the Plainfield Co-op parking lot on to Main Street, Towbin stated that he will follow up on procuring a sign for that location. He will check with the Fire Department regarding its placement.
- Towbin reported that he will be working with Green Mountain Power to eliminate the telephone pole situated in the sidewalk leading up to the Park and Ride.

## MUNICIPAL ROADS GRANTS IN AID PILOT PROJECT APPLICATION

- Wells and Towbin explained that the grant will help with road management, specifically requirements resulting from new State water regulations. The Town’s cost share of \$1,000 will be covered by the Road Crew’s in-kind work on the project. **Sneyd made a motion to adopt the Intent to Participate in the Regional Planning Commission’s Department of Environmental Conservation Municipal Roads Grants in Aid Pilot Project. Thayer seconded the motion. The motion was approved.**

## CONSTABLE REPORT

- Constable George Cushing introduced Dan Hardy, who was present at the meeting to discuss the problem of vehicles speeding by his house on Brook Road. Hardy provided details regarding the issue, including the loss of two dogs in the past three years who were hit by speeding vehicles, noting that many drivers are clearly texting or talking on cell phones. Others attending the meeting attested to similar observations on the road. Hardy presented information regarding the use of speed bumps and/or cameras to help alleviate the problem. Towbin noted that there has been a lot of opposition associated with both of the above options, but assured Hardy that he will make the video of this discussion available to the Sheriff’s Department and State Police so they are aware of the severity of the issue. Sneyd noted that similar problems exist on many other roads in Plainfield and that the Select Board is willing to consider all ideas. Ziegler stated that discussion on the issue will continue at a future meeting and Thayer offered to inform the interested parties present when those discussions are scheduled to occur.

## 2017 BICYCLE/PEDESTRIAN GRANT APPLICATION

- At 8:00pm, Ziegler opened a public hearing, noting that its purpose is to inform the public about this year’s application to the Vermont Agency of Transportation’s Bicycle/Pedestrian program.
- The grant application requests funding for the construction of a pedestrian bridge from Route 2 to Plainfield’s Lower Village. Pedestrian Bridge Project committee members Tim Phillips and Laura Ziegler were present to speak on the proposed project in David Strong’s absence. Phillips stated that at this point, the actual project costs are not known and will not be known until construction inspection and the bids for the work are received, adding that construction costs are expected to be

less than what has been budgeted. Discussion followed on the original and added costs of the project, and how the Town's share of each would be funded. **Sneyd made a motion to adopt the following resolution: Resolve that the Plainfield Select Board acknowledges its willingness to provide the local match and future maintenance responsibility for the Main Street Pedestrian Bridge/US 2 South Sidewalk Project as outlined in its 2017 Bicycle/Pedestrian application and that the Select Board chairperson be authorized to provide a letter of support to this effect to be included with the Town's application. Thayer seconded the motion.** Thayer noted the huge cost differences of construction bids received for other projects, and that hopefully the funding that has been allocated will be more than what is actually needed. Laura Ziegler stated that the current situation that pedestrians face when crossing the bridge is dangerous and needs to be addressed. **The motion was approved.** Ziegler will work with Wells in drafting the letter of support.

- Ziegler closed the public hearing portion of the meeting at 8:12pm.

#### **NEEDLE DROP OFF PROPOSAL**

- Dave Kelley, who routinely rides his bicycle in and around Plainfield, was present to report on the number of hypodermic needles that he and others have found on the side of local roads, specifically areas of Lower Road, Brook Road, Cameron Road, Nasmith Brook Road by Twinfield Union School, Creamery Street, and Recreation Field Road. Kelley recommended determining a location where needles found could be dropped off for proper disposal. Thayer reported on research she has done regarding how perceptions of needle drop sites have changed from what many once considered to be the enabling of drug addiction to those of providing safety to those, especially kids, who come across used needles. Discussion followed on Barre's pilot project to provide boxes in the community for needle disposal, the possibility of supplying materials and training town workers about needle-handling precautions, and the danger to pets. Thayer and Ziegler proposed exploring the issue further, including costs, and Sneyd suggested considering the issue in the context of the safety forum as well as potentially scheduling a public hearing to give people in the Town the opportunity to weigh in on the issue. Towbin raised the issue of visible needle-drop boxes in a town not being a good thing for business. Constable Cushing suggested that it might be a multi-town effort. It was decided that the item be added to the agenda for the next Select Board meeting.

#### **CONSTABLE REPORT: CONTINUED**

- Constable George Cushing voiced his strong opinion that the new constable should receive training and other evaluations prior to beginning in the position. He stated his willingness to remain as constable until the new constable is trained. Sneyd noted that it was already the consensus of the Select Board that the new constable will receive training. Thayer clarified that because the position would not involve law enforcement, the non-law enforcement aspects of the training would not be necessary. Discussion ensued on the appropriate areas of training, including areas that the new constable has offered to pay for that are not necessarily part of what the position would entail.
- Cushing brought up the need for a Skateboard Ordinance in the Town, noting examples of reckless behavior, including those on dirt bikes, that he has witnessed. Sneyd related similar issues on Upper Road that have been reported to him and Towbin has heard of mud bikes causing a problem on Cameron Road. Discussion followed on Cushing's ability to write tickets for various infractions.
- Returning to the issue of training the new constable, Sneyd proposed that the issue be revisited at the Select Board's first meeting in July and that Cushing be appointed to continue in his current

position until the end of July. **Sneyd made a motion to appoint George Cushing as one of two Town Constables through 7/31/17. Ziegler seconded the motion. The motion was approved.**

- Cushing noted the need to recruit for and fill the Town positions of animal control officer and health officer. Thayer will post to local social media the process of applying for the positions.

#### **SKATEBOARD ORDINANCE**

- Thayer reported on her research regarding skateboard ordinances and presented examples of such from Bennington and New Haven. Thayer offered to draft an ordinance for Plainfield for review at the next Select Board meeting. Towbin suggested that if Thayer gets anything from the Vermont League of Cities and Towns, she look at the references and is mindful of any expired ordinances that may be cited. Ziegler stated that while safety is important, she would like any ordinance to be sensitive to the fact that skateboarding is a healthy and positive activity and not be too draconian. Discussion on the language in the ordinance will be continue at the next meeting.

#### **OTHER BUSINESS: APPROVE MINUTES**

- **Sneyd made a motion to approve the minutes from the 5/22/17 regular Select Board meeting as submitted. Ziegler seconded the motion. The motion was approved.**
- **Sneyd made a motion to approve the minutes from the 6/12/17 regular Select Board meeting as submitted. Ziegler seconded the motion. The motion was approved.**
- **Ziegler made a motion to approve the minutes from the 6/16/17 special Select Board meeting as submitted. Sneyd seconded the motion. The motion was approved.**
- **Sneyd made a motion to approve the minutes from the 6/19/17 special Select Board meeting as submitted. Ziegler seconded the motion. The motion was approved.**

#### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

- **At 9:05pm, Sneyd made a motion to go into executive session for the purpose of discussing personnel issues under Statutory Provision 1VSA Section 312A. Thayer seconded the motion. The motion was approved.**

#### **ADJOURNMENT OF EXECUTIVE SESSION AND RETURN TO OPEN SESSION**

- The Select Board adjourned its executive session and went back into open session at 9:32pm.
- **Sneyd made a motion that the Select Board authorize Chair Betsy Ziegler to sign a separation agreement and general release between the Town of Plainfield and employee Stephen Hogan. Thayer seconded. The motion was approved.**

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

- **Sneyd made a motion to adjourn at 9:35pm. Thayer seconded the motion. The motion was approved.**

Respectfully submitted by Cindy Wyckoff