

Brighton Selectboard Meeting Minutes
June 5, 2024

Minutes of the June 5, 2024 Selectboard meeting held at 5:30 PM in the town hall at 49 Mill St. Ext in Island Pond. Attending were Jeanne Gervais, Heather McElroy, Mike Testut, Pierre Gervais, Greg Manning, Noah Bond, Mike Strait, Andy Martin, Joel Cope, Jamie Budrewicz, Stacey Roese, Maria Perry, Rebecca Hinton, Lisa Cooper, Milo Rossi, Henry Sieber, Zack Letourneau, Burton Barnes, John Furino, Paricia Furino, Trevor Colby and Ed Barber. Attending virtually were Jennifer Rodseth, Mercy Manning, Annie Budrewicz and Bruce Webster.

1. Chair Jeanne Gervais called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM.
2. The board approved a motion by Greg Manning to start Selectboard meetings off with the Pledge of Allegiance.
3. The board considered a request by Stacey Roese from the ATV club asking the board to amend the ATV ordinance to open all Brighton Class 2, 3 and 4 highways to ATV's, and to change the times that ATVs are allowed to operate within the town. New dates of operation would be May 15 to October 31, and times would be from 7 Am to 10 PM.

Pierre Gervais had a concern about enforcement.

Road Foreman Andy Martin had a concern about the damage done to some roads by ATV's and the maintenance requirements and said that the ATV club had said they would donate money for chloride to help keep dust down but that no donation was made. He wanted to know where the money would come from for Class 4 road maintenance that would result from ATV usage. Mr. Roese said he was not aware that the ATV club was supposed to make such a donation but that they would donate in the future.

Ms. McElroy wanted to know if you could make a comparison from before opening roads and after opening at problem areas to see what actually happens as a result of ATV use.

Ms. Gervais suggested opening the roads for a couple years and see what happens.

Ms. McElroy wants to make sure that village roads are open for the purpose of accessing the trail and for businesses and services access but not desirable to have them on pavement.

Pierre Gervais pointed out that they are hard to control.

A discussion of speed limits ensued. Sherriff Trevor Colby said the reason his office doesn't recommend different speed limits for ATVs and regular cars is they interact with regular cars, and gave the example of cars having to go around ATVs on the highway.

Mr. Manning wanted to know the law for towns to adopt speed limits, such as signs. A discussion of speed limits followed.

Ms. McElroy moved to open all Class 2, 3 and 4 town highways for business access and services for a two-year period provided that the ATV club will reimburse costs for chloride and gravel needed for maintenance of said highways. She also moved to draft new language to amend the ATV ordinance to change the speed limits and hours of operation in line with the ATV club's request.

The motion was approved.

Pierre Gervais said a number of things should be done as a result of this action.

Review impact on roads after the close of ATV operation this year, rather than waiting two years. The amount of money reimbursed should be tracked. There needs to law enforcement.

4. Jamie Budrewicz asked for a followup on the status of the non-functioning radar sign on Pleasant St. Sheriff Colby said he would get the sign fixed. Mr. Martin said that the road crew helped the former police chief install the signs but then operation of the sign was turned over to the chief.

Ms. McElroy suggested moving the sign because signs can lose their effectiveness if they aren't moved from time to time. She requested Mr. Bond to seek prices on mobile radar signs.

5. Beckie Hinton, representing the Brighton Fire Department, requested permission from the board for a coin drop on June 28 from 3:00 to 7:00 on Cross St.

Approved.

6. Ms. Hinton would also like to get a Fish & Game Club started and suggested that the town forest on Moise Wood Road could be used for that purpose. Ms.

McElroy said that the board needed to finish the forest management plan first. Mr. Gervais moved to table the discussion while the plan is being developed.

7. Jennifer Rodseth said she was having trouble with foul balls from the adjacent ballfield that have hit her house several times. The board authorized Mr. Bond to develop a cost proposal to install a net to protect nearby homes from foul balls. He will also check insurance compliance with ballfield organizations. He will also get together with the school and figure out contributing costs for recreational equipment.

Mr. Gervais suggested a policy would be good for use of the ballfield to protect the town.

8. Swim and Summer program: Mr. Bond told the board that the rec committee needs a lifeguard for the program but has not been able to find qualified person yet.

9. New board member introductions: Pierre Gervais thanked those who voted for him and explained that his main interest are in good communications, planning and budgeting. Greg Manning said his commitment is compassion, fairness and a strong work ethic. He is recently retired from FEMA and worked in grants management and certification and primary focus is review all policies and procedures especially those that deal with federal assistance dollars to make sure T's are crossed and I's dotted.

10. Sheriff – Trevor Colby updated the board on his efforts in town. The town contracts with the sheriff's office for 40 hours a week, but he is billing the town for 561 hours for the past five months because he bills for hours actually worked, not necessarily for what the contract allows. He said that he doesn't really have the staff needed to cover all of Essex County, and he would rather the town run its own police department.

Mr. Colby is applying for a grant from Operation Stonegarden, which is a border security program that will pay for officers to patrol near the border, and the town may get the advantage of having officers in the area paid for by that program. He wanted to know if the board was okay with using for Operation Stonegarden boarder security to do what they would otherwise do on a daily basis in the border area. He said that he's interested in the grant to have office in north of the county, so if he gets from town that they would rather not have free service he would consider giving up grant to provide office to be available in town.

11. Lister appointment: The board approved the appointment of Martin Jones to the Board of Listers.

12. Tennis courts – Mike Strait explained a proposal for how to pay for the necessary repairs to the tennis courts, which are in poor shape. He described a modular surface that could be installed that would cost around \$100,000 and would last much longer than the current asphalt periodic repairs. If the board is interested, Mike will look further into the option. The money would have to come from the infrastructure reserve fund, which would be reimbursed. The surface would allow for use by pickle ball, volley ball, badminton as well as tennis. Some of the money would come from the Opioid settlement of about \$9,000.

Some members of the board expressed concern about using the infrastructure fund for this purpose but Mr. Strait was given the ok to look into the new surface option further.

13. Mr. Bond handed out copies of the Vermont Open Meeting law, a budget report, and the Personnel Policy. Some policies are in need of updating.

14. Town Manager form of government: Mr. Bond explained that the Town Management form of government is different than town administrator's in that it is codified in Vermont statutes and provides that the selectboard hands over much of its authority to the manager for dealing with employees and handling day to day operations. An attorney will be present at the next meeting to answer further questions about the arrangement.

15. Employee Compensation package: The board approved a motion to pay out 40 hours for road crew comp time per employee per past practice. All in favor.

16. The board approved the minutes of the previous meeting.

17. Other business: Zack Letourneau from the water department told the board that starting Thursday June 20 the department workers will shut down much of Blueberry Lane lane for two weeks to install a curb stop. The Water department will hand out a flyer to residents and the action will be posted on town bulletin boards.

18. Mr. Manning stated that he was concerned about good communications with the public and wondered about ways to develop good communication, He also expressed a desire to have a list of the many acronyms and abbreviations used in town communications. He wanted staff to make sure the board was kept up to speed on what was going on in town government operations.

19. Mr. Testut said he was asked about the posting of a 30 MPH speed limit sign on Birch Street that allows people to go faster than they should, even if that is the legal speed allowed by ordinance. The board directed Mr. Martin to take down the speed limit sign and put up a cautionary 15 MPH sign instead.

20. Solar array project: The board was made aware of the plan by Norwich Solar to install a 9.6 acre solar array on Basil Hill.