

SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES
OCTOBER 16, 2024

Present: Jeanne Gervais, Heather McElroy, Greg Manning, Mike Testut, Pierre Gervais, Noah Bond, Ed Barber, Andy Martin

Attending Virtually: Michael Strait, Joel Cope, Mercy Manning, Kathryn Manning

The chairperson, Jeanne Gervais, called the meeting to order at 4:30 PM.

Pledge of Allegiance: All attendees stood for the Pledge.

Updates to the Agenda: Noah Bond requested that the following items be added to the agenda: Authorization for Noah Bond, Jeanne Gervais, and legal counsel to negotiate on behalf of the Town with the Union; Road Department budget; and gym use/MOU.

Public Comment: N/A

Union Negotiation: Heather McElroy made a motion to authorize Noah Bond, Jeanne Gervais, and the Town's legal counsel to negotiate with the Union on behalf of the Town. Seconded by Pierre Gervais, all in favor, so carried.

Road Department Budget: Road Foreman, Andy Martin, requested that the Board allocate additional funds in the Road Department's budget for several items, including salt, liquid and dry chloride, gravel, stone, and fuel. Stores of items like gravel, sand, and stone were significantly depleted due to road repair efforts in December 2023 and July 2024. Andy recommended other line items, including culverts and supplies/materials, stay at current levels. He also suggested salting roads after storms to reduce the cost of spring cleanup of sand (currently \$6500/year). Heather McElroy asked if the Town could begin with certain roads (winter 2024/2025) to determine if using salt had an impact on cleanup without diminishing safety. Andy said he would start with Mountain Street, Middle Street, South Street, and Maple Street.

Gym Use/MOU: Noah Bond drafted an MOU between the Town and Brighton Elementary School for reciprocal use of gym spaces. Greg Manning said that there is a clear cost associated with using the Town Hall Gym, specifically custodial. While there is a Gym Use Policy in place, Brighton Elementary School has not paid any fees for usage for several years. Greg indicated he is opposed to any use of the gym by organizations/groups/leagues, etc., without a fee. Greg Manning made a motion to institute a \$75/per use/per day fee for Town Hall Gym usage, effective immediately. Pierre Gervais seconded. Heather McElroy, a Brighton Recreation committee member, abstained. All else in favor, motion carried.

The Board clarified that individuals may use the Town Hall Gym during operating hours without charge.

Throwing Up Roads Discussion: Noah advised the Board that there is a specific, and detailed, legal process the Town must follow to “throw up” a road, or declassify it as a Town road. Andy Martin advised that this would apply to roads that do not and have not met state standards (VT A76 standards). The roads in question are: Allard Farm Road (1 part-time residence), Paquette Street (2 full-time residences), Bellevue Street (unpaved, class III portion, 1 residence), Birch Street (further end, 1 part-time residence), and Town Highway 32 (1 residence). If these roads are thrown up, the Town will no longer maintain (e.g. plow, sand, salt). The Board wishes to proceed with this plan and instructed Noah Bond to speak with legal counsel first to determine next steps.

Authorization for Assistant Clerk to Sign Checks/Be Added to Accounts: Greg Manning advised Noah Bond that he would like the Board to review the “Federal Yellow Book” (financial standards, internal control procedures, etc.) before deciding on this item. No action taken.

Pay Orders: The Board reviewed and signed the pay orders for the road department expense account and the general expense accounts.

Town Manager’s Report: Noah Bond updated the Board on the MERP grant. The Town expects a decision on the award amount (up to \$500,000) within the next two weeks. The Road Crew position has been filled; Joshua Smith has accepted the position and will begin the onboarding process immediately. Noah also updated the Board about the NVDA speed study. After follow-up, it is likely that this will not be completed until 2025 due to NVDA staff shortages. FEMA has closed the Island Pond Disaster Recovery Center and has opened another DRC in Newport (222 Main Street).

Other Business: N/A

Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting: Pierre Gervais moved to approve the minutes of October 2, 2024. The motion was seconded by Mike Testut. All in favor, so carried.

Adjourn: Pierre Gervais made a motion to adjourn at 6:45pm. Mike Testut seconded. All in favor, so carried.