

SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES
December 4, 2024

Present: Noah Bond, Jeanne Gervais, Mike Testut, Greg Manning, Pierre Gervais, Stacey Roese

Attending Virtually: Joel Cope, Mike Strait, Jennifer Rodseth, Audra Pitts, Mercy Manning

The chairperson, Jeanne Gervais, called the meeting to order at 5:00pm.

Pledge of Allegiance: All attendees stood for the Pledge.

Updates to the Agenda: Brighton Snowmobile Club request to open select roads for 2024/2025 season.

Public Comment: Stacey Roese with the Brighton Snowmobile Club requested that the Board allow select Town roads to be open to snowmobile traffic (for the purpose of connecting with trails). In addition to the previous year's allowed roads, Mr. Roese requested that Elm Street (to Pepin's Garage), Creamery Street, Head of the Pond Road, Arthur John Road, Meadow, and from the back of the Fire Station to Meadow be open. Greg Manning moved to open these roads, in addition to the previous year's, to snowmobile traffic. Seconded by Pierre Gervais. All in favor; motion carried.

Jennifer Rodseth asked the Board about netting or other protective measures between the Town ballfield and adjacent residences. She says her home has been struck by balls. Mike Testut said that the Board had tabled the issue, primarily due to budgetary concerns as netting or fencing would be very costly. Jeanne Gervais said the Board is open to revisiting the issue in the spring but homeowners could submit insurance claims if their property was damaged. No action taken.

Town Manager's Report: Noah Bond updated the Board on the Small Scale Safety Grant; he is reviewing the grant requirements and beginning the ordering process for the lighted crosswalk sign. The monies must be expended by December 31, 2024. Further, he told the Board, per their request, that he had priced static stickers for the recycling center. Mike Testut said that he observed that out-of-town use was minimal and the Town should not spend the money on this issue in light of other budgetary concerns. Greg Manning concurred. No action taken.

Noah also updated the Board about a lease renewal (Underdog) at 2024's rate, and the OIT cabinet. He is waiting on NEK Broadband for easements. Also noted was the issue of rights-of-way or easements for driveways in which plow trucks turn around. These are very few and property owners have no complaints. The Board advised Noah that they felt ROWs and easements were unnecessary in this case.

Noah updated the Board on FEMA flood buyouts, which may affect two Brighton residents. He needs them to provide the required documentation before he can continue with the process. In other FEMA news, Noah is meeting with the approved project manager from Montpelier to continue working on relief for DR 4810 (the first July 2024 flooding event).

Noah also communicated via letter with the one employee who does not receive Direct Deposit. If the authorized signatories are out, his paper check may be delayed. The employee indicated he accepted this.

Noah told the Board that gym scheduling with Brighton Elementary basketball teams and other teams has been worked out, and coaches have access. He also noted that the Town is in need of a new Delinquent Tax Collector.

Budget: The Board reviewed the appropriations in the proposed 2025 budget, including line items for VLCT, NVDA, the Regional Planning Commission, Community Forum, NorthWoods, Restoration of Records, and the Area Agency on Aging. Of note was the Cemetery Commission, which has a reserve fund of approximately \$118,000 (mostly in the form of stocks and a CD). The Board questioned if the Commission could tap into this fund to reduce the \$5000 Town appropriation. Jeanne Gervais suggested going to a Cemetery Commission meeting, while Greg Manning said the commissioners should come to the next Selectboard to justify this expenditure. No action taken.

Selectboard Public Hearing on Zoning Bylaws Discussion: The Planning Commission submitted their report to the Selectboard following the November 18, 2024 public hearing. The Selectboard must warn and hold another public meeting. Pierre Gervais moved to formally accept the Planning Commission's report. Seconded by Mike Testut. All in favor; motion carried.

The Board set the second public hearing for Wednesday, January 8 at 5:30pm. Noah Bond will warn.

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

Other Business: Noah Bond informed the Board that the Brighton Snowmobile Club had submitted a written request for property tax exemption for their property valued at \$71,000. They advise that they are an approved 501(c)(3). Noah advised the Board to be cautious of setting precedents by approving this request, while Joel Cope noted that their 501(c)(3) status did not exempt them from Town property taxes. The Board requested Noah look further into the issue. No action taken.

Noah presented the Board with an estimate from Tardiff's Heating & Mechanical to address the issues in the Town Hall lobby restroom and sewer lines. The estimate is \$2005.87. No Board action required.

Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting: Greg Manning made a motion to approve the minutes of the previous meeting as written. Seconded by Pierre Gervais. All in favor; motion carried.

Adjourn: Pierre Gervais made a motion to adjourn at 7:02pm. Seconded by Greg Manning. All in favor; motion carried.

Town Manager Report 12/04/2024

New Requests:

- **Material Request:** Mike T. requested additional material to be delivered across the street from Craig Goulet's property.
- **Safety Grant:** Currently under review.
- **Recycling Center Enhancements:** Currently under review.

Upcoming:

- **Underdog Non-Profit Lease:** Updating the lease agreement between Underdog Non-Profit and the Town of Brighton remains pending.
- **School MOU:** Continued development and review. Awaiting the school's response.
- **OLT Cabinet Update:** Contacted NEK Broadband and am awaiting a callback regarding our easement.
- **ROW Agreements:** Efforts to obtain agreements from residents have been initiated.
- **FEMA Flood Buyouts:** Waiting for buyout documents from the applicants before completing the town's portion of the documentation. No buyout documents have been received at this time.

Action Items:

Completed Agenda Items:

- **Memorial Park Maintenance:** Trimmed bushes and Christmas tree.
- **NEK Broadband Easement:** Contacted NEK Broadband; easement expected next week.
- **Pleasant Street Sign Repairs:** Replaced CPU board, installed a new radar device, updated Wi-Fi transmitter and software, and added a new 18A/H battery.
- **Marlin Controls:** Requested a quote for safety grant pedestrian signs; awaiting a response.
- **Green Lantern Solar Contract:** Reviewed and sent; awaiting final contract.
- **Newport Ambulance Contract:** Signed and mailed.
- **Pleasant Street Hydrant:** Confirmed with Zack regarding part delays.
- **GLS Contract:** Sent out for review.
- **Newport Hospital Letter:** Draft reviewed and sent to the Board.

- **Employment Letter Regarding Direct Deposit:** Bruce returned the signed letter and confirmed he understands that direct deposit is possible.
- **Communicated to Employee Regarding Recycling Enforcement Starting January 1:** Spoke with Bruce about enforcing restrictions and the new static sticker requirement.
- **Added Calendar Updates and Reminders for Speed Sign Software:** Created a reminder schedule for updating the software on the speed signs on Pleasant Street.
- **Coaches Meeting for Gym Use:** Met with Craig, the only coach with a team this year. His schedule is available on the town's website, and he has a copy of his gym use schedule.
- **FEMA Meeting Prep:** Andy, Charles (from FEMA), and I will meet pending weather to discuss the damage assessment inventory for DR4810 (July flooding event).
- **MERP and GLS:** The Municipal Energy Resilience Program and Green Lantern Solar documents were sent and acknowledged by their respective organizations.
- **VLCT Tax Collector Meeting:** I will attend the meeting in case we do not have a delinquent tax collector by March.