

*(Draft only – not approved by the Selectboard)*

# **Greensboro Selectboard**

## **September 8, 2021 – Minutes**

**[Meeting was held in person and on video conference]**

**SELECTBOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Peter Romans, Gary Circosta, Tracy Collier, Matt McAllister, David Kelley

**SELECTBOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:** None

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Kim Greaves, Josh Karp, Eric Hanson, Lise Armstrong, Ellen Celnik, Fred Mann, JoAnn Hanowski, Jed Feffer, Alison Gardner, Nicole Mann, Rick Lovett, Brian Lafont, Martha Staskus, Kelli Story, MacNeil, Michael Porrazzo, Rusty Newhouse, Judy Dales, Stew Arnold, Nancy Riege, Oliver Pierson

**CALLED TO ORDER: 6:30 PM**

### **ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA**

Peter: new town garage, Bend Depot.

Kim: curb cuts (2)

### **MINUTES**

August 11 regular meeting: unanimously approved as amended.

August 25 special meeting: unanimously approved as written.

### **PUBLIC CONCERNS**

Brian Lafont lives on Rt. 14 near Eligo Lake; he and other area residents are concerned about speeding. According to Brian, no one has seen the Orleans County Sheriff doing any patrols, and he asked what kind of coverage the OCSD is supposed to be providing. Peter told Brian that he can view the police logs at the town clerk's office, and that Sgt. Wells is aware of the speeding concerns in the area and has done patrols there. The town's radar speed sign was placed on Rt. 14 near Eligo for much of the summer. Peter said he's been able to upload speed data from the unit but needs technical assistance to convert it into a usable form.

### **GREENSBORO FIRE DEPT – Chief Dave Brochu, Jr.**

Chief Brochu was not present. His monthly report was reviewed by the board.

### **ORLEANS COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPT.**

No representative from the OCSD was present.

The August OCSD report was reviewed by the board.

### **ROADS**

**1. Road Foreman's report.** Road foreman Tom Camarra was not present.

2. **East St. sidewalks – update.** Peter said after the road crew finishes compacting the base, Perry’s will pour the sidewalk.
3. **Curb cuts.** Tom approved two curb cuts from Keven and Terrie Rich, and Todd and Debra Hebert. After reviewing the curb cuts, Gary made the following motion:

*The Board approves the two curb cuts.*

Peter seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

### **HIGHLAND LODGE SOLAR ARRAY**

Martha Staskus from Norwich Solar Technologies told the board that the Highland Lodge (HL) has submitted an application to the public utility commission for the installation of a 50-kw solar array. While the required minimum setback for such projects is 25’ from adjacent property lines, the HL is asking to reduce this to 15’ along David and Willie Smith’s property line. Martha said that the Smiths are fine with this, and both the HL and the Smith’s will receive net metering credits from the project.

While the project is not subject to local zoning, the selectboard needs to approve the reduced setback. Martha said that reducing the setback would allow the array to be moved away from an underground water line, away from the Highland Lodge cabins, and away from neighboring residences.

Tracy made the following motion:

*The Board approves the reduced setback for the Highland Lodge solar project, as requested.*

Dave seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

### **STEWARDS OF THE GREENSBORO WATERSHED – PETITION TO RECLASSIFY CASPIAN LAKE**

JoAnne Hanowski, co-chair of the Stewards of the Greensboro Watershed (SGW), gave a recap of the their efforts to have Caspian Lake’s water quality class changed from B(2) ‘good’ to A(1) ‘excellent’.

The SGW came before the board on May 12 along with Oliver Pierson (VT Dept. of Environmental Conservation), who made a presentation explaining the process of, and reasons for, reclassifying Caspian Lake. At that time, the selectboard suggested that the SGW conduct wider community outreach to gauge the level support for reclassification. The SGW did outreach and got approx. 500 signatures in support of reclassification.

Prior to this meeting, selectboard members submitted questions about reclassification to the SGW, and the group provided answers to many of the questions. JoAnne asked if there were any new questions. Gary asked what rules and restrictions might be imposed on residents in the future if the reclassification occurs. He also asked what costs there might be to the town due to the reclassification, such as if a lake clean-up is mandated by the state in the future. Gary asked if there’d be any harm in waiting until town meeting, where the question of reclassification could be discussed and/or voted on.

JoAnne said there’s strong momentum to submit the reclassification petition to the legislature now. Stew Arnold said that the SGW has been working on this for over a year and there’s been ample time for residents to digest this. He added that the Greensboro Association and Greensboro Land Trust both support reclassification. Stew said there are four or five other towns planning to petition for reclassification of lakes, and the SGW wants to submit its petition along with those of the other towns. He said that while the support of the town would be ideal, the SGW will be submitting the petition to the legislature now, regardless.

Stew said that the SGW doesn’t have full answers to the questions about possible costs to residents, or whether some land use restrictions, enacted to improve water quality, might be imposed in the future. He said that while there could be some costs to landowners and/or the state, he didn’t think the town would face a large financial burden if a lake clean-up was required.

SGW member Alison Gardner said that Caspian’s phosphorus load is increasing, and if this trend continues, reclassification now to a higher class means that the lake would be considered to be ‘impaired’ sooner, and thus action would be required earlier. Dealing with a water quality problem earlier on will ultimately cost less and is more likely to be successful.

David Kelly said it’s important for the selectboard to support the petition and take a clear position that the town cares about the water quality of Caspian Lake. He made the following motion:

*The selectboard supports the petition to reclassify Caspian Lake.*

Tracy seconded the motion.

Further discussion. SGW member Fred Mann said that members of the SGW have tried hard to listen to different opinions on the matter, and that the process has been a great example of how a community can successfully deal with a multi-faceted issue.

Planning commission member Ellen Celnik said that residents already weighed in on this issue when they approved a town plan that speaks throughout about the importance of Caspian Lake. Peter added that during the Greater Greensboro meetings, the value of Caspian Lake to residents came up again and again. On the subject of potential future costs, he said that given the importance of the lake to so many, wouldn’t we all be willing to put some funds towards conserving Caspian?

Stew thanked current and past selectboard members for their concerns about Caspian, and also thanked the town for supporting the invasive species wash station for many years. He asked that the board support the petition to reclassify.

The vote was P.R., T.C., M.M., D.K. in favor; G.C. opposed. Gary added that while he fully supports efforts to keep Caspian clean, he felt that the voters should have a say at town meeting.

#### **TOWN CLERK – Kim Greaves**

**Re-appoint deputy health officer.** Gary made the following motion:

*The board re-appoints Christine Armstrong to be deputy health officer.*

David seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

#### **TREASURER**

Treasurer Brett Stanciu was not present.

1. The Board reviewed the treasurer’s monthly report.
2. **FY22 budget report, YTD.** Reviewed by the Board.
3. **August check warrant reports.** Reviewed by the Board.

#### **ONGOING BUSINESS**

1. **Junk ordinance enforcement options.** No update; Peter will discuss with the OCSD.
2. **Personnel policy revisions.** The selectboard has been working on revisions to the policy. David said that part of the VLCT template used by the town seems to contain an error regarding the difference between at-will employees and contract employees. He will be discussing this with a VLCT attorney.
3. **New town garage.** Peter said that project manager Steve Pitkin has been investigating the current garage site to determine whether it may be suitable for a new garage. It’s possible that a building could be put where the sand pile currently is. Peter said that next summer, the road crew might be asked to stockpile sand at the stump dump to keep the area clear.

- 4. Bend depot lease.** Mark Snyder came to the board in May, looking for town support for a better lease. While he owns the old depot building in Greensboro Bend, the state has historically owned the land due it being in the railroad right-of-way.

According to statute, state land within 33' of the rail bed can't be sold. The VT Agency of Transportation (AOT) has offered Mark a month-to-month lease that includes the provision that they can reclaim the land at any time - not a great option for him.

David has spent six months trying to work out a reasonable lease between Mark and the AOT. One option might be for the town to lease the land from the state, and then lease the land to Mark. Another path would be to advocate for the legislature changing the statute to allow land sales within the 33', under certain circumstances.

Discussion about the fact that once the rail trail is fully developed, it will likely have thousands of users a year, and the depot could contribute to the economic development of Greensboro by catering to those users. David said the building could be converted to a bike shop, a store featuring VT farm products, or even a pub.

- 5. Zoning bylaw update proposals.** Planning commission (PC) member Ellen Celnik asked the selectboard about the timeframe for moving forward with the zoning bylaw update proposals, adding that the PC would appreciate the board making this a priority. Board members agreed to submit any bylaw questions to the PC as soon as possible.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

- 1. Eligo Lake Association.** The Eligo Lake Association is requesting permission to donate \$500 from the Eligo Milfoil Fund to support the loon program at the VT Center for Eco Studies. Gary made the following motion:

*The board approves the \$500 expenditure from the Eligo Milfoil Fund, as requested.*

Matt seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

- 2. Retail Cannabis - Kelli Story.** Kelli said that retail cannabis will be legal next year, and that all towns will be required to include in their town meeting warning the question of whether retail cannabis establishments will be permitted in their towns. Kelli is interested in opening such an establishment, and said she'd be happy to work with the board to make sure an appropriately-worded article is included in the 2022 town meeting warning.

- 3. Selling the Greensboro Grange.** Someone has expressed interest in purchasing the grange building. A number of years ago, a grange committee was formed to begin a renovation of the building, and a grant was received to start the work. However, uses for a renovated grange building were never determined, little work was done, and the committee has been inactive for about five years.

Discussion. Tracy wondered if the Greensboro Historical Society would be interested in restoring the building. David suggested that if the decision is made to sell the building, it could be sold with the stipulation that renovations be done in a historically appropriate manner.

Peter suggested that selling the grange be discussed at town meeting.

- 4. Length of selectboard meetings.** Discussion of limiting speaking times for members of the public at board meetings, to try to keep meetings shorter. Tracy suggested that such limits be used on an as-needed basis, rather than creating a blanket policy.

**ADJOURNMENT: 8:32 PM**

*Respectfully Submitted: Josh Karp, Selectboard Clerk*