

Greensboro Selectboard

October 13, 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, Chief Dave Brochu, Jr., Ellen Celnik, Sheriff Jennifer Harlow, Eric Hanson, Brett Stanciu, Michael Porrazzo, Tom Camarra, Eric LaPoint, Emma Porrazzo, Caitlin Porrazzo, Elizabeth Steel, John Stone, Elissa Mackin, Linda Romans, Karl Stein

CALLED TO ORDER: 6:33 PM

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

Kim: driveway plowing contract

Eric LaPoint: moving town road

MINUTES

9/8/21 approved as amended.

9/17/21 approved as written.

PUBLIC CONCERNS

None this evening.

GREENSBORO FIRE DEPT – Chief Dave Brochu, Jr.

The September report was reviewed by the board. Chief Brochu said the new tanker has been used a few times and has performed very well.

ORLEANS COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPT.

1. **Sheriff Harlow – month in review.** The September OCSD report was reviewed by the board. Sheriff Harlow said the OCSD has been busier than expected in Greensboro, with a wide variety of calls. Things have been going well overall and she appreciates all the community support.

Tracy asked how it's been working when they're on call. Sheriff Harlow said they've had a few call outs, and have heard no complaints about service during their on-call hours.

Eric LaPoint said he's concerned about speeding on Lake Rd. and asked if the OCSD will be doing speed checks there, saying he'd appreciate the deterrent effect of an officer being present at times. Sheriff Harlow said they are making an effort to have more of a presence on that side of town.

Peter said that the speed limit on Lake Rd. is 50 mph, and due to the nature of the road it would be impossible to actually 'speed' on that road. Josh asked Sheriff Harlow if they could ticket a driver for going 'too fast for conditions' on a dirt road that is steep and narrow in places. She replied that they could, at the discretion of an officer.

Regarding speeds on Rt. 14 near Eligo Lake, Sheriff Harlow said she'd collect data from the speed carts, which the town could possibly use to petition VTrans to lower the speed limit.

- 2. Lamoille County Sherriff – dispatch.** The town renewed the dispatch contract with the Lamoille County Sheriff's Dept. (LCSD) on May 16 to ensure a seamless transition from the HPD to OCSD. In the meantime, Sherriff Harlow has determined that they don't need dispatch services from LCSD – their own dispatch works fine in Greensboro, supplemented by state police dispatch at times.

Kim said the LCSD has refused to amend the current dispatch contract. Sheriff Harlow said she'd talk to Sheriff Marcoux about this.

ROADS

1. Road Foreman's report.

- The East St. sidewalk project has been completed.
- **Porter Brook bridge (over Craftsbury Rd.).** Two separate bids will be solicited, for engineering and for construction.
- Eric LaPoint asked Tom to grade Lake Rd. more than two times next season. Tom said they'd do their best.
- Tracy thanked Tom and the road crew for their hard work keeping the roads in good shape.

- 2. Michael Porrazzo – culverts.** Michael said after major work was done in the town R.O.W. adjacent to his house, his driveway has washed out a few times over the 15 years since the work was done. Michael feels one of the town's culverts is to blame, and asked how culverts are prioritized for replacement. Peter said the town has over 600 culverts and that only a few of the worst ones can be replaced in any given year. Tom said seven were replaced this year. Matt and Tom inspected the culvert near Michael's house and found it to be in decent shape, meaning it isn't a high priority for replacement at this time. Peter asked Michael to inform the town if there are further washouts on his property.

Michael wondered about the town's responsibility when road work changes drainage patterns that results in damage to private property.

GREENSBORO PLANNING COMMISSION

- 1.** Jerilyn Virden submitted a letter of resignation from the Planning Commission (PC). The Selectboard accepted her resignation and thanked her for her service to the town.

The PC is soliciting letters of interest in serving and will soon make a recommendation to the Selectboard, who will make the appointment.

- 2. Zoning Bylaw updates.** PC member Ellen Celnik asked the Selectboard what action it plans to take on the proposed bylaw updates recently handed off to them by the PC. Ellen said the PC answered many questions from the Selectboard, and asked the board to either make changes, or pass it on to the community for a vote. Zoning Administrator Brett Stanciu suggested that the Selectboard hold its required public hearing, adding that the board could still make changes after the hearing.

Gary said it appears the proposed Extended Village District won't lead to much building, and questioned whether making this change would be worth the administrative costs.

If part of Eligo's shoreline becomes resource district as proposed, Gary asked whether the Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) would consider this equivalent to the area being included in the shoreland protection district. Through the 'delegation' process, the town was previously required by ANR to include Eligo lake in the shoreline protection district, but this hasn't been done. Brett will talk to ANR to clarify.

Peter said he doesn't feel entitled to modify the PC's bylaw proposals, and that the most democratic way to move forward is to hold the public hearing and see what the public has to say.

Tracy made the following motion:

The Selectboard will move forward with the public hearing on the Planning Commission's bylaw proposals.

David seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

The public hearing will be held at 6:30 PM on Wednesday, November 3 at Fellowship Hall at the United Church. There will be a remote option as well. Brett said she will warn the meeting.

- 3. Additional zoning proposals.** The Planning Commission will soon be sending the second round of bylaw change proposals to the Selectboard. Brett will make sure supporting documentation is included.

WEBSITE TASK FORCE

Liz Steel, Michael Porrazzo, and John Stone of the Greensboro Website Task Force presented their findings. The group completed a technical review of the existing website, and made suggestions to improve functionality. Feedback about the town website was solicited from town employees and residents.

The task force presented three options:

1. Improve the most-used pages (\$1500);
2. Implement #1 plus add new functionality across the website, with a focus on enhancing community engagement (\$5000);
3. Build a completely new website (\$10,000).

Given likely budget constraints, the task force recommended option 2. Liz added that there would likely be the additional cost of an annual maintenance contract to ensure the website is kept up to date.

Tracy asked Brett if ARPA funds could be used for this, suggesting that the task force's excellent report could be used to make the case that the website is in need of an update. Gary noted that a website upgrade could likely be considered pandemic-related, since so many residents are getting information from the site and attending meetings remotely. Brett said she'd look into this.

The Board was in agreement that a website update in some form is needed. Gary volunteered to be part of this project moving forward.

Discussion of when the task force should disband; perhaps the group could write a RFP as their final project. Members of the board thanked the task force for a job well done.

TOWN CLERK – Kim Greaves

- 1. Town Meeting 2022.** Kim asked town health officer Karl Stein to speak about town meeting 2022. The warning needs to be finished by early January, so a decision has to be made soon whether or not to offer an in-person meeting option.

Karl said that COVID-19 cases have been slowly declining around the state, but that cases have been going up in Orleans County. The vaccination rate in Orleans County is slowly increasing, now at 76%.

Karl said that most public health officials believe the delta variant has reached its peak, and while it's not expected that another variant will appear, vaccination rates still need to get higher.

Karl said the pandemic has caused widespread social and emotional stress, and that hospitalizations for anxiety are up, and drug and alcohol abuse is up as well.

He said the bottom line is that if you're vaccinated, you're very well protected; if you're unvaccinated, you're at high risk.

Karl suggested that a hybrid town meeting with in-person and remote options would be a reasonable approach. In-person attendees would have to be fully vaccinated and wear masks. Every other seat would

be empty, and he noted that the Highland Center has an excellent ventilation system that exchanges the air every six minutes.

Karl said while N95 masks are the best, cloth or surgical masks would be acceptable.

Given the unknowns of the pandemic, Karl said that the town would be wise to have an alternative plan if pandemic conditions in March make an in-person meeting untenable.

It was unclear whether remote attendees would be able to take part in ballot voting.

Gary said state guidance is needed about whether we can require vaccines for town meeting attendance. He also questioned the fairness aspect of allowing only those present to participate in ballot votes. Gary said this has the effect of saying that only those vaccinated can vote.

Kim said the Selectboard can authorize an Australian Ballot vote in place of town meeting, as was done in 2021.

- 2. Printing of town report.** Kim said that printing costs have been going up and recommended signing a two-year contract now with the firm that prints the town report. Gary made the following motion:

The board approves signing a two-year contract with the printer of the town report.

David seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Tracy asked whether there could be an opt-in option for receiving a mailed town report, since many residents likely would prefer a digital version. Kim said that according to statute, hard copies must be mailed out, and that a digital version will be available on the town website.

- 3. Driveway plowing contract.** This will expire at the end of FY 2022. It was agreed put the contract out to bid.

TREASURER

1. The Board reviewed the treasurer's monthly report.
2. **FY22 budget report, YTD.** Reviewed by the Board.
3. **September check warrant reports.** Reviewed by the Board.
4. **ARPA funds.** Brett suggested that the ARPA funds be moved to a separate bank account in order to receive more interest. Gary said the town's investment policy should be reviewed, and questioned whether tying up these funds, such as in a CD, would be a good idea. Peter suggested that in the short term, the funds get moved to a regular bank account that will generate more interest, and Brett can then investigate higher interest rate options. Gary made the following motion:

The town will move the ARPA funds to a separate bank account, and set up a separate NEMRC account for these funds.

David seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Gary asked about the provision in the ARPA guidelines that allows the funds to be used for general budgetary expenses as long as the town's budget increases less than 4.1%. Brett said she'll look into this.

5. **Non-arbitrage account.** There is \$180k sitting in a non-arbitrage account that yields very low interest. Discussion of moving these funds into a higher interest account. Brett said these funds are considered to be a surplus in the general fund, and recommended simply moving these funds into the general operating account. Gary made the following motion:

The Selectboard directs the town treasurer to move the funds into the general operating account, which has a higher interest rate.

David seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

ONGOING BUSINESS

1. Personnel policy – update.

a) David made the following motion:

The first two paragraphs on p. 13 of the personnel policy will be replaced with the following paragraph: On July 1 of each year, all full-time employees shall receive 3 personal days. All full-time employees shall receive 48 hours of sick leave on July 1 of each year. Vacation time will be as follows: after 1 year employment 40 hours; 2-9 years employment 80 hours; 10-19 years employment 120 hours; and after 20 years 160 hours. For the first year of employment, or if an employee leaves voluntarily or involuntarily, employees shall receive leave on a prorated basis. Vacation times and schedules shall be established by road crew supervisor at the beginning of each fiscal year.

Matt seconded the motion. Discussion.

Vote: the motion carried (D.K., P.R., T.C, M.M in favor; G.C. opposed). Gary noted that he voted nay due to not having enough time to fully understand the motion.

b) David made the following motion:

Paragraph 6 on p. 13 of the personnel policy will be replaced with the following paragraph: If an employee, or paid elected official, does not use all of his or her accrued vacation leave in a year (the year ends on the day before an additional year of full-time service is credited to that employee), the employee may carry unused, accrued vacation leave forward to the next year up to a maximum of 40 hours. Any unused, accrued vacation leave that exceeds the amount carried forward will be forfeited and an employee will not be compensated for those forfeited hours. If working circumstances make vacation hours impractical to be used then the Selectboard may award compensation at their discretion.

Peter seconded the motion. Discussion.

Vote: the motion carried (D.K., P.R., T.C, M.M in favor; G.C. opposed).

2. Junk ordinance enforcement. No update.

3. ATV ordinance update. Tracy and Matt are working on an update, which they'll present to the full board when ready. If the new version is completed in time, it could be discussed at town meeting.

4. Bend Depot lease. David said the town of Hardwick apparently purchased the land under the Hardwick Depot for \$1. Similar land purchases within the railroad R.O.W. have also happened in Morrisville. If these towns were able to do this, perhaps Greensboro could as well. David will investigate.

OTHER BUSINESS

1. Town Green. Tabled.

2. HED easement. The Hardwick Electric Dept. wants to bore under Craftsbury Rd. and asked the town whether an easement would be required. The board agreed that no easement will be required in this particular case.

3. FY 23 budget meetings. A budget meeting will be held on October 27 at 1 PM.

4. Eric LaPoint – moving town road. Eric said he's hoping to get permission from the town to move the centerline of the town road 25' away from his house. He would pay for the work, and has a petition signed by 40 residents in support of moving the road. Eric said the road is dangerously close to the house, and he's concerned about the safety of his family. He said that moving the road wouldn't impact any other landowner, and that it's in the town's interest to have a safer road.

No action was taken by the board.

ADJOURNMENT: 10:05 PM

Respectfully Submitted: Josh Karp, Selectboard Clerk