

Greensboro Selectboard

December 13, 2023 – Minutes

[This was a hybrid meeting held at the Greensboro Free Library, with some participants joining remotely]

SELECTBOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Ellen Celnik, Gary Circosta, David Kelley, Peter Romans, Eric Hanson

SELECTBOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: None

OTHERS PRESENT: Brett Stanciu, Kim Greaves, Officer Andrew Gonyaw (OCSD), Beth Meachem, Brenden Beer, Joseph Gresser, Josh Karp, Janet Long, John Reilly, Clive Gray, MacNeil, Mallory Rakowski, Christine Armstrong, Davis Barnett, Nancy Reige

CALLED TO ORDER: 6:30 PM

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

- Peter Gebbie – request that Perry’s alternate plowing schedule
- RuralEdge update on Town Hall housing project
- Eric – VT Bond Bank flood loan
- Beth – approve funding for library gutters

MINUTES

1. November 8 regular meeting unanimously approved as amended.
2. Budget meetings 10/23, 11/1, 11/8, 11/15, 12/6 approved as amended. Gary suggested that budget meeting minutes note that these are working meetings with a wide variety of budget items discussed. He also noted the 11/29 budget meeting minutes need to be approved.

PUBLIC CONCERNS

None this evening.

COMMUNITY WASTEWATER PROJECT – Update from Hoyle-Tanner (project engineers)

Project manager John Reilly and engineer Mallory Rakowski were present and gave an update on progress to date.

The potential disposal field off French Hill has an estimated 25,000-40,000 gallons per day capacity. John was hesitant to provide an approximate number of households that could be served given this range, saying this information would be available in the first quarter of 2024. But when pressed, he said the range would be 100 – 160 homes, based on 250 gal/day for a single-family residence. If connected to the system, large users such as the Nursing Home, the Town Hall with new housing units, or the Lakeview School would reduce the number of households that could connect to the system.

John asked the town to focus on getting the two Purchase and Sales agreements signed by the end of the year, as required by the ARPA grant. While agreements have been drawn up and given to both St. Michael’s Church and Gerard Fontaine, Eric said an extension for this 12/31 deadline has been applied for and is likely to be granted.

John said Hoyle-Tanner will provide a “Preliminary Engineering Report, 60% deliverable” in the first quarter of 2024.

Gary asked how much has been spent on the project to date. John said he would send the town a report.

Peter asked John to explain why the disposal field in Greensboro Bend was chosen. John said finding a suitable site in Greensboro has been very challenging, and while they initially investigated an area closer to Greensboro Village, the on-the-ground analysis found the site unsuitable. The French Hill site was the next closest area that looked promising, and studies have shown that it will work.

Christine Armstrong asked how the service area of the project was defined. Peter said the Wastewater Committee worked with Hoyle Tanner to delineate an area with a reasonable density of houses and the Greensboro Village zoning district was selected.

ORLEANS COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPT.

1. Officer Andrew Gonyaw was present. He reported that data from the speed cart placed on Rt. 14 near Lake Eligo was reviewed and didn't show anything of concern.
2. The Board reviewed the November OCSD report.

GREENSBORO FIRE DEPT. – Chief Dave Brochu, Jr.

Chief Brochu was not present, and no report was available.

Stannard fire contract. Gary said at a recent budget meeting, the Board agreed to discuss possible changes to the funding formula of the town's contract with Stannard for fire protective services. The agreement has historically covered operating expenses only, not large equipment purchases or fire house maintenance. Gary said the current formula doesn't reflect the town's rising costs to keep the fire department going and properly outfitted, especially with the inflation of the past few years.

ROADS & DRIVEWAYS

1. **Road Foreman's report.** Tom was not present this evening.
2. **Peter Gebbie – alternating snowplowing order.** Peter Gebbie requested that Perry's alternate their plowing schedule from storm to storm, so those at the far end of town aren't always waiting the longest to be plowed out. Peter said this approach has been suggested to Perry's over the years. Eric talked to Brian Perry, who said it can be hard to get out to the far reaches of town first thing, since those town roads are not always plowed that early. Brian said during recent storms they've been down a driver, and multiple rounds of heavy, wet snow have been challenging. Snow-laden limbs have also impeded plowing on some driveways.
3. **July flood/road repairs update.**
 - **FEMA update.** While the construction season has ended, work on the administrative side of the flood damages will continue throughout the winter. The town has spent almost all of its \$1 million line of credit earmarked for flood expenses. The 5% interest rate on this loan amounts to about \$4k monthly.
 - **VT Municipal Bond Bank.** Eric reported that the town will apply for a loan from a new state-administered 1.3% interest rate loan fund, designed to lend funds to towns as they wait on FEMA reimbursements. The program has limited funding and while the town will apply to transfer the entire amount of its flood debt, it is unlikely Greensboro will receive will this entire amount.

TOWN CLERK – Kim Greaves

Reappraisal. The state is requiring a town-wide reappraisal and Kim put out a number of RFPs seeking firms for this job. A single bid was received, from NEMRC, who can begin work in early 2027. Gary made the following motion:

The Board approves the NEMRC appraisal proposal for \$99,840, plus additional fees as specified.

Peter seconded the motion which carried unanimously. Gary noted there is likely enough funds in the reappraisal account to cover this expense.

TREASURER – Brett Stanciu

1. The Board reviewed the treasurer's monthly report, the FY24 budget report, and the November check warrant reports.
2. Beth Meachem asked the Board to approve funds for gutters at the library. Gary made the following motion:
The Board approves spending \$12,629 from the Capital Budget to hire Worth's Seamless Gutters to install gutters at the library.

David seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

ONGOING BUSINESS

1. **Housing at Town Hall – update from RuralEdge.** Eric said RuralEdge is moving forward with comprehensive studies of the Town Hall Building. A preliminary report has been submitted and will be made available on the town website.
Discussion of communication issues between RuralEdge and the town. For instance, most Selectboard members and town staff never saw this update, dated 9/29/23, and without good lines of communication there are concerns that RuralEdge will head in directions the town may not agree with.
Along those lines, Brett and Kim expressed concern that moving the town offices to the Grange – an integral part of the Town Hall redevelopment, in their opinion – has not been discussed in enough detail. Eric said improving communication with RuralEdge will be made a priority, and agreed that it needs to be made clear that moving the town offices to the Grange is an important part of the overall project.
2. **Wilson St. Drainage issues.** Peter said Dan Predpall has investigated a number of grant programs and believes the only feasible option is the *FEMA Advanced Assistance Program*. This would pay for an engineering study to find a solution to the ongoing drainage problem along Wilson and East Streets.
The program would provide up to \$50k in engineering with a 25% town match. Dan has requested approval from the Board to move ahead with this grant program application. Dave made the following motion:
The Board approves Dan Predpall moving ahead with the FEMA grant application as discussed.
Gary seconded the motion which carried unanimously. He asked if the future installation of a community wastewater system would impact new drainage infrastructure. Peter said while this is worth considering, a community wastewater system, if built, is years away from completion – yet this drainage issue needs to be addressed as soon as possible.
Dave Kelley suggested that paving the parking lot at the town park could help improve the drainage situation. Eric suggested that the FEMA engineering study could investigate this idea. Gary again brought up the wastewater project, concerned that new pavement would have to be ripped up if a community system is installed.
The Board thanked Dan for his work investigating grant options.

OTHER BUSINESS

1. **New Tax Attorney.** David said delinquent tax collector Janet Long would prefer to work with a different attorney. After discussion, David made the following motion:
The Selectboard endorses Janet Long's selection of attorney Rob Halpert to be the town's attorney for delinquent tax collection matters.
Gary seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

- 2. Barr Hill Rd./gravel for parking lot.** Based on an agreement approved at the 2006 town meeting, the town supplies gravel (not hauling) for the maintenance of Barr Hill Rd. Clive said The Nature Conservancy is improving the Barr Hill parking lot and he asked if town gravel could be supplied, though the project is not technically 'Barr Hill Road.'

Discussion. Gary expressed concern that the town providing gravel to this private organization without approval from the voters could set a bad precedent. It was agreed that since this request didn't line up with the intent of the 2006 resolution, the question should go to the voters at the 2024 town meeting.

Peter suggested that Clive ask the contractor if bank run could be used for the project instead of crushed gravel, noting that crushed gravel is expensive for the town to produce. Clive agreed to ask the contractor.

- 3. Pollinator resolution.** The Conservation Commission submitted a resolution to the town, hoping it could be included in the 2024 town meeting warning. The resolution declares Greensboro to be a pollinator friendly community and would be for educational purposes only. Dave made the following motion:

The Board will include the pollinator resolution in the 2024 town meeting warning.

Peter seconded the motion which carried (D.K., P.R., E.C., E.H. in favor; G.C. opposed).

- 4. Town Hall generator – service contact.** Brook Field Service has solicited the town to sign a generator service agreement. Peter said the generator typically requires only basic maintenance and ideally a local person could be hired to do this work for less than Brook Field's proposal. Kim said it's been hard to find a local person to do this job.

Officer Gonyaw recommended Marquis Electric, who services generators sold by the Farmyard Store in the Newport area. After further discussion, Gary made the following motion:

The Board approves signing a one-year, single visit generator service contract with Brook Field Service for \$531, unless Marquis Electric is available and can perform this service for less.

Eric seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

EXECUTIVE SESSIONS

Gary made the following motion:

The Board will enter executive session at 8:10 PM to discuss a legal matter, with Brett Stanciu present.

Peter seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

The Board left executive session at 8:15 PM and took no action. Eric made the following motion:

The Board will enter executive session at 8:16 PM to discuss legal and personnel issues, with Brett Stanciu present.

Peter seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

The Board left executive session at 8:35 PM and took no action.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was unanimously adjourned at 8:35 PM.

Respectfully Submitted, Josh Karp, Selectboard Clerk

AMENDED 1/11/24 J.K.