

Greensboro Selectboard

June 12, 2024 – Minutes

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

SELECTBOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Ellen Celnik, MacNeil, David Kelley, Eric Hanson

SELECTBOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: None

OTHERS PRESENT in person: Brett Stanciu, Kim Greaves, Josh Karp, Beth Meachem, Jennifer Ranz, Davis Barnett, Kelly Robinson, Raymonda Parchment, Tom Camarra, Christopher Roy, Paul Fixx

OTHERS PRESENT remote: Robin Hardy, Linda Ely, Janet Long, Peter Romans, Nancy Lammert, Kristen Leahy, Elissa Mackin, Christine Armstrong, Jerilyn Virden, Frances Downing, Carl Sangree, Rod Kerr, Elaine Cole-Kerr

CALLED TO ORDER: 6:30 PM

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

Eric: May 17 minutes approval; set date for Bylaw hearing on Misc. Amendments; bid for heating oil; Bike/ped scoping study grant; MERP update (Beth); Rural Edge update in public session; ice rink

MINUTES

1. May 17 special meeting – approved as written unanimously.
2. May 22 second regular monthly meeting – approved as written unanimously.
3. May 28 special meeting - approved as amended unanimously.

PUBLIC CONCERNS

Town hall housing. Jennifer Ranz read a letter she submitted to the Board, requesting that a public meeting be scheduled so residents and landowners can share their perspectives on the future of the town hall.

Ellen said at the April 24 Selectboard meeting there was a lengthy question and answer period about the RuralEdge (RE) project, and until more is known about major issues including water, septic, and parking, there's not much to have a meeting about.

Jennifer disagreed, saying that there's plenty to discuss about the town hall and proposed RE project, and more voices need to be heard. She said the Board voted to support applying to the Village Trust Initiative for the town hall building, yet that same evening they renewed the option agreement with RE, making the VTI application moot.

Ellen said part of the Selectboard's job is to look at priorities identified in the town plan, and housing is a big one. Jennifer said it's the Board's responsibility to give people the opportunity to have an open conversation about the town hall, and that the Board agreed to schedule such a meeting.

David said the Board is going to pursue the RE proposal. People can hold meetings anytime they want, such as the meeting held last week at Fellowship Hall that the Board had nothing to do with. He added it's possible that the RE project won't happen, as there are many things that have to be figured out and agreed on.

Peter suggested the Board hold the public meeting so people can speak their minds.

Eric said Beth and others on the communications committee are going to make recommendations on ways the town can improve communication with the public. Eric said once the report is received and reviewed, the Board will likely schedule the public meeting on the town hall.

Davis said a public meeting would not necessarily be held to disagree with the RE proposal. It's more that the town should consider different ideas before we give away our town hall and village green. He added that it's been said that 'there's no cost to the town' if the RE project moves ahead, but there are costs out there to consider. For instance, if the town offices have to move, that's a huge expense.

Eric said the Board has designated MacNeil and Ellen to negotiate the Purchase and Sales (P&S) agreement with Rural Edge. Ellen said they will be starting meetings with RE the week of June 17. The town has identified a real estate attorney who will assist with the RE negotiations, due to the considerable number of questions and concerns that need to be addressed. Ellen said it makes sense to hold the public meeting once the process is further along,

RE continues to investigate the suitability of the site, with test borings the week of June 23.

ORLEANS COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPT.

1. The Board reviewed the May OCSD report.
2. The speed study on Main St. is currently underway.

GREENSBORO FIRE DEPT. – Chief Dave Brochu, Jr.

1. No report was available this evening.
2. **Dispatch contract with Lamoille County Sheriff's Dept.** This contract covers dispatch services for the Greensboro Fire Dept. and Hardwick Rescue Squad. Ellen made the following motion:

The Board approves the dispatch contract with the Lamoille County Sheriff's Dept. in the amount of \$6,000.

MacNeil seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

ROADS & DRIVEWAYS

1. **Road Foreman's report.** Tom reported that the road crew has finished ditching on Breezy Ave., Garvin Hill, and Cemetery Ridge. They are currently ditching on Tousant Hill and will then move to flood repair work on Bayley Hazen Rd.

David asked about spots around town where road runoff goes right into streams and lakes, and whether mitigation measures could be implemented. Josh wondered about crowdsourcing this problem, asking residents to report areas where runoff is problematic. Peter noted one problem area on Gebbie Rd. where stormwater washes off the road, heads down Barton Drive, and dumps directly into Porter Brook. He said a culvert and some gravel could help solve this problem.

Tom said the annual state grants received by the town are directed at projects, such as ditching, that are designed to reduce road runoff. Grant work this year will be done on Shadow Lake Rd., Country Club Rd., and the hill below Rod Kerr. He added that he and Alan May at VTrans discussed hiring Mark Colburn to do this grant work, with the road crew hauling gravel for the town match. Peter said that according to the town's bidding policy, these jobs need to be put out to bid. Eric said he'd reach out to Alan May to clarify.

2. **Dumping on W. Cook Hill Rd.** MacNeil said trash is being dumped at the school bus turnaround on W. Cook Hill Rd, concerning a nearby resident. Discussion of removing the turnaround in the hopes that this will reduce dumping, since apparently the turnaround is no longer needed for buses. Tom noted the turnaround is still used by the Greensboro and Hardwick road crews as a snow plow turnaround.

Discussion of hanging a game camera at the site.

Davis suggested a no dumping sign be put out.

3. FEMA update – Josh Karp.

- All road damage from the December rain event is identical to damage experienced in the July flooding. The town has been told to withdraw its request for assistance for the December storm, and add this damage to the July event.
 - Josh will be meeting with FEMA next week to discuss the remaining flood repair projects. He’s discussed these projects with Peter and Tom. The road crew will repair some of these areas, with other sections likely fixed by contractors.
 - The state has eliminated the local match requirement for mitigation funding, and will now be paying 100% of project costs. The funding program has an August deadline, and the town will likely apply for funding for at least six projects.
 - It was just announced that FEMA will now be able to reimburse the town for a substantial portion of the interest paid on the \$1 million line of credit.
4. Peter said the site visit and notice requirements have been completed and the Board can downgrade Barton Drive to Class IV if it’s determined this is the best long-term option.
5. **Emergency phone number for after-hours roads issues.** Kim said she’s fine with receiving after-hours roads calls from the general public, and she’ll just relay any issues to Tom.

TOWN CLERK – Kim Greaves

1. **Highland Center – liquor licenses.** David made the following motion:

The Board approves an outside consumption permit, first-class liquor license, and third-class liquor license for the Highland Center.

Ellen seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

2. **New generator for town hall.** Two bids were received: Brookfield Service (30kw unit for \$22,143) and New England Power Systems (32kw unit for \$24,600, or a 25kw for \$18,600). Kim said the 25kw unit should be adequate for the town hall. Dave made the following motion:

The Board accepts the New England Power Systems bid of \$18,600 for a 25kw generator.

MacNeil seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

3. **Heating Oil for town buildings.** After discussion, David made the following motion:

The town will pre-buy heating oil from Blanchard Oil at \$3.02/gallon.

MacNeil seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

TREASURER – Brett Stanciu

1. The Board reviewed the treasurer’s monthly report, the FY24 budget report, and the May check warrant reports.

2. **Childcare contribution tax.** This new tax goes into effect on July 1 and amounts to 4.4% of state wages. Brett said the Board needs to decide whether the town, or employees will pay this tax. If paid by the town, the cost will be about \$1650. Ellen made the following motion:

The town will cover the cost of the childcare contribution tax.

MacNeil seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

3. **Payroll adjustments.** Brett said the 3.2% wage increase for town employees in the FY25 budget needs Board approval.

Discussion about town employee Josh Karp's wages. He is the Selectboard clerk as well as FEMA coordinator, and is paid two different rates for the two different jobs. Discussion of paying Josh the higher FEMA rate for both jobs. Ellen made the following motion:

The Board approves paying Josh Karp the same rate for Selectboard work as his FEMA work.

David seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

MacNeil made the following motion:

The Board approves a 3.2% wage increase for all town employees.

Ellen seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

ONGOING BUSINESS

- 1. Glover property – encroachment issue.** A surveyor has done an initial review of the situation and said it appears there is 'substantial encroachment' onto the town's property by an abutting landowner. Peter said once the town has completed the research he would be willing to start a conversation with the property owners. If the Board approves, the town could offer to sell them a few additional acres around their property, land the town has no need for. It would have to be determined who pays for a new survey, and the purchase price for the land would have to be negotiated. David made the following motion:

The Board approves Peter talking to the landowners, explaining what lawyers and surveyors have said about the deed, and work out a solution to solve the encroachment.

MacNeil seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Jennifer asked whether this land has been looked at for housing. Peter said this particular piece is basically a wetland, and is not the larger parcel adjacent to Rt. 16 that was discussed at earlier meetings.

- 2. Interim Selectboard member.** While a few residents have expressed interest, no letters of interest have been received to date.
- 3. New town attorney.** Eric reported that Kevin Kite agreed to be the town's attorney, but that Kevin noted that regular visits to the town offices would be costly as he's based in Middlebury. It is believed that most of the town attorney's work can be done from afar. Brett will follow up with Kevin about an engagement letter. Kevin said he would bill the town on an hourly basis.
- 4. Bike/Ped scoping study grant for Breezy Ave.** The grant application is for \$64k with no town match required. MacNeil made the following motion:

The Board approves applying for the bike/ped scoping study grant.

Ellen seconded the motion which carried unanimously.
- 5. Hearing for "Miscellaneous Amendments" zoning bylaw proposals.** It was agreed to hold the public hearing on Tuesday July 25, 6:30 PM at the library with a remote option.
- 6. Community wastewater project.** Next Monday will be a meeting at St. Michael's Church between the town, parish council and the head of facilities for the diocese. The town is asking for a permanent easement on 1.5 acres of church land for the disposal field. Coming to an agreement with the church will allow planning for the wastewater project to continue and keep federal construction funding in hand for the time being. However, a portion of the Fontaine property will ultimately be needed for the project to actually be built.

OTHER BUSINESS

- 1. Delinquent tax attorney.** Janet said new delinquent tax attorney Rob Halpert is much more expensive than the town's prior attorney. David will look into this.

2. **Municipal Energy Resilience Program (MERP).** Beth said she met with NVDA to review the library building assessment and prioritize work. The goal is to make the library a tighter, more efficient, and long-lasting building that's healthy to spend time in. A few of the projects being considered include a secondary ADA emergency exit and heat pumps. NVDA will help the library develop the grant application.

EXECUTIVE SESSIONS

MacNeil made the following motion:

At 8:25 p.m. the Board will enter executive session to discuss personnel (collector of delinquent taxes).

Ellen seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

At 8:33 p.m. the Board came out of Executive session. MacNeil made the following motion:

Eric Hanson and Kim Greaves are appointed to interview the candidates for collector of delinquent taxes and report back to the Board with a recommendation.

Ellen seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

David made the following motion:

At 8:35 p.m. the Board will enter executive session to discuss personnel (road commissioner).

MacNeil seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

At 8:45 p.m. the Board came out of Executive Session and took no action.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was unanimously adjourned at 8:48 PM.

Respectfully Submitted, Josh Karp, Selectboard Clerk

AMENDED 6/26/24 J.K.