

## **Brandon Select Board Meeting December 18, 2018**

**NOTE: These are unapproved minutes, subject to amendment and/or approval at the subsequent board meeting.**

**Board Members In Attendance:** Seth Hopkins, Doug Bailey, Tracy Wyman, Devon Fuller, Brian Coolidge

**Others In Attendance:** Dave Atherton, Steve Bissette, Dick Kirby, Bernie Carr, Arlen Bloodworth, Mickeen Hogan, Mike Frankiewicz, Russell Jones, Jeff Stewart

The 17<sup>th</sup> Month of the Even Better Brandon drawing was held and J. C. Sharrow won the \$50.00 in Brandon Green.

### **1. Call to order**

The meeting was called to order by Seth Hopkins at 7:02PM.

**a) Agenda Adoption – Motion** by Doug Bailey/Tracy Wyman to adopt the agenda. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Following Item 4 – Addition of Historic Preservation Committee Appointment of 5<sup>th</sup> Member – Nominee John Peterson

### **2. Approval of Minutes**

**a) Approval of Minutes – November 26, 2018 - Select Board Regular Meeting**

**b) Select Board Budget Workshop Minutes – November 20, 2018**

**c) Select Board Budget Workshop Minutes – November 28, 2018**

**d) Select Board Budget Workshop Minutes – December 11, 2018**

**Motion** by Devon Fuller/Brian Coolidge to approve the minutes noted in Items (a) through (d) above. **The motion passed unanimously with one abstention – Tracy Wyman.**

### **3. Town Manager's Report**

Dave Atherton provided the following Town Manager's Report for the weeks of November 26<sup>th</sup>, December 3<sup>rd</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>.

#### ***Segment 6:***

Work continues on the storm water structure at 4 Conant Square. There has been discussion with CLD and Dubois and King on the traffic lights. There is a list of adjustments to be made for a while to get them functioning properly.

***Bridge 114:***

The bridge construction is shut down for winter.

***Union Street Sidewalk:***

The deed and plan revisions have been made, recorded and sent to VTrans for review. Once they are approved the Town will be able to prepare bid documents.

***Park Street:***

The Town received a Finding of No Significant Impact letter from the Agency of Natural Resources on the proposed improvement project. There has been email from Historic Preservation requesting the swale not be installed. Mr. Atherton noted there is grant money connected to this item.

***Recreation Department News:***

On December 27<sup>th</sup>, the Brandon Rec will bus 6<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> graders to Rutland for pizza and bowling. The cost is \$15.00 for transportation, pizza, drinks and bowling for 2 hours on a winter vacation afternoon. The Brandon Rec Youth Theatre is presenting “Fantastic Mr. Fox” at the Town Hall on January 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>. Come see the directorial debut of OV Walking Stick Theatre alum, Lennon Philo, as he leads this group of 28 actors and actresses. Tickets are \$5.00 at the door. Quiz Night League with the Brandon Free Public Library starts January 6<sup>th</sup> at Center Street Bar. Registration for 1 – 5 person teams is open and the first 10 to sign up get to participate in the 6-week offering to crown the trivia champs. Winter Registration for the Winter Cornhole League at the Brandon Town Hall opened last week. The first night will be January 8<sup>th</sup> at 7PM. This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> winter for this popular adult recreation offering. Try-outs for Brandon Idol singing competition starts January 12<sup>th</sup> at the Brandon Town Hall. People will register and have a chance to sing in front of a panel of judges and a live audience, with 7 picked to participate in a monthly competition to sing songs across multiple genres and a winner will be crowned at the 2019 Brandon Carnival. U6, U8 and U10 basketball starts on January 5<sup>th</sup>. The Brandon Rec has scheduled a Celtics vs. the Houston Rockets bus trip for a game in March, with 26 tickets remaining. Details of the June 21<sup>st</sup> through 23<sup>rd</sup> Gettysburg trip is available on the Town’s website. Brandon Rec also has Flagship Cinema Movie Money Bonanza booklets on sale for \$25.00 that are good through April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

***Other News:***

Work is being done on updating the Town Personnel policy that was from 1988. Mr. Atherton has sent the draft policy to the Town’s attorney for review. Mr. Atherton attended a VHCB meeting at the Brandon Inn to discuss the Kennedy Park repairs after tropical storm Irene. The VHCB played a vital role in the grant that originally built the park and they monitor it on a yearly basis. The Town has started negotiation with the new Police union. There have been three

budget workshops held in developing the FY2020 budget. The process is going well with positive input being received.

Devon Fuller asked how far down Union Street the sidewalk project would be going. Mr. Atherton advised it will be done from the first turn on Barlow Avenue to the red house. The next phase will go down along the river to Maple Street. The railroad has indicated they will put the sidewalk in when they do their upgrade. Brian Coolidge stated there have been quite a few complaints about traffic lights. Doug Bailey confirmed that once the Union Street sidewalk project is complete, the requirement of the grant from the State would be satisfied. Mr. Bailey requested Mr. Atherton provide details on the adjustments to be made to the traffic lights. Mr. Atherton advised the engineers are working on this issue, as the Town does not have control over the lights at this point.

Bernie Carr read the following letter that was sent to The Reporter: *“Have you heard anyone talking about them? What the heck let’s talk some more. There has been much frustration and confusion since the lights came online a couple weeks ago. Many of you talked with me and gave me insight to pass on to Casella and the lighting engineers. That truly has been helpful. The lights need to be on 24/7 for thirty days, per federal contract, to identify and work out the kinks and issues that arise with normal Brandon traffic flow.*

*Engineers are working on many of the concerns that were relayed to them. They’re adjusting the timing and adding informative signage to help with the flow. They are extending the left turn lane at Carver Street, when heading north, to include the left turn onto Union Street. Both turns will be accessible with the left turn arrow light. There will then be a separate north bound lane. New line painting will be done this Thursday to extend the left turn lane markings, increase the size of the stop bars, paint in the crosswalks and incorporate a right hand fog line. These will all make it a little easier for us to navigate more comfortably through the intersections. Also the odd little “No left turn” sign in the north bound lane on Franklin Street sign will be removed.*

*I live on Carver Street and have our shop here in downtown and going through the lights, have had an average of 30-60 second waits and nothing more than two minutes. Pre-segment 6 we dealt with much worse, at the Whittaker and Bar Harbor Bank corners, AND they had much more dangerous and difficult sight lines. Someone reported seeing cars stuck in Hannafords & Riteaid because of the vehicles on Union, but they would also have been backed up at Whittaker's and Bar Harbor Bank corners before any of this was done. Now when the signal turns all those vehicles will be able to go through the light, because the light will not change to red again until the camera sees that the lanes have been cleared. After the 30 day trial period, the town will have the ability to have the lights go to flashing during slower traffic times and active during our “rush hours”.*

*We’re all a little frustrated with the lights but they will go hand in hand with the pedestrian upgrades that this project is finally bringing to Brandon. I lived my whole life negotiating this asphalt jungle, with huge swaths of roadway and sidewalk and absolutely no delineation as to which was which, people passing on the right everywhere, no curbs or green spaces to provide safe walking and no green, attractive streetscape to entice travelers to stop and walk our classic little town.*

*So many locals and visitors are commenting on how nice it will be to wander through the village and sit and spend some time and, like the storm water and sewage upgrades, its one more example of how this project puts us so far ahead of the rest of Vermont. After five straight years of construction in and around the downtown I'm very proud of all of us, because, on the whole, the town has soldiered on, with the traffic delays and the traffic lights being the major talking points. Plans are being worked on over the winter to ameliorate the traffic issues as much as is possible for 2019.*

*So stay the course! It's the holiday season, be patient, kind and thoughtful and please don't be naughty. A quick reminder, your current town manager, public works director and select board inherited this project that has been 30 years in the making. It was all adopted by the voters in town and they are doing their best to implement the plans while also tweaking it where possible. So send them a Christmas card and a little pat on the back. Dave Conger stated lights are not a traffic calming devices, they are a traffic controlling device."*

Doug Bailey stated a general comment he has heard is that the lights are still on at 9PM and there are few cars on the road at that time. If a change could be made sooner, it would be better. Mr. Atherton advised the lights could go in flash mode at night, but the crosswalk signals do not work when in flash mode. Bernie Carr stated the crosswalks will come into play during the busier times of day. Mr. Bailey thought the Carver Street light will be good once it has been adjusted and with Park Street realigned, people can make a right turn on red, unless there is a sign indicating no turn on red. Mr. Carr advised that when the lights are flashing, the no turn on red changes to a stop and go. Dave Atherton advised that a 15 mph speed sign has been placed in the parking lot near the park and when doing the traffic policy, the Select Board could consider keeping the lower speed limit, as the parking area will be a high pedestrian area. Steve Bissette asked if the crosswalks are going to be done all the way through town and Mr. Carr advised they will be done at the lit intersections, but he was not sure how much they can do at this time. The question was raised why there are signs for no right turn on red and it was noted that this is due to traffic turning on to a main highway. Mr. Hopkins noted that one can turn right on red from Park Street on to the main highway. Mr. Carr stated there will be more discussion with the engineers concerning these lights.

#### **4. Comments for Items Not on the Agenda**

Devon Fuller advised the Downtown Brandon Alliance (DBA) has applied for a \$25,000.00 National Life grant, with the assistance of Christy Gahagan for engineering and design of a nine-acre parcel behind the Smith Block that will be called "The Hub". There was a design committee that had begun development of the Brandon greenways, which are walking paths that would connect walkways and roadways that exist and the idea is for it to start it from this Hub area. The grant will provide for design of the walkways, with the intent to pursue purchase of the 9-acre parcel. The DBA would raise money to purchase the property and then donate it to the Town once the walkways and pathways are developed. Mr. Fuller will keep the Select Board informed if the grant is obtained and the Board can then consider how to support the project.

#### **5. Historic Preservation Appointment**

Jeff Stewart advised that in order to be a certified local government there has to be a Historic Preservation Committee with five members. Blaine Cliver has retired from the Committee and the Select Board was requested to approve the appointment of John Peterson. Mr. Stewart advised Mr. Peterson is a history teacher and would be a great asset to the Committee.

**Motion** by Doug Bailey/Tracy Wyman to appoint John Peterson to the Historic Preservation Committee. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Dave Atherton stated the Historic Preservation Committee has had sparse meetings and he has been asked if the Committee has been meeting quarterly. Jeff Stewart advised the Committee is meeting on a more regular basis now and will maintain minutes of the meetings. Mr. Atherton advised the Historic Preservation Committee allows for the Town to have a downtown designation and this status has brought a lot of benefits to the Town. The current members of the Committee are Jeff Stewart, Frank Bump, Richard Baker and Lance Mead.

Doug Bailey noted the Select Board has had discussion of requesting the Town's committees provide the Select Board with periodic updates and suggested all committees that are Town appointed provide an update once or twice a year to the Select Board to provide the Select Board the ability to assist the committees in their work. Mr. Stewart advised this Committee has a number of things they are looking into such as state funding for historic signs, a barn survey, a quarry survey and reviewing the historic buildings to assure they are recognized. The Town currently has over 240 buildings in the National Register. Mr. Stewart noted the Committee has a good working relation with the State Historic Preservation Committee.

## **6. Assessors Errors and Omissions**

**Motion** by Devon Fuller/Doug Bailey to ratify the Assessor's list of errors and omissions as presented. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Devon Fuller asked if this would affect the tax rate and Mr. Atherton advised it would not affect the tax rate, only the amount collected. He noted there will likely be more changes forthcoming.

## **7. Approve Purchase and Sale Contract for Real Estate Conveyance**

Dave Atherton reported the Town has received an offer on two more swamp lots the Town owns. A tax map outlining the lots was provided to the Select Board. Mr. Atherton noted the lots are landlocked with one abutting Otter Creek and this is the best the Town can do on these lots. Mr. Atherton advised the Town acquired these lots in a tax sale in 1958 and there has not been taxes collected on them since that time.

**Motion** by Tracy Wyman/Brian Coolidge to approve the Purchase and Sale Contract for real estate conveyance to Barry and Julie Delphia in the amount of \$1,500.00 for the parcels as depicted on the Brandon tax map. **The motion passed unanimously.**

**Motion** by Tracy Wyman/Doug Bailey to approve the 1061 notice for the transaction. **The motion passed unanimously.**

## 8. Fiscal

### *a) General Fund Warrant – December 18, 2018 - \$122,690.88*

**Motion** by Brian Coolidge/Devon Fuller to approve the General Fund warrant of December 18, 2018 in the amount of \$122,690.88. **The motion passed unanimously.**

### *b) Route 7 Construction Warrant – December 18, 2018 - \$812,965.97*

**Motion** by Doug Bailey/Brian Coolidge to approve the Route 7 Construction warrant of December 18, 2018 in the amount of \$812,965.97. **The motion passed with one abstention – Tracy Wyman.**

### *c) Bridge 114 Warrant – December 18, 2018 - \$32,247.69*

**Motion** by Tracy Wyman/Devon Fuller to approve the Bridge 114 warrant of December 18, 2018 in the amount of \$32,247.69. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Dave Atherton advised the project has to be completed in June and Casella's may be the vendor finishing the project.

## 9. Adjournment

**Motion** by Brian Coolidge/Tracy Wyman to adjourn the Select Board meeting at 7:40PM. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,

Charlene Bryant  
Recording Secretary