

**Brandon Select Board Meeting
March 25, 2019**

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

Board Members In Attendance: Doug Bailey, Seth Hopkins, Tracy Wyman, Brian Coolidge, Tim Guiles

Others In Attendance: Dave Atherton, Bernie Carr, Sue Gage, Jeff Stewart, Steve Bissette, Mike Frankiewicz, Bill Moore, Dick Kirby, Jackie Savela, Matt Bonner, Brent Buehler, Josh Quinn, Ron Smith, Danielle O’Neil, Russell Jones

1. Call to order

The meeting was called to order by Seth Hopkins at 7:00PM.

a) Agenda Adoption – Motion by Brian Coolidge/Doug Bailey to adopt the agenda as amended. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Move Item 5: Fiscal Year 2019 Auditor Presentation following Item 2: Approval of Minutes.

2. Approval of Minutes

a) Approval of Minutes – March 11, 2019 - Select Board Meeting

Motion by Tracy Wyman/Doug Bailey to approve the March 11, 2019 Select Board minutes. **The motion passed unanimously.**

5. Fiscal Year 2018 Auditor Presentation

Sue Gage provided a copy of the audit report to Select Board members and introduced the auditors from H. R. Smith. Ms. Gage noted they did a great job and the audit went very smoothly. Seth Hopkins thanked the auditors for attending the meeting. Josh Quinn provided a brief overview of the audit beginning with the balance sheet that provided an overall view of the funds. He noted there was \$2.6 million at the end of the year, with a fund balance of \$604 thousand, with a positive change from last year of \$57 thousand. The transportation grant fund is the major fund for Segment 6. In the general fund, there is a detailed view of the revenues and expenditures, which is the way Sue Gage and Jackie Savela have it set up in the Town’s system. Mr. Quinn advised there are several notes that provide explanations of terms, GASBE requirements and information about the short-term and long-term debt. Seth Hopkins stated this is the easiest audit the Town has had and the audit is available to anyone who would like to see it. Mr. Quinn stated Ms. Gage and Ms. Savela were very responsive and he appreciated their hard work. Ron Smith noted the amount of debt is not a concern due to the number of construction projects being done. Mr. Smith stated with long-term investments, using long-term debt for long-

term projects protects the business and cash flow. Mr. Smith will provide the Board a schedule of the range for debt and statutory limit. Mr. Hopkins stated the current audit firm is contracted for three years. Mr. Hopkins thanked Ms. Gage and Ms. Savela for their assistance with facilitating the completion of the auditors' work. Dave Atherton advised the amount paid for this audit is about 3 times less than the previous auditor's fee.

3. Town Manager's Report

Dave Atherton provided the following Town Manager's report for the weeks of March 11th and March 18th.

Union Street Sidewalk:

The RFQ for inspection engineering was sent out on March 12th, with responses to be submitted within 3 weeks.

Park Street:

Aldrich & Elliott will be the inspection engineers on the project. The Town is still waiting for the NEPA document from Historic Preservation.

Newton Road:

Two of the three appraisals have been completed. Mr. Atherton will be setting up appointments with homeowners to discuss. VPR will be doing a story on what the Town has done regarding flood resiliency and will include interviews with Newton Road residents.

Segment 6:

The project resumed on March 18th. A pre-construction public meeting was held.

Other Happenings:

As of 3/21/19, there are 6 properties remaining on the current tax sale list in the amount of \$24,786.40. The tax sale is scheduled for April 5th. The Sanderson Bridge has been repaired. Thanks to Wright Construction for a speedy repair and great job. Mr. Atherton attended the RRPC Board meeting on March 19th. VTrans did a presentation on autonomous vehicles. There was discussion on solar panel language for preferred sitings. There was also a meeting on the Otter Creek Watershed to discuss forming an Ad Hoc Committee and a summary of grant funding that has been spent on restoration and run-off projection within the OC Watershed. The annual Local Emergency Management Plan has been completed and implemented with suggested changes and forms to keep the Town current. This is a big part in keeping the ERAF percentage up.

Recreation Department News:

Upcoming community events at the Town Hall include: Wildlife Encounters on April 5th @ 6:30PM that is a family-friendly wildlife presentation at a cost of \$5/person, Brandon Idol's 3rd concert (Blues for Breakfast) on April 6th @ 7:00PM, a volunteer recruitment day on April 20th @ 6PM with childcare provided. This will be a community event to have local organizations and community members connect to find the right volunteer opportunities.

An Actors Workshop will be held during April vacation for the local youth thespians to work on their acting skills. April Break "A Week of Fun" vacation camp with Kim Hewitt will be held at the Compass Music and Arts Center. There will be baseball field cleanup held on April 20th.

Seth Hopkins questioned whether the \$34,786.00 for the tax sale is the amount of taxes that are not in a payment plan with everything else is either current or in a payment plan. Mr. Atherton confirmed that was correct and is for last year's taxes. Mr. Hopkins also requested a status of the work the Energy Committee is doing with solar sites. Mr. Atherton reported they have reached out to homeowners on this subject. It was recommended to have someone from the Energy Committee present at the next meeting to provide an update.

Doug Bailey questioned the funding for the Sanderson Bridge repair. Mr. Atherton reported VLCT already paid the Town, as it was an insurance payment. VLCT will recoup funds from the insurance company of the person that damaged the bridge. Mr. Bailey questioned if the Select Board can assist with NEPA information for Park Street. Mr. Atherton he has reached out to the local legislator; however, there is nothing further that can be done as it is in historic review. Due to the project having both state and federal funding, it has to go through both state and federal historic review. In speaking with VTrans, Mr. Atherton was advised this used to be a 40-day process, but is now 140 days. Mr. Atherton reported there will still be work done on Route 73 paving this year, but the completion of the project will not be final until 2020. This was a VTrans decision separate from the Town's project. Doug Bailey asked if there is an estimate of the Town's share for the Union Street Sidewalk project. Mr. Atherton advised this project was developed 3 years ago and was part of an Article, so the Town has the money for the match. Mr. Atherton will research the information and advise the Select Board.

4. Public Comment and Participation

Compliments were expressed to the road crew, who have been putting in long hours during the recent storms.

6. Tax Stabilization: Smith Block LLC

Bill Moore, Economic Development Manager, advised this request was approved last year. The total invoices for the project are above \$1 million and according to the policy, would allow Smith Block LLC to have 9 years of stabilization. Matt Bonner was present to answer any questions the Select Board had. The Town Manager and Economic Development Manager had signed off on this item. Mr. Moore advised this starts a new period and sustained one year based on last years' investments. Seth Hopkins thanked Mr. Bonner for attending and for investing in a property in Town. Doug Bailey appreciated this kind of investment in the Town and asked if the tax stabilization helped Mr. Bonner choose this project over some other options. Mr. Bonner

stated it is a great program and was one of a number of things. The project will be putting twelve 2-bedroom apartments in the downtown. Mr. Moore stated Rutland County needs rentals and this type of downtown rental property helps to grow a vibrant downtown and will help transform the Town. Mr. Bailey stated the only comment he has heard is concern about parking issues. Mr. Bonner advised they are working on a solution to have off-street parking, in addition to municipal parking. Mr. Moore noted Mr. Bonner is aware of the concern and will be sensitive to the issue. Tim Guiles asked what the rent rates will be. Mr. Bonner stated the rent will vary widely due to the size of the units. Mr. Moore noted the project will fill once construction is complete.

Motion by Brian Coolidge/Doug Bailey to approve the tax stabilization for Smith Block LLC as presented. **The motion passed unanimously.**

7. Speed Limit Reduction in Route 7 Construction Area

Dave Atherton advised this is the same request that came before the Board last year to reduce the speed limit during the construction season from 25mph to 15mph to keep the area safe.

Motion by Tracy Wyman/Tim Guiles to approve the speed limit reduction in the Route 7 construction area to 15mph. **The motion passed unanimously.**

8. Road Posting Proposed Changes

Dave Atherton stated after the road posting approval at the last meeting, there was continued discussion of trucks getting into the gravel pit on Town Farm Road. Due to the issue of the road not being able to hold the trucks anymore, it was decided to open North Street the entire way, keep Newton Road open and close off Town Farm Road from Newton Road to Route 73. This would leave Town Farm Road open from Richmond Road to Newton Road to allow trucks to get into the pit. Mr. Atherton noted the change seems to be working. Seth Hopkins thanked the Town Manager for coming up with an alternate plan. Tracy Wyman stated as long as trucks can get in and out of the pit, it is acceptable. Mr. Atherton discussed this item with Mr. Burlett and the State and it was determined these roads would be the ones that would withstand the traffic. Doug Bailey did not have a problem with this change, but is concerned with the long-term and suggested holding a meeting to discuss this matter, as there could be some trucks like UPS or fuel trucks that would go over the limit. He noted the Police Chief has indicated this will be difficult to enforce. Mr. Atherton advised there are exceptions for some trucks based on the scenarios. Mr. Atherton suggested the Select Board discuss this matter in October. Mr. Atherton noted that municipality, state, Ag trucks and emergency vehicles are excluded. Mr. Bailey would like to determine something that the Police Department can enforce.

Motion by Tracy Wyman/Brian Coolidge to approve the Road Postings as presented. **The motion passed unanimously.**

9. Consider Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment Grant

Dave Atherton advised there has been discussion of placing electric vehicle chargers in the municipal parking lot that will be behind the Mobil Station. There is an Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment grant that would require Select Board approval to apply. The plan is to place two fast chargers and two regular chargers in the municipal parking lot. Doug Bailey requested clarification of the types of chargers being proposed. Tim Guiles advised a regular charge is 240 volts and charges 30 miles an hour. He stated it would be desirable to have a charger in front of businesses, so that they can access them while their car is charging. Mr. Guiles advised the super charger is direct current and can charge 80% of a charge in about ½ hour. Mr. Guiles noted the slowest charge is a wall outlet that charges at 3 miles an hour. Mr. Guiles stated the actual electric cost is small and suggested to entice people to visit Brandon; the Town could pay for the cost of the chargers. He stated it is like offering free Wi-Fi and would be a type of advertising. Dave Atherton expressed concern with giving away power to charge a car, as there could be residents that would potentially have an issue with giving it away. Mr. Guiles reiterated it is a small cost and would be more like an advertising cost. Mr. Guiles stated chargers are typically near establishments that people visit and noted there is potential in the grant for businesses to apply for one. Mr. Atherton stated it was hoped the municipal parking area would be the first point with charging stations and noted this grant is a good start. Mr. Guiles thought the parking lot would be a good location and suggested the new parking in front of the Brandon Inn could be a good location as well. Mr. Guiles advised that Tesla has placed chargers in other areas at no charge. There was concern expressed with designating spaces for electric cars. Mr. Guiles stated there are many good solutions that could be done. Mr. Atherton noted there is also a parking area behind Café Provence that could be a location for one. Mr. Atherton advised the grant application is due the end of April. Bernie Carr reported at the last Chamber meeting, it was suggested that it would be good to have a charger in the downtown. Mr. Carr's concern is taking away a space in the downtown and suggested that each entrance sign to the Town indicate to watch for the charging and parking locations. He stated people can wander through Town easily from the Mobil parking lot. At the meeting, the Chamber had approved applying for the grant, but they will want to consider whether to pull their grant application if it is going to affect the Town's grant application. Mr. Guiles advised Tesla has a grant program for the middle speed chargers and they have a cap that is relatively high. Tesla's vehicles are the majority of the electric cars and Mr. Guiles suggested one entity could apply for the Tesla grant and the other for the State grant. Mr. Guiles offered anyone interested in additional discussion about electric cars or to take a ride in his vehicle to contact him.

Motion by Doug Bailey/Tracy Wyman to authorize the Town Manager to submit an application for the Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment grant. **The motion passed unanimously.**

10. Local Emergency Plan Adoption

Dave Atherton reported this is the new adoption of the Local Emergency Management Plan. Mr. Atherton is working on updating the Red Cross certification that currently has the American Legion and Neshobe School, with OV going through the process for certification. It was recommended to have locations for 10% of the population. Work is also being done on the River Corridor area, which helps maintain the ERAF funding. The Plan is substantially what the Town has had with updates made to bring the Plan current on required items.

Motion by Doug Bailey/Tim Guiles to approve the re-adoption of the Local Emergency Plan as presented. **The motion passed unanimously.**

11. Personnel Policy Questions

Seth Hopkins stated the Personnel Policy was re-adopted just prior to Town Meeting and the Select Board has received a summary of questions from the Town Clerk and Treasurer regarding the policy that was adopted. Mr. Hopkins and Mr. Bailey met with Ms. Gage and have clarified some of the questions. With regard to the elected officials, this is something that has to be clerically done and all elected officials have to sign off that they understand the personnel policy. Mr. Hopkins noted the Town used the model policy from the VLCT. Mr. Hopkins stated the policy indicates the office work time is from 8:30AM to 4:30PM, however, the times on the town office door indicate 8AM to 4PM. Mr. Atherton stated there is always someone in the office at 8AM and the policy is a guideline for employees that do not interface with the public. Mr. Hopkins noted the lunch schedule was resolved. Mr. Hopkins has had a discussion with Ms. Savela and advised the Town has employees on all three municipal retirement plans (VMERS). Mr. Atherton reported it was recommended VMERS be by department. Tim Guiles asked why there needs to be three plans. Mr. Atherton advised it would be easier to have one, but people that have already been in a plan cannot be forced to change. Tracy Wyman stated it was suggested to have just one group for new hires. Mr. Atherton advised it would be a bigger contribution from the employee and the Town. Sue Gage stated if one is an employee of the Town, it is a statutory requirement to be in VMERS. Mr. Atherton reported the majority of the employees opted to go into Group C. Mr. Hopkins asked if this is integral to the personnel policy or if it could be an addendum and it was the consensus to straighten this out in an addendum. With regard to the Sick Bank, Mr. Hopkins advised that both unions have a policy that allows employees to give sick time to other employees and it was not the intent to remove this option from the non-union employees. Mr. Hopkins suggested inserting the Sick Bank into the personnel policy.

Motion by Seth Hopkins/Doug Bailey to duplicate the Sick Bank of the Union Provision Policy from the Union Contract into the Personnel Policy. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Doug Bailey suggested clarification for the work schedule and asked if the Town Clerk's office hours be noted as 8AM to 4PM, with other employees' hours to be scheduled by their Department Heads. Mr. Atherton stated they just want to make sure that someone is there, whatever the office hours are. Mr. Atherton suggested defining the Town Office will be open from 8AM to 4PM. Mr. Atherton noted the union contract indicates the work time is five consecutive 8-hour days.

Motion by Seth Hopkins/Tracy Wyman to amend Section 7 of the Personnel Policy to state that the Town Office will be open 8AM to 4PM Monday through Friday and the regular workweek for employees to be five consecutive 8-hour days, with the work hours to be determined by the Department Heads. **The motion passed unanimously.**

12. Fiscal

a) General Fund Warrant – March 25, 2019 - \$64,983.13

Motion by Tracy Wyman/Brian Coolidge to approve the warrants of March 25, 2019 in the amount of \$64,983.13. **The motion passed unanimously.**

b) Route 7 Construction Warrant – March 25, 2019 - \$30,850.20

Motion by Brian Coolidge/Tracy Wyman to approve the Route 7 Construction warrant in the amount of \$30,850.20. **The motion passed unanimously.**

17. Adjournment

Motion by Brian Coolidge/Tracy Wyman to adjourn the Select Board meeting at 8:19PM. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,

Charlene Bryant
Recording Secretary