

Brandon Select Board Meeting December 9, 2019

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

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

Others in Attendance: Dave Atherton, Brent Buehler, Barry Varian, Jeff Stewart, Steve Bissette, Bernie Carr

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

1. Call to order

a) Agenda Adoption - Motion by Tracy Wyman/Brian Coolidge to adopt the agenda. **The motion passed unanimously.**

2. Approval of Minutes

a) Select Board Budget Workshop - November 25, 2019

c) Select Board Budget Workshop - December 3, 2019

Motion by Doug Bailey/Brian Coolidge to approve the minutes of the November 25th and December 3rd Select Board Budget workshops. **The motion passed with one abstention – Tracy Wyman.**

b) Select Board Meeting - November 25, 2019

Motion by Tracy Wyman/Doug Bailey to approve the minutes of the November 25th Select Board meeting. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Brent Buehler requested clarification of the statement in the minutes that the Dunkin Donuts project was waiting for the construction project to be completed. Dave Atherton reported that he spoke with Mr. Dukeshire and was advised that they are looking at doing demolition in the spring with the construction to begin the summer of 2020.

3. Town Manager's Report

Dave Atherton provided a report for the weeks of November 25th and December 2nd.

Segment 6:

Anticipated Up -Coming Work:

- . Installation of guard rail upon retaining wall across from former Mobil Station to include both the main rail and approach railings.
- . Continued installation of traffic control signage.
- . Continued cleaning and sealing of installed drainage, (drop inlet), structures.
- . Continued cleaning and sealing of installed sanitary, (manhole), structures.
- . Installation of pedestrian railings, (bank, Church, stairways and other locations). Have poured stair
- . Continued preparation and concrete placement for stairways.
- . Initiation of addressing preliminary punch list items, (Weather permitting).
- . Construction winter shutdown preparations; it is anticipated the shutdown, except the installation of the guardrails will be Friday, December 13th.

Other happenings:

The buildings at 57 and 31 Newton Road have been demolished. Mr. Atherton is still waiting for a reply from the residents at 477 Newton Road to proceed with their buyout.

Mr. Atherton has been working with Chief Brickell on updating the Traffic Ordinance. It is hoped to have a draft to the Select Board by the first of the year.

A request for bid was put out for the timber sale for the Town Forest lot. Mr. Wyman would discuss later in the meeting.

The parking area behind the Mobil Station is now available for public parking.

Rec News:

. Thanksgiving morning snow squalls did nothing to squash the pie dreams of the racers who showed for the inaugural Neshobe Pie Gobbler fun run, with 48 of the 51 registrants participating. 1st place male and female racers, last place and every 5 in between got homemade pies. Thanks to our bakers: Sue Hoxie, Patty Moore, Liz Ross, Carol Fellon, Greg Smela, The Brandon Inn and Gourmet Provence for their delicious pie donations. Also, a huge shout out to volunteers Neshobe Golf Course General Manager – Matt Wilson, Patty Moore, Sophie Moore, Colleen Wright and Dave Surprenant. This was a collaboration with Sue Hoxie of Maple Run Marketing.

. Registration for Pre School - 4th grade basketball has opened. Our U12 (5th/6th) grade registration numbers are 13 girls and 19 boys.

. The Brandon Rec Town Hall schedule is set and being promoted for the winter season. 802tix is selling tickets for our numerous events and Colleen Wright is doing a phenomenal job promoting and scheduling so that this winter will be the busiest yet.

. Watch out for the Second Moonlight Madness on the 19th with the Brandon Area Toy project filling up the town hall with 26 + vendors. Come check it out.

. Looking to get into the holiday spirit? A Christmas Concert is on tap for the 21st with Santa, courtesy of the BATP.

Doug Bailey asked if there is signage for the parking in back of the Mobil station. Dave Atherton reported there is signage at each end of town and during Moonlight Madness there will be a generator light and a sign placed in the area. Brent Buehler asked if the parking area is lighted and safe to park in. Dave Atherton advised there will be an additional light during Moonlight Madness but the area does have the same lighting as in the past. Mr. Buehler noted most people park in the Mobil station area. Mr. Atherton stated there has been an arrangement made for some tenants to park in the Mobil parking lot. The Town is looking to rebuild the parking lot sometime next year and permanent lighting is planned for some time in the future. This parking is more for an overflow situation and the Town is planning to make it a safe and accessible parking lot with significant work to be done in the area.

Jeff Stewart questioned if the replacement of some of the steps on the east side of Grove Street are going to be marble or concrete. Mr. Atherton advised that those are residential properties and the replacement will be whatever was worked out with the landowners.

Bernie Carr reported a light has been added to the front pole at the Episcopal Church and the Bookstore will be parking in the Mobil station area. The new light should help cast some additional light in the direction of the back parking lot.

4. Public Comment and Participation

Tracy Wyman reported the forester mailed out 7 invitations to the major mills and log yards regarding the timber sale from the Town Forest and all came to the showing except the Ash Mill in Wallingford. The bids were open today and it was awarded to Canopy Timber from East Middlebury. It was a good showing, and everything went well, and the revenues should be in by the end of the winter. Dave Atherton stated it was the normal bid process with the forester handling the bidding that was based on the volume of the wood. Mr. Wyman noted the forester did not do a tally of the timber as it would have been more expensive to have him do that. There is about 80 thousand feet of timber stumpage with a bid of \$610/thousand feet and the logging cost will have to be taken out of that. Mr. Hopkins extended the Board's gratitude to the forester for his assistance in this matter.

Mr. Wyman stated he has received some comments regarding the stoplights. Mr. Wyman suggested placing a sign at the end of Park Street indicating right turn on red after stop, as this area appears to be a bottleneck with people waiting for the light to turn green when there is no on-coming traffic on Route 7. Mr. Atherton will look into the possibility of adding a sign. Tim Guiles also noted an issue with the no right turn on red signage for cars turning right from Union Street. Bernie Carr suggested rather than adding another sign to the downtown, to remove the sign across the street and placing it on the corner. Mr. Carr thought the timing of the lights is much better than it was last year. He has had many compliments about the new traffic lights regarding how they are working and compliments from pedestrians regarding the ease of crossing.

Seth Hopkins reported there have been a couple of communications from Town Farm Road residents and questioned if the Town Manager has had a conversation with anyone concerning sanding. Dave Atherton stated there was a complaint about sanding and advised that this road is

sanded in the same manner as the Town does the other dirt roads. There was a significant ice event a couple of weeks ago and the dirt roads are not great in the winter and the conditions are subject to the elements. Mr. Atherton has traveled the road and does not see that there is a problem with the road. Tim Guiles advised that he drove the road a couple of times and noted concern that the bridge is narrow and suggested making it a one-lane bridge and placing signage near the bridge. Mr. Atherton reported the Town is reviewing the bridges that are undersized with the intention of going after funding to do some bridge replacement. Mr. Atherton advised the Town Farm Road bridge would be one of the three bridges considered, however, the other two bridges would be done first due to flooding. Mr. Guiles suggested looking into making it a one-lane bridge and Mr. Atherton will look into this possibility. Tracy Wyman agreed that it would be good to make the bridge a one-lane bridge. Mr. Guiles asked if there is concern about the carrying capacity with regard to weight limit. Mr. Atherton advised there is weight limit information available at the town office for the bridges in the area. Brent Buehler suggested a sign "trucks yield to oncoming traffic" could be helpful. Mr. Wyman noted the cars, not the trucks, have been the speeding problem. Mr. Hopkins suggested the Town Manager discuss this item with the Public Works Manager about what can be done. Doug Bailey reported that he had responded to Sarah Stevens, a resident of Town Farm Road, concerning her recent letter. Mr. Bailey asked whether the truck traffic is more compared to prior years now that the Route 73 and Segment 6 projects are done, whether there is an issue with speeding and what the condition of the road is. Ms. Stevens responded that she has not seen a difference in the amount of truck traffic from this year to other years but thought the car traffic is less since the project has been completed. Mr. Bailey suspects the trucks are coming from other areas. With regard to speeding, Ms. Stevens feels there are multiple problems and though the Town continues to repair the road, the road conditions are not good with the ruts and holes in the road. Ms. Stevens did note that the plowing has been amazing and much better than in years past. Mr. Bailey advised Ms. Stevens of the traffic study and she was not thrilled with the idea of a 25mph speed limit, but she could handle the change. It was noted the traffic study has been completed, but the information has not been received from the RRPC yet. Mr. Hopkins stated the Town will be reviewing the highway budget and suggested that perhaps some engineering funds could be considered to make the road safer. Mr. Atherton stated this road is not viewed different from other dirt roads, other than the fact that there are three gravel pits on the road. Mr. Atherton advised there is a lot of ledge and swamp on this road and he is not sure how there could be a widening of the road, due to the variables. He noted there was consideration in the past to widen the road, but due to the ledge it was not possible. Mr. Bailey suggested the road may need to be built up, as the grading does not appear to last long. Tracy Wyman suggested reviewing this subject with the Public Works Manager during the budget meeting.

Bernie Carr advised that as of November 30th, he is no longer the Public Information Officer for the Segment 6 project. Mr. Carr is proud of the Brandon residents to get through the last five years of construction in Town and appreciated the support of the Select Board, Road Crew, Town Manager and Water Department in bringing the project to completion. Mr. Carr enjoyed working with Casella and Dubois & King, who have been very responsive. Mr. Carr thanked the Select Board for allowing him to be involved in the project. Seth Hopkins thanked Mr. Carr for his efforts, as he was the sounding board for many people, and it was good to have a point of contact for accurate information. Dave Atherton will now be the point person for the remainder of the project.

Brent Buehler asked if the Select Board had read the recent article about some towns passing a resolution on the sale of cannabis with regard to authority and flexibility of the sales in an effort to keep more of the income in the towns rather than going to the state, similar to the options tax. Seth Hopkins noted that he read Clarendon has forbid retail marijuana sales, but it is uncertain if towns have the authority to do that. Mr. Hopkins was not in favor of drafting an ordinance if the legislature is not going to allow the town to regulate it. He stated in towns that have retail sales, they want the towns to have some of the proceeds, but it will not be the towns' decision but will be a legislative decision. Mr. Hopkins thought the legislature will hold hearings on this subject and the local legislators will likely poll the communities to determine their consensus. Mr. Hopkins noted towns' decisions to regulate in advance of legislative action is premature.

Brent Buehler questioned why some of the listings in the notice of tax sale dated back to 2015. Seth Hopkins advised it is because they are all mobile homes. Dave Atherton reported the Town has had mobile homes in the tax sale in the past. The Town has had some issues with one of the parks where the some of the owners were trying to form a co-op due to the park being for sale. This did not come to fruition and the park changed hands and the Town is now moving forward with the tax sale. The Town has offered payment plans, but owners have to be faithful with their payments and the majority have gone through the process more than once. Some had payment plans from two years ago and have fallen short. Mr. Hopkins stated the Town was in favor of the residents forming a co-op and he is pleased that the Town tried, but it was not fruitful in the end.

Steve Bessette asked if the sidewalks are going to be plowed on Union Street and Mr. Atherton advised that it is not possible to plow the sidewalk because it is not paved currently.

5. Appointments

a. Historic Preservation Commission

Motion by Brian Coolidge/Doug Bailey to appoint Bob Clark as a member of the Brandon Historical Commission. **The motion passed unanimously.**

6. Assessors Errors and Omissions

Dave Atherton advised that this report is coming to the Select Board for approval, as the assessors are fine-tuning the grand list due to the reappraisal. The report includes the data that outlines the values. Seth Hopkins noted the report was well-presented and thanked the assessors for putting it together.

Motion by Tracy Wyman/Brian Coolidge to accept the assessors' Errors and Omissions report as presented. **The motion passed unanimously.**

7. Discuss Green Fleet Policy

Dave Atherton advised Mr. Guiles requested this information be provided to the Board for discussion. Tim Guiles reported he has recently corresponded with a Select Board member from

Thetford who has put forth a Green Fleet policy. Mr. Guiles thought the policy is a reasonable first step, as it does not impose action, but imposes the gather of data. This would allow the policy makers to access the data after a couple of years to make wiser, longer-term choices in possibly transforming the Town's fleet. This policy would not advocate replacement of vehicles and does not suggest greening the fleet, but after a couple of years of data, it could be reviewed whether to invest in greener equipment. Operationally, when looking at fleet maintenance, using environmentally friendly items would be good to have in a policy. Mr. Guiles questioned the subject of retreaded tires, as this would seem to be an environmentally good alternative. Tracy Wyman advised that he runs with a lot with retreads, as it saves money on truck tires. Mr. Atherton stated the cost for the Town is less for these items, as the Town receives municipal pricing from the State. Mr. Hopkins liked the various allowances the policy gives and asked the Town Manager to comment on the collection of data. Mr. Atherton advised the Town already has some of the data, as they purchase in bulk and the invoices are very detailed. The emissions data collection would require purchasing equipment. Mr. Guiles advised that there are on-line tools that are greenhouse emission calculators. Mr. Guiles offered to assist with the data collection.

Motion by Tim Guiles/Doug Bailey to change the title and adopt a Green Fleet policy for the Town of Brandon.

Dave Atherton suggested fine-tuning the policy and reviewing it further prior to adoption. Tracy Wyman would like more information on the policy before adoption. Mr. Atherton would like to talk with the Public Works Manager about retreaded tires before adopting a policy concerning this subject.

Mr. Guiles and Mr. Bailey withdrew their motion and second.

The Town Manager will discuss this with the Public Works Manager and any board members with any questions or comments should provide them to Mr. Guiles.

7. Fiscal

a) Warrant – December 9, 2019 - \$90,973.07

Motion by Doug Bailey/Tracy Wyman to approve the December 9, 2019 warrant in the amount of \$90,973.07. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Tim Guiles questioned the invoice for Brook Field Services and Mr. Atherton advised this is a maintenance agreement for the generators. The vendor does an annual tune-up and maintenance on the generators.

Seth Hopkins reported Wayne Rausenberger provided information for the budget process from the Mosquito Control District that is a 3.5% increase over the previous year's assessment. Tim Guiles would like to see the mosquito issue approached from a health standpoint rather than from a nuisance standpoint. Seth Hopkins thought the Mosquito District has been transparent with the public health impact, noting there have been two deaths due to this issue. Mr. Hopkins stated it is not the goal to eliminate all mosquitos and the District is doing its work on a shoestring budget.

Mr. Guiles would like to raise awareness that there is a right number. Dave Atherton stated the mosquito issues are based on the weather and it is a quality of life issue. Doug Bailey noted the diseases also affect livestock. Bernie Carr advised that it started out as a quality of life and grew into a health issue, as there was no quality of life in the late 80s due to the number of mosquitos in the area. The severe health issue dramatized how things have changed. It was suggested Mr. Guiles have a discussion with the Mosquito District regarding the funding, as the Mosquito District is trying to do the same thing with the same funding that has been provided for the past 30 years. Mr. Hopkins stated there is a funding problem at the State level as it allocates an amount for mosquito abatement and divides it between the two mosquito districts of Weybridge and BLSG. The Mosquito District is being asked to do an enormous job with a small amount of funding. Brent Buehler suggested Michael Shank be invited to have a discussion of this topic. Mr. Hopkins recommended the Mosquito District would be the group to have a discussion with about this subject. The Select Board's involvement is the budget consideration from the information received from the Mosquito District. Mr. Hopkins noted the Town can have two delegates to the Mosquito District, however, currently Wayne Rausenberger is the only delegate from Brandon and anyone with comments or concerns should directed them to the Mosquito District.

b) Route 7 Construction Warrant – December 9, 2019 - \$360,420.12

Motion by Brian Coolidge/Doug Bailey to approve the December 9, 2019 Route 7 Construction warrant in the amount of \$360,420.12. **The motion passed with one abstention – Tracy Wyman.**

Dave Atherton confirmed that the Casella warrant was in order.

9. Adjournment

Motion by Brian Coolidge/Tracy Wyman to adjourn the Select Board meeting at 8:04PM. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,

Charlene Bryant
Recording Secretary