

**Brandon Select Board Meeting
March 14, 2022**

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

All in Attendance via Zoom.

Board Members In Attendance: Brian Coolidge, Seth Hopkins, Tim Guiles, Michael Markowski, Tracy Wyman

Others In Attendance: Dave Atherton, Bernie Carr, Steven Jupiter, Bill Moore

Others by Zoom: Angelo Lynn, Sue Gage, Marielle Blais, Richard Jennings, David Kachajian

1. Call to order

The meeting was called to order by Dave Atherton at 7:00PM.

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

2. Election of Select Board Officers

a) Election of Chair

Motion by Tracy Wyman/Tim Guiles to appoint Seth Hopkins as the Chairperson of the Brandon Select Board. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Mr. Hopkins thanked the voters for approving the budget and congratulated all Board members who were elected.

a) Election of Vice-Chair

Motion by Brian Coolidge/Mike Markowski to appoint Tracy Wyman as the Vice-Chair of the Brandon Select Board. **The motion passed unanimously.**

a) Election of Clerk

Motion by Tracy Wyman/Mike Markowski to appoint Brian Coolidge as the Clerk of the Brandon Select Board. **The motion passed unanimously.**

3. Consent Agenda

Seth Hopkins noted several items are a matter of routine following the town meeting and suggested doing Items 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11, 12, and 14 of the original agenda as a consent agenda. All Board members were in agreement.

Motion by Tracy Wyman/Mike Markowski to approve the Consent Agenda. **The motion passed unanimously.**

a) Designation of Select Board as Other Statutory Bodies

- 1) Board of Liquor Control (Title 7, Section 166)***
- 2) Board of Health, (Title 18, Section 604)***
- 3) Board of Sewer Commissioners***
 - (aka) Board of Sewage System Commissioners (Title 24, Section 3506)***
 - (aka) Board of Sewage Disposal Commissioners (Title 24, Section 3614)***
- 4) Housing Board of Review (Title 24, Section 5005)***

b) Establish Meeting Schedule, Time and Location

- 1) Second and fourth Mondays***
- 2) 7:00PM***
- 3) Brandon Town Hall or Zoom meeting ID #253 279 4161***

c) Adopt Meeting Rules and Procedures

- 1) Rules of Procedure for Select Board of the Town of Brandon, Vermont***
- 2) Reports of Appointed Boards, Commission and Officials to the Select Board***

d) Designate Official Newspaper

- 1) Official – The Reporter***
- 2) Alternate – The Rutland Herald***

e) Appointments (Term ends at first Select Board meeting after the 2023 Town Meeting)

- 1) Tree Warden – Neil Silins***
- 2) Fence Viewers (2 members) – Todd Nielsen and John Reynolds***
- 3) Inspector of Lumber, Shingles and Wood – Bob Kilpeck***
- 4) Weighers of Coal – Lou Faivre and Olya Hopkins***
- 5) Otter Creek Watershed Insect Control District (2 reps) - Wayne Rausenberger and Richard Russ***
- 6) Green-up Day Coordinator – Jim Leary***
- 7) Rutland County Solid Waste District (1 rep) - Gabe McGuigan***

f) Other Appointments

- 1) Historic Preservation (Terms are indefinite) – Roy Murdock and Dennis Reisenweaver***
- 2) Otter Creek Communications Union District (Term is from April 1st until March 31st) – Bill Moore***

g) Approval of Minutes

- 1) Select Board Minutes – February 14, 2022***
- 2) Select Board Minutes – February 28, 2022***

h) Local Emergency Plan Adoption

i) National Incident Management System (NIMS) Adoption

j) Fiscal

1) General Fund Warrant – March 14, 2022 - \$106,128.47

4. Town Manager’s Report

Dave Atherton provided the following report:

. There are new suspended ceilings and lighting in the town hall basement. Mr. Atherton provided a photo of the woodchipper the DPW sandblasted and painted and noted it looks brand new.

. Updated the Local Emergency Management Plan (LEMP) for its annual submission to the RRPC for approval. Not much has changed in the LEMP since last year other than local contacts and regional contacts.

. Attended an RRPC meeting to discuss the vulnerable populations section of the LEMP which was very helpful as there were folks from most of the regional entities like Bayada, RRMC, etc., to answer questions and discuss protocol for when these services are needed.

. Still prepping the bid documents for the Arnold District Road culvert replacement and hope to have this posted by the end of March. Mr. Atherton will have to meet with a couple of landowners for temporary easements.

. DPW used their time during winter operations to rebuild and repaint our woodchipper. This kind of project really shows that we have an amazing group of guys in the DPW and that they take a lot of pride in their job.

. Sent an invitation to attend the March 28th Select Board meeting to the residents that live on the section of Union Street where the Town is going to be replacing the sidewalk and curb for a presentation from Dubois & King and provide an opportunity for Q & As.

. There was a sewer issue on Park Street and discovered that a couple of properties were still connected to the old sewer main. This has been corrected and they are now connected to the new main. This should all be reimbursed through the Segment 6 project as it was missed during the project. VTrans has agreed to do that and it should not be on any of the landowners.

Rec Department News:

. Baseball sign-ups are happening now for Pre-K – 6th grades.

. Jon Gailmor will be performing live at the Brandon Town Hall on March 17th. This is a partnership with the Neshobe School and the Brandon Children’s Music Fund following a 2-week fellowship with their music department. Doors open at 6:00PM. Free will donation.

. Miss Michaela B – Rec Dance is back. Ballet, tap and hip-hop classes: Tuesdays at the Town Hall for ages 3 – 6 and Saturdays at the Pilar Pilates Studio for ages 7 – 12.

. April will be full of Town Hall happenings, stay tuned for indoor mini-golf, Rusty DeWees, Mom Prom and more...

Tim Guiles requested more information about the police dog and what type of training he will have. He understands there are different trainings for the dog and is excited to have a dog to help find missing people and questioned if there will be bite training done. Dave Atherton advised the Town does not have the dog yet, but there is a lot of public support for it. Aidan will be officer to have the dog and he is not sure what type of training the dog will have.

Police Chief Kachajian stated the process of obtaining the police dog is coming along smoothly. He decided to have the dog do tracking and drug work but not train in patrol work. There will be two separate schools that are six weeks long that will include tracking and narcotics detection. Chief Kachajian provided an update on the Department noting this is his second month in the position. For the month of February, the Department handled 175 calls for service with 2 arrests and 18 tickets. Two new fulltime officers have started, Nicholas Stendardo and Joseph Mannino. Chief Kachajian wished to thank Lowes, Seth Hopkins, Roberta Haskins and all who have donated time with obtaining the police dog. The outpouring has been unbelievable and the Department can't wait to get the dog up and running. There have been two more people interviewed today for officer positions, with the Department still down one fulltime officer. Chief Kachajian would also like to bring on a couple of parttime officers. Background checks will be done with anticipation of going through the parttime school at the Police Academy. Directed patrols have been increased and they are trying to educate people as it is not just about issuing fines. Foot patrol in the downtown area will be increased to check doors and businesses. Take Back Day will be this Saturday for prescriptions that people would like to dispose of and can be brought to the police station. Chief Kachajian noted if there are any questions or concerns, please feel free to call him. Seth Hopkins thanked Chief Kachajian for all the initiatives that he has taken and for the update.

5. Public Comments and Participation

Seth Hopkins thanked all appointed to the various positions approved this evening and for their willingness to assist the community. There is an open spot on the Energy Committee due to the resignation of Matt Orchard. Mr. Hopkins thanked Mr. Orchard for the work he did on the Committee. Mr. Hopkins would like to do a Pre-Board announcement on Front Porch Forum going forward to provide information on non-routine items that would be discussed at future meetings. The Board members did not have any objections.

Sue Gage stated the audit is complete and the Board was provided copies. The Management Letter was included and only one item was found that has been rectified. It was around making sure two people sign off on any adjusting entry and there is always two people looking at the financials. Ms. Gage attended a meeting of the Brandon Essential Care Committee that are several community members that formed the group for health and wellness. One issue discussed was homelessness and Ms. Gage will keep the Board posted on the work of this Committee. They are trying to assist with essential care and Ms. Gage advised there will be a free dental

clinic in either April or May. One thing they would like to do is get a laundromat back in Brandon as it is a resource that is missing and is needed in the area.

Steven Jupiter, President of the Brandon Museum Board was present to discuss a proposal for the Town. Mr. Jupiter noted Thomas Davenport developed the electric motor in Brandon and his presence is important to the Town. Mr. Jupiter stated there is not enough done to acknowledge this and it has been suggested to rebrand the Town as the birthplace of the electric motor. Senator Leahy is trying to provide funds to Vermont and is seeking larger projects for this funding. Mr. Jupiter suggested forming a committee with the Select Board's backing for Brandon to become a town that emphasizes energy science as it would have a historic and educational component. Some concepts discussed have been hosting an annual Energy conference that would be an easy way to put Brandon on the map. Mr. Jupiter has discussed with Kevin Thornton about developing School, After-school and Summer programs. Mr. Jupiter advised the grant application is due on Friday. He suggested there should be signage about the birthplace and other items for consideration would be hiring marketing consultants, marketing material as an energy science hub and artistic pieces. Mr. Davenport did his work in Forestdale and that area also needs to be acknowledged. The Brandon Museum is putting together an exhibit on Mr. Davenport. There has been discussion with Representative Stephanie Jerome, Energy Committee, DBA, and the Brandon Chamber on this subject. Mr. Jupiter noted they had an opportunity to speak with Senator Leahy's team and were advised the Select Board has to be involved in this application as no other organization in Town has the authority. Due to the application deadline of Friday, there would need to be a meeting in the next couple of days to discuss the details for the application with a specific dollar amount set. Mr. Hopkins suggested the Town Manager, Town Clerk and Economic Development Director act as the Town's committee for working on the application. Mr. Jupiter reiterated the application is due this Friday and there is no leeway. The DBA has noted they could be the pass through for the funding. Mr. Atherton stated the Town could be the pass through for the funding as they have done this for other entities in the past.

Motion by Tim Guiles/Mike Markowski to write a letter of support for the grant through Senator Leahy's Directive Spending Initiative. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Mr. Jupiter noted Senator Leahy's team thought it is something that should come from the Town rather than a non-profit due to public works and signage and it would be required that the Town be an active participant. Mr. Jupiter noted the Town will need to apply for specific categories in the grant. There was a proposal from the Town's Energy Committee to form a nonprofit called the Thomas Davenport Association to manage the funds. It was the consensus of the Board for the Town Manager, Town Clerk and Economic Development Director be the Town's committee for the process and authorize them to make the application for the grant for those areas that are most advantageous for the Town. Sue Gage advised the Town does annual audits for federal funds which is a selling point.

6. Retail Cannabis Licensing and Ordinance Discussion

Dave Atherton reported the Zoning Administrator has raised questions about retail cannabis. Mr. Atherton provided information to the Board on this subject. Seth Hopkins stated on Page 5 of the State Cannabis Control Board information, under Item b, a municipality can't make additional regulations different from any other business. On Page 6 – it indicates the local commissioners can be part of the legislative body, like the Board of Sewer and Liquor Commissioners. Item 7

indicates cannabis is not agriculture exempt and is not a commercial product. Item 8 indicates there is no approved fee for the licensing and Item 9 indicates the Town will receive the 1% local option tax for the sales. Mr. Atherton advised Mr. Biasuzzi reached out to the VLCT and noted there is no model policy available and it appears the best way to move forward is to create a Cannabis Control Board. If a local control commission is not created, only the State will have an oversight in the Town. Mr. Atherton suggested this would be the best course of action due to other entities like sewer and liquor are handled this way.

Motion by Tracy Wyman/Mike Markowski to designate the Select Board as the Brandon Cannabis Control Commission. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Bill Moore advised there are people looking into this type of business and he is glad that the Select Board is moving forward with this item. Mr. Hopkins stated this will be a further step to assure that conditions placed on the business reflect the values of the community. Mr. Atherton suggested adopting the guidance from the State. Tim Guiles stated by defacto we are bound by the laws of the State. Mr. Atherton noted the Zoning Administrator is receiving many calls and it would be helpful if he could use the State's document as there are details and guidelines in the document that are helpful. Mr. Hopkins thought it would be helpful as it would not make sense to write a local ordinance as there would not be any additional restrictions to apply. Mr. Hopkins noted the only licensing the Town can do is for retail, growing happens without local input.

Motion by Brian Coolidge/Tracy Wyman to adopt the Guidance to Municipalities from the Cannabis Control Board dated January 2022. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Dave Atherton stated Wayne Kingsley passed away last week and will be missed. Mr. Atherton advised there is a memorial service for Roman Wdowiak, former Brandon Fire Chief, this Saturday, at 1PM at the Fire Station.

Seth Hopkins noted the Select Board is looking forward to the discussion of the Union Street Project at the March 28th meeting.

7. Adjournment

Motion by Brian Coolidge/Mike Markowski to adjourn the Select Board meeting at 7:46PM. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,

Charlene Bryant
Recording Secretary