

Brandon Select Board Meeting November 14, 2022

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

Board Members In Attendance: Seth Hopkins, Brian Coolidge, Tim Guiles, Ralph Ethier

Others in Attendance: Gail Cordner, Cecil Reniche-Smith, Sandy Mayo, Marielle Blais, Claire Astone, Paula Ashley, Jim Emerson

Other In Attendance Via Zoom: Angelo Lynn, Jan Coolidge, Tom Kilpeck, George Wetmore, Neil Silins

1. Call to order

The meeting was called to order by Seth Hopkins, Chair at 7:03PM.

a) Agenda Adoption

Motion by Tim Guiles/Brian Coolidge to adopt the agenda as presented. **The motion passed unanimously.**

2. Approval of Minutes

a) Select Board Meeting Minutes – October 24, 2022

Motion by Brian Coolidge/Tim Guiles to approve the October 24, 2022 Select Board meeting minutes. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Seth Hopkins requested a footnote be added on Page 4 with regard to the July 25th meeting minutes where it indicated a BRAVO confidential client had been named. Mr. Hopkins had indicated the minutes would reflect the removal of the name, however, in researching the July 25th meeting minutes, and the minutes of the prior and subsequent meetings, the individual's name was not mentioned.

3. Town Manager's Report`

Bill Moore provided the following report that the Recording Secretary read:

. The Arnold District culvert has been installed and paved. Poulin has set up jersey barriers temporarily as guardrails so the road can be opened. The guardrail installers should be here this week.

. The first section of the Town Farm Road rebuild has been completed. This included new gravel road base, culvert replacement, ditching and new asphalt.

. Shawn and Mr. Atherton have been working with Nancy Leary to come up with conceptual plans for a new Town garage. The Energy Committee has been asked to assist the Town in making this new building as efficient as possible. See attached draft design.

Recreation Department News:

. Basketball season is upon us. The 5th/6th grades get to start first with our annual collaboration pre-season camp with Otter Valley varsity program going on this week. Registration for the regular season that starts the week of November 28th is open.

. Early registration for the 2nd annual Neshobe Pie Gobbler Thanksgiving Day Fun Run is now open. A morning run/walk is a great way to justify the eating that will happen later on in the day. Top male and female finishers as well as every 10th finisher gets a homemade pie!

4. Public Comment and Participation

Seth Hopkins reported he received a note from a Brandon person to share with the Select Board. Wendy Fjeld raised a safety concern and requested the possibility of adding Yield to Pedestrian signs regarding the westerly portion of Park Street and also a change to diagonal parking on Park Street. Mr. Hopkins noted Mr. Atherton is aware of the Park Street parking issue and is planning to work with Shawn Erickson to see if stripes can be painted to assist people and make them safer for the driveways. The Yield to Pedestrian signs were not discussed recently and they used to be taken in during the winter but the Town Manager will be made aware of this situation. Mr. Hopkins thanked Wendy Fjeld for raising this concern to the Board.

Jim Emerson on behalf of the Energy Committee, thanked the Select Board and Dave Atherton for their support of Brandon Button up. Over 60 people were registered with 50 people attendance. There were some good speakers and music thanks to Mr. Guiles. It was a positive event and lays a foundation for an event for landlords and tenants, with special programs for the landlord groups. 3E Thermal has a special program for weatherization improvements for landlords. The BEC received two grants and have good seed money for the next event. There was a lot of great support and volunteers, with a number of businesses and individuals assisting with the event. Seth Hopkins thanked the BEC for their efforts.

Sandy Mayo stated in the minutes of the last meeting, when talking about the police and the recent study of budgets it was noted that Brandon was one of the only towns that decreased their Police budget. Ms. Mayo requested an explanation of why it was decreased in the past budget year. Seth Hopkins advised that for the last five years, the Town was not able to hire and retain the number of officers that had been budgeted for salaries and benefits, with the Police budget turning over around \$100,000 to the General Fund at year-end. Though not a bad dynamic, as there would be money to hire the officers, but it was found that there was a long time with no change. The effect is actually padding the budget or building a surplus that was not the most transparent way possible or the fairest to the taxpayers as the Board is trying to ask for what is required to provide the service. The Board has a policy to retain an Unrestricted Reserve fund and found that the fund has been within the acceptable range of the policy of 15% to 30% of the operating budget. Last year, the Select Board removed the figure but the department budget was

reduced with the understanding that if a candidate were found the Unrestricted Reserve fund would fund the officer.

Jim Emerson asked if the actual expenditures have changed over the years. Seth Hopkins stated the actual expenditures have been less for the last few years. The actual spending based on actual previous and current year has a slight upward pressure due to the union contract to try to attract and retain the officers.

Gail Corder asked the timeline for Tennybrook. Seth Hopkins advised it is not known, but their building permit was renewed because sufficient progress has been made and it seems at this point the activity is about to be completed.

5. Consider Appointment of Emergency Management Director and Emergency Services Representative to Regional Emergency Management Committee

Seth Hopkins reported this request came from the RRPC. There is a recommendation to appoint the Town Manager as the Emergency Management Director and Tom Kilpeck as the Emergency Services Representative to the Regional Emergency Management Committee. Tom Kilpeck noted he advised Mr. Atherton of his willingness to continue another year in this capacity.

Motion by Tim Guiles/Ralph Ethier to appoint Dave Atherton as Emergency Management Director and Tom Kilpeck as the Emergency Services Representative to the Regional Emergency Management Committee. **The motion passed unanimously.**

6. Resolve Scheduling Conflict for December 5th Budget Workshop

Seth Hopkins advised there is a scheduling conflict for the December 5th budget workshop, with the first workshop scheduled for November 21st at the Town Hall. Mr. Hopkins also noted Dave Atherton and Jackie Savela had indicated the last Select Board meeting of November is traditionally omitted. It was the consensus of the Board to maintain the November 28th meeting, in addition to the grant hearing for the Brandon Library that is also scheduled for that evening. Mr. Hopkins advised the Otter Creek Insect Control District has requested time during the November 21st budget workshop to provide their annual appropriation request and discuss the shift in funding the district going forward.

7. VCDP Planning Grant Hearing Notice

Seth Hopkins reported the Vermont Community Development Planning Grant hearing has been posted for November 28th at 7PM at the Town Offices at 49 Center Street regarding the planning grant for the feasibility study for the Library's design costs. This hearing will be held in conjunction with the November 28th Select Board meeting.

8. RAMP MPG Resolution

Seth Hopkins advised Bill Moore has brought forth this item for the Select Board's consideration. RAMP is part of the RRPC and has a dedicated website, rutlandramp.com, that is designed to provide information about communities' assets like shopping, dining, and cultural venues. It is a regional planning item but currently has only three towns, one being Brandon. Mr.

Hopkins read a portion of the letter submitted by Mr. Moore and noted that the Select Board is being asked to do a resolution for partnering to create town-specific sites. Brandon is excited to lead the county in this effort that will assist in solving the master community calendar problem. It will serve as a central depository and will be funded through a grant. The resolution is to apply for the funding to continue to develop the website and the match will be provided by the RRPC. Tim Guiles suggested it is a good idea. Mr. Hopkins advised Cecil Reniche-Smith as Chair of the Planning Commission, Seth Hopkins and Dave Atherton will be contacts for Brandon, and Maggie O'Brien will be the grant administrator. Mr. Hopkins noted this will be a good clearing house for events for the economic development manager.

Motion by Tim Guiles/Ralph Ethier to pass the resolution to continue work for the RAMP support. **The motion passed unanimously.**

9. Fiscal

- a) Warrant- November 14, 2022 - \$338,652.88*
- b) Library Grant Warrant – November 14, 2022 - \$24,342.49*

Motion Brian Coolidge/Ralph Ethier to approve the November 14, 2022, warrant in the amount of \$338,652.88 and the Library Grant warrant in the amount of \$24,342.49. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Sandy Mayo asked why a feasibility is being done since the Library is already under renovation now. Seth Hopkins stated from what was provided to the Board, the funds that have already been received include the cost of feasibility studies that have happened and this is to obtain the views of the community and to give citizens the opportunity to provide comments. Mr. Hopkins noted the library grant had been applied for a couple of times and this grant opportunity is the one that finally happened. The Library has requested \$100,000 of the ARPA funds and the Select Board has asked them to approach another funding agency with ARPA funding to be the match. Cecil Reniche-Smith reported there are two potential funding agencies. Mr. Hopkins advised the ARPA funding discussion will be opened again. The Library hearing is for the non-ARPA grant from the State that is reimbursing costs including the feasibility study and other items.

10. Adjournment

Motion by Brian Coolidge/Tim Guiles to adjourn the Select Board meeting at 7:35PM. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,

Charlene Bryant
Recording Secretary