

**Town of Plainfield, Vermont
Select Board Meeting Minutes
February 15, 2022**

Approved 4/23/2022

Present via Zoom or telephone: Jim Volz, Select Board Chair; Sasha Thayer, Select Board member; Tammy Farnham, Select Board member; Linda Wells, Town Clerk and Treasurer; Alice Merrill, Town Grant Writer; Mike Nolan, Road Foreman; Eric Blaisdell, *The Times Argus*; Jeremy Matt, CV Fiber; Charles Cogbill; Rose Paul, Plainfield Co-op Board Member; Cat Klarich, Plainfield Co-op Board Chair; Christian Meyer, Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission; Paula Emery, Administrative Assistant to the Select Board

Agenda:

- ♦ Changes to Agenda
- ♦ Announcements
- ♦ Road Foreman report, Road Foreman Mike Nolan
- ♦ Town Clerk/Town Treasurer Report - Linda Wells
 - Planning for filling open positions and upcoming vacancies due to retirement including planning for seeking employees including Highway Department, Town Clerk's Office, Water/Wastewater Department
 - Possible use of ARPA funds for special compensation
 - Approval of warrants
 - Approval of minutes
 - Town meeting planning and publicity
- ♦ Update on Main Street bridge problems and repairs and funding options - Linda Wells and Tammy Farnham
- ♦ Plainfield Co-op Request for support for Coop application for Rural Development grant
- ♦ Plainfield Co-op Request for greater allocation of parking spaces in parking lot adjacent to Municipal Building, Fire House, and Coop
- ♦ CV Fiber Alternate Delegate
 - Use of some ARPA funds for CV Fiber project
- ♦ Update on State Emergency Management mask distribution and other matters related to COVID-19 - Sasha Thayer
- ♦ Public comment
- ♦ Update on Pedestrian Bridge construction - Tammy Farnham
- ♦ Gully Remediation Project Maintenance Agreement Approval - Sasha Thayer
- ♦ Other business

Chairman Volz called the meeting to order at 7:02PM.

Changes to Agenda

Add fleet permits to Town Clerk's report; add announcement about Steve MacLaren; move co-op up on agenda to take place immediately after Town Clerk report.

Announcements

Tammy Farnham announced the passing of Steve MacLaren, formerly of the Road Crew.

Farnham moved to have the town authorize funding for a memorial gift of flowers or contribution to a charity of the family's choice, to be determined, of up to \$100.00. The motion passed unanimously.

Road Foreman report – Mike Nolan

Nolan reported the following:

- ♦ The road crew attempted to tow cars parked overnight in front of Positive Pie last week. The cars prevented them from clearing snow from that intersection. Will continue to try to get a towing company to come.
- ♦ Some frozen culverts were thawed.
- ♦ They are pushing snow banks back in preparation for upcoming rain.
- ♦ The equipment is functioning well.
- ♦ The contracted plow drivers are working out well.
- ♦ There were issues with the sidewalk plowing caused by the amount of snow and wetness of the snow.
- ♦ There were no responses to the advertisements for a new road crew hire.

At this point, the Select Board jumped ahead to

Planning for Filling Open Positions and Upcoming Vacancies

Tammy Farnham agreed to work with Linda Wells to post advertisements on Zip Recruiter and Indeed. There was discussion about how to retain staff and attract new staff.

The Select Board opted to hold a special meeting to discuss hiring for the Road Crew with Mike Nolan in attendance on Thursday, February 17th at 5:30PM, weather depending.

Town Clerk/Town Treasurer Report - Linda Wells

town reports are being printed now and should be mailed by Saturday, the 19th

there is no open town meeting this year.

voting will be by Australian ballot again this year

the polls will be at municipal office

open from 7 – 7 required to open early due to vote on cCVCC proposal

find link for information in the Twiwnfield annual Report

processed 278 absentee ballot requests

if you haven't received a postcard in the mail you should contact the town office directly

or come to the town office on March 1 to vote in person

Approval of Warrants

Tammy Farnham moved to approve two payroll warrants from February 2 and 11, and the motion carried unanimously.

Cleaning the Town Office

Wells reported that they are having an issue with getting the Town Offices cleaned. LamCo is no longer working in Plainfield. Assistant Clerk, Carol Smith has offered to do the job and would be doing so as an employee and not an independent contractor. **The Select Board decided to allow Wells to use her discretion to make arrangements to fill the cleaning position.**

Fleet Permits

Sasha Thayer moved to approve the Fleet Permit for La Jeunesse Construction, Inc. of East Barre. The motion carried unanimously.

Tammy Farnham moved to approve the Fleet Permit for New England Quality Service, Inc. of Rutland and Barrett Trucking Co., Inc. of Burlington. The motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

Sasha Thayer moved to approve minutes for February 1 and January 4 minutes. The motion carried unanimously. February 19 minutes are still in draft form and not approved.

November 19 minutes were discussed and approved unanimously.

Town Meeting Planning and Publicity

Information about voting and about how to participate in the February 22 Informational Meeting is available on the town website. The Informational Meeting will be held by Zoom and can be attended by telephone. Information will be posted at the public posting areas of Plainfield Co-op, Town Office and Post Office.

Update on Main Street Bridge Problems and Repairs and Funding Options

Farnham met with VTrans representatives and members of the Daniels Company to inspect the bridge last week. It was determined that the bridge is safe and that it needs maintenance and cosmetic work. One beam underneath cannot be fully repaired, as the rebar is rusted, but it can be cleaned. This rust will not affect the stability of the bridge. The surface of the bridge needs maintenance. All previously cited concerns and issues in the state's bridge reports still stand.

VTrans will provide options and recommendations at a later date. They are also seeking funding for the project. The Daniels Co. will provide estimates. Linda Wells is working on a structural grant for funding.

Options provided by VTrans will be evaluated at a later date.

Plainfield Coop

Cat Klarich of the Plainfield Co-op Board of Directors, requested that the Select Board support a USDA Rural Development grant for a feasibility study that will be used to evaluate whether the co-op remains in place with expansions and improvements to the building, or if it will leave the lower village for an as-yet-undetermined location on Route 2. **Sasha Thayer moved to approve and to authorize Jim Volz to sign the grant application on behalf of the town. The motion carried unanimously.**

The Plainfield Co-op requested that the Town of Plainfield provide four more parking spots along the cemetery fence. Linda Wells spoke against this, noting that the town will need the parking once the coronavirus pandemic is over. She noted that the two spots on the street in front of the town offices are available for co-op parking and that co-op employees are parking along the back wall of the fire station, using up several customer parking spots.

There was discussion about sharing some of the parking spots and **it was decided that the town will designate two of the municipal parking spots as short-term parking that can be used by co-op shoppers or visitors to the municipal building.** Cat Klarich agreed that the co-op could help pay for the new signs. **Volz suggested, and all interested parties agreed, that the co-op will coordinate with Linda Wells and the Select Board to determine the wording for the signs and the cost sharing arrangements via email over the coming two weeks.**

This issue will be revisited to consider the proposals for sign language and cost sharing at the next meeting and the matter will be decided then.

CV Fiber Alternate Delegate

Jeremy Matt, Plainfield Representative to the CV Fiber board of directors, requested information about where the town is in the process of appointing an alternate to the CV Fiber board of directors. In doing so, he provided this update:

- CV Fiber is in the process of hiring an executive director
- they have been earmarked for 9.2 million in construction grant funds which will help build out the network
- working with WEC to get low interest loans to cover remaining costs of build-out
- they are on track to start construction on first parts of the network in June or July of 2022, working on connecting customers as they build
- CV Fiber is focusing providing services in underserved areas, avoiding areas that already have cable or fiber service
- CV Fiber is looking for areas with density of population to keep costs down
- Plainfield is closer to the front of the line than the back of the line for service, but will not be first served
- CV Fiber is a non-profit and is trying to keep subscription rates as low as possible

Matt requested that Plainfield appoint an alternate board member to the CV Fiber board who will be expected to attend regular monthly meetings, which occur on the second Tuesday of every month at 6:00PM. They will ideally be willing to join a committee and attend occasional special meetings. The alternate will be expected to attend all meetings in order to advocate for Plainfield, help meet quorum, build institutional knowledge, and be capable of participating meaningfully when acting as alternate.

Matt also expressed interest in obtaining ARPA funding for CV Fiber, enabling CV Fiber to get matching grants. How Plainfield's money could be spent is up to the town, and Matt suggested that funds could be used to offset the cost to consumers for hook-ups to the system, for connections to town offices, or for connections to Twinfield Union School.

Jeremy Matt requested information about where the town is in finding an alternate board representative. He will send a posting about the CV Fiber Alternate for Linda to post on the town website.

Update on State Emergency Management Mask Distribution

Thayer reported that the town received notice of allocation of masks for half of the town's population. The masks will be delivered to the Town Office. **The Select Board will discuss how to distribute masks at the next meeting.**

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Update on Pedestrian Bridge Construction

There was no update on the pedestrian bridge project.

Gully Remediation Project Maintenance Agreement Approval

Christian Meyer of the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission (CVRPC) was in attendance and reported that he sent an email out to the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) requesting clarification about the town's maintenance contract for the gully remediation project, but hasn't received a response. The Select Board expressed concerns over the town's capacity to deal with the burden of the maintenance as defined by the DEC.

Next step: Meyer requested an outline of what the town can take on for maintenance. He will gather more information about anything beyond the .5 day mark required by the project. He will share information as he receives it. Thayer offered to meet with Mike Nolan to find out what the Road Crew feels able to take on.

Volz noted that if the town chooses to terminate more sediment will enter the Winooski, compromising the quality of water downstream. This will create limitations to future development in the town.

Other Business

Items for future agendas were discussed and are listed below.

Sasha Thayer moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:12PM and the motion carried unanimously.

Agenda Items for Upcoming Meetings

February 22, 2022 Town Meeting Informational Meeting

- **Due to Town Meeting time needs, the twice-monthly Select Board meetings for March will be on Wednesday, March 9 and on Tuesday, March 22**

March 9, 2022 Agenda Items

- Conservation Commission
- Hardware Store Building Garbage Containers
- Fleet Permits

- Old Fire Station – Jay Southgate
- ARPA Committee Appointments
- Co-op Parking
- CV Fiber Board Alternate Appointment
- Continuity of Operations Planning, Grace Vinson, Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission & Bruce Johnson, East Montpelier Town Administrator
- Update On State Emergency Management Mask Distribution and Other Matters Related To Covid-19
- CVRPC – Gully Remediation Project Follow Up