

**Town of Plainfield, Vermont**  
**Select Board Meeting Minutes**  
**August 2, 2022 - Approved**

**Present in person:** Jim Volz, Select Board Chair; Sasha Thayer, Select Board member; Linda Wells, Town Clerk and Treasurer; Paula Emery, Administrative Assistant to the Select Board

**Present via Zoom or telephone:** Eric Blaisdell, *The Times Argus*; Liz Bicknell, Plainfield Co-op Board Member; Melinda Vieux; Peter Young; George Springston; Kathy and Bob Fancher; and Lauren Geiger

**Agenda:**

Changes to Agenda

Announcements

Public Comment

Town Clerk/Town Treasurer Report - Linda Wells

- Update on August 2 primary
- Compliance with ADA (Americans with Disabilities) requirements report sent to Town from VT Disability Rights
- Update on new Assistant Town Clerk/Assistant Town Treasurer and preparation for Linda's retirement
- Approval of contract with Washington County Sheriff's Department
- Approval of warrants
- Approval of minutes including April 19, 2022, May 3, 2022, May 10, 2022 meetings at 7 AM and 5 PM, May 12, 2022, May 31, June 7, 2022, June 21, 2022, July 4, 2022, July 7, 2022, July 14, 2022, July 19, 2022 and July 21, 2022

Brook Road replacement bridge-Hazard Mitigation Grant Program

- Fiscal implications re reduced match
- Consideration of ARPA funds for town match
- Application

Update on Main Street Bridge Repair and Pedestrian Bridge Project

Appointment of Donna Pettersson to the Cemetery Commission

Update on complaint about Sign at 235 Brook Road

Review of Properties on Brook Road with Trash & Any Action to Take

Approval of Local Emergency Management Plan

Other Business

Agenda Items for Upcoming Meetings

- August 16, 2022 Agenda Items

Adjourn

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**Chairman Jim Volz called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.**

**Changes to Agenda** There were no changes to the agenda.

**Announcements** There were no announcements.

Public Comment There was no public comment.

### **Town Clerk/Town Treasurer Report – Linda Wells**

– **Update on August 2 Primary**

Wells reported that 178 absentee ballots were mailed, but as of this meeting only 82 had been returned, and requested that people send them in or drop them off soon. They can be dropped in the dropbox at the front of the Town Office, brought in on election day, or mailed in time to arrive at the Town Office on or before election day. Wells suggested that Primary polling take place at the Town Office because a recent survey noted some access issues with the Town Hall.

– **Update on New Assistant Town Clerk/Assistant Town Treasurer and Preparation for Linda's Retirement**

Wells reported that the new Assistant Town Clerk and Treasurer is doing very well and is coming up to speed on the job.

– **Compliance with ADA (Americans with Disabilities) requirements report sent to Town from VT Disability Rights**

Wells reported that a recent survey by Vermont Disability Rights of the Town Hall and Opera House highlighted issues with the entrance, walkway, threshold, and parking that need to be addressed prior to the building being used for Town Meeting or as a polling place. There were no issues with the interior of the building.

– **Approval of Contract with Washington County Sheriff's Department**

This item was moved to the August 16 meeting.

– **Approval of Warrants**

Thayer moved to approve payroll warrants from July 22 and 23, and an accounts payable warrant from July 26. The motion carried.

– **Approval of Minutes**

Thayer moved to approve meeting minutes from: April 19, May 3, May 10 at 7:00 AM and May 10 at 5:00 PM, May 12, May 31, June 7, June 21, July 4, July 7, July 14, July 19, and July 21, 2022. The motion carried.

### **Brook Road Replacement Bridge & Hazard Mitigation Grant Program**

Alice Merrill reported on her progress in pursuit of a grant for the Brook Road bridge replacement. She was notified that the town match has been reduced to 10% and that the application deadline is September 30. Merrill requested that the Select Board give her permission to contact VHB Engineering about their costs and permission to work with Stephanie Smith of the state's Hazard Mitigation Office to pursue the application, noting that there may be additional funding from the state. Merrill also reported that American Rescue Plan Act funds can be used for the bridge replacement.

Volz moved that the Select Board permit Alice Merrill to contact VHB Engineering to review costs and to clarify the roles of the engineers; and to work Stephanie Smith of the Hazard Mitigation Office on the grant application. The motion carried.

Merrill noted that the grant application needs to take place in a timely manner.

### **Update on Main Street Bridge Repair and Pedestrian Bridge Project**

Thayer provided a review of a meeting that occurred on Friday, July 29 during which change orders from Daniels Company and VHB Engineering were presented to the Select Board. At that meeting, the Select Board voted to approve the change orders for additional funds for Daniels and VHB Engineering for additional costs of replacing the membrane, paving the bridge, and additional engineering costs.

As of this meeting, the project is scheduled to begin on August 15 and last approximately three months. Volz noted that Daniels expects to complete the paving in October.

### **Appointment of Donna Pettersson to the Cemetery Commission**

Thayer moved to appoint Donna Pettersson to the Cemetery Commission, with a term ending at the 2023 Town Meeting, and the motion carried with commendations to the Cemetery Commission.

### **Update on Complaint about Sign at 235 Brook Road**

Volz reported that he hasn't heard from Karen Storey, Town Zoning Administrator, about zoning concerns with the sign. The sign is not in the town right-of-way, which means that it is protected under the first amendment to the US Constitution. As it is not an election sign there is no limit to how long it can remain in place.

Peter Young requested that the Select Board send a letter requesting that they remove the sign.

Lauren Geiger noted that another sign on the same property stating that: "trespassers will be shot and survivors will be shot again," is more distressing.

Volz moved to send a letter to the property owners asking them to take the signs down as a courtesy to the community and the motion carried.

Thayer moved to photograph the sign and send the photo to the Washington County Sheriff and the State Police, saying that the signs have been up for several months and are of concern to people in the community. The motion carried.

### **Review of Properties on Brook Road with Trash & Action to Take**

Thayer reported that she has not been able to get in touch with the landlord of the property at 1246 Brook Road and that she has contacted the Town Health Officer about visiting the site due to concerns about trash making its way into the river from the property. **This item will be revisited at the next meeting.**

### **Approval of Local Emergency Management Plan**

Thayer moved to approve the Local Emergency Management Plan and the motion carried.

**Other Business**

Liz Bicknell inquired about the progress of the ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) fund committee. Thayer reported that the Select Board is still working on that.

**Agenda items for August 16, 2022 Select Board Meeting**

- Update on Brook Road properties
- Update on Pedestrian Bridge project
- Update on Brook Road signage issue
- Report on August Primaries
- Brook Road Bridge

**Adjourn**

Thayer moved to adjourn at 7:52 PM and the motion carried.

*Respectfully submitted by Paula Emery.*