

**Town of Plainfield Select Board Meeting,
March 6, 2023 by Zoom
Approved Minutes**

Agenda:

Changes to Agenda

Announcements

Public Comment

Town Clerk/Town Treasurer Report, Robin Miller

- Planning for Town Meeting

- Approval of warrants

- Fleet Permits

Barrett Trucking, Burlington, VT

Connecticut Valley Trucking, Orford, NH

Gillespie Fuels & Propane, Northfield, VT

K Bellavance Landworks, Barre, VT

Lajeunesse Construction, East Barre, VT

McCullough Crushing, Middlesex, VT

N.A. Manosh, Morrisville, VT

Pike Industries, Barre, VT

Structural Wood Corp., Waddington, NY

- Approval of draft minutes

- Update on payments made for Pedestrian Bridge/Main Street Bridge repair project, anticipated reimbursements, expected future costs, source of funds and Town match (including from \$350,000 VTrans grant)

- Development of policy for acquisition, use, and monitoring of Town credit card

Meeting new Washington County Sheriff Marc Poulin – Sheriff Marc Poulin & Lt. Bret Meyer

Response to T-Mobile Northeast LLC petition for Certificate of Public Good for co-location of antenna at 1073 East Hill Road

How/whether to proceed with completing survey by March 16, 2023 deadline for application for Congressionally Directed Spending for FY 2024

Review of plans for April 3, 2023 (7 pm) Public Hearing re proposed changes to Zoning Ordinance

Transition issues related to new Select Board after Town Meeting

Other Business

Upcoming Select Board Meeting Agenda Items

March 20, 2023

Organizational Meeting

Election of Chair and possibly Vice-Chair

Approval of Rules of Procedure

Report from Road Foreman

Committee, Board, and Commission appointments

April 3, 2022

**Policy for acquisition, use, and monitoring of Town
credit card**

7 pm Public Hearing re proposed Zoning Ordinance changes

Adjourn

Present: Select Board members Jim Volz (Select Board Chair), Riley Carlson, and Sasha Thayer. Also present were Kristin Brosky (Town Administrative Assistant), Dawn Fancher, Kathy and Bob Fancher, Julie Hackbarth, Bram Towbin, and Eric Blaisdell (Times Argus).

Jim Volz called the meeting to order at 6:07 pm.

Changes to Agenda:

There were no changes to the agenda.

Announcements:

Volz shared that Town Meeting would be held the following day and stated that there were some problems related to that. He stated that the Select Board had put a notice on Front Porch Forum, the Plainfield People page on Facebook, and on the Town website about the issue. He explained that the Town Report had not been published in time to meet statutory requirements to hold Town Meeting. He stated that Town Meeting would still convene March 7, 2023 at 10 am and then a motion would be taken up to adjourn to a later date. He stated that the voting for Town officers and the Town budget would also be postponed but that voting on the school budget and other items would be voted on on March 7, 2023 as scheduled. Volz offered an apology about the need to postpone Town Meeting.

Thayer suggested it would be helpful to try to set up Zoom access for Town Meeting.

Carlson, Thayer, and Volz discussed identifying a proposed date to which the Town Meeting would be adjourned. Within that discussion Thayer cited statute 24 V.S.A. § 992, which states that the last day for the auditors to meet to examine and adjust the Town finances is 25 days prior to Town Meeting, and she also noted that the Town Report needed to go out at least 10 days prior to Town Meeting. Thayer went on to explore the possibility that at Town Meeting the following day someone may make a proposal to do all of the Town Meeting business at the adjourned date by Australian ballot. She cited statute 17 V.S.A. § 2681a which states that towns using Australian ballot must have ballots prepared and available that no less than 20 days before

elections. Thayer suggested the proposed rescheduled Town Meeting date should be at least 25 days out, and noted that Town Meeting does not necessarily need to be held on a Tuesday. Volz suggested the proposal could consider the option of rescheduling to a Saturday. Carlson stated his belief that Town Clerk Robin Miller and Moderator Donnie Osman should be consulted regarding the proposed reschedule date.

Thayer clarified that the financial information for this Town Meeting goes through June of 2022 which is prior to Robin Miller being appointed as Town Clerk and Town Treasurer on December 1, 2022. Thayer clarified that the issue that needs to be reviewed by the auditor is regarding reserve accounts for which there was an identified discrepancy. Volz clarified that the reason the Town Report did not get mailed on time is because the financial statements that need to go into the report were not ready.

Public Comment:

Julie Hackbarth commented via Zoom chat, asking whether the Town Report would contain the certification of the Auditor. Volz responded that it was his understanding that the Town Report had been certified as it had already gone to the printer.

Town Clerk/Town Treasurer Report, Robin Miller:

Robin Miller was unable to attend this meeting.

Planning for Town Meeting – See Announcements above.

Approval of warrants – The approval of warrants will be completed at a later date; the information was not available for this meeting.

Fleet Permits - Thayer moved for approval of fleet permits for Barrett Trucking of Burlington, Vermont, Connecticut Valley Trucking of Orford, New Hampshire, Gillespie Fuels & Propane Of Northfield, Vermont, K Bellavance Landworks of Barre, Vermont, Lajeunesse Construction of East Barre, Vermont, McCullough Crushing of Middlesex, Vermont, N.A. Manosh of Morrisville, Vermont, Pike Industries of Barre, Vermont, Structural Wood Corp. of Waddington, New York. The motion was approved unanimously.

Approval of draft minutes – **Thayer moved to approve draft minutes for the June 27, 2022 and February 6, 2023 Select Board meetings. The motion passed unanimously.**

Update on payments made for Pedestrian Bridge/Main Street Bridge repair project, anticipated reimbursements, expected future costs, source of funds and Town match (including from \$350,000 VTrans grant) – Thayer stated a need for clarity regarding the Town’s share of the

payments and expressed her concern about the striping on the bridge. Thayer notes this issue would best be taken up at a future meeting when Miller is present.

Development of policy for acquisition, use, and monitoring of Town credit card- Thayer shared that the Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT) has some policies on credit card use, but stated that she didn't feel this was sufficient for the Town's use. She shared her concerns about possible misuse of a credit card without proper controls in place. She stated her belief that there needs to be a good policy in place that reflects the issues for a small town. Volz suggested this is an issue that can be taken up in the future.

Meeting new Washington County Sheriff, Marc Poulin: - Volz and Thayer welcomed Sheriff Marc Poulin and Captain Bret Meyer who joined the meeting in-person at the Town Office.

Captain Meyer reviewed traffic statistics from July 1, 2022 through March 6, 2023. He stated his opinion that the statistics look low which could be due to staffing issues in the past year. Thayer notes that the report shows three tickets issued and ten warnings given. She clarified that the Sheriff's Department really tries to resolve traffic issues with warnings rather than tickets. Sheriff Poulin stated that the goal is to change behavior, which can often be accomplished with a warning and education. Captain Meyer cited excessive speeding on the Middle Rd. flats, stating that many tickets had been written for speeds 21-30 mph over the speed limit. Thayer mentioned that the Select Board had heard from community members regarding speeding and passing on dirt roads. Captain Meyer stated he plans to check the Plainfield People page on Facebook to help him hear from community members about where and when speeding is occurring. Volz read from the provided traffic statistics from July 1, 2022 through March 6, 2023 sharing that for violations between 11-20 mph over the speed limit there were three tickets issued, ten warnings, and 29 incidents responded to by directed patrol.

Captain Meyer discussed the difficulties posed by short staffing at the Sheriff's office. He shared that they're hoping to hire another patrolman. Sheriff Poulin states they're looking for two full time deputies and multiple part-time deputies. He encouraged all types of people to apply, stating they are particularly looking for people with good communication skills. He shared that interested parties can pick up an application at the Sheriff's office at 10 Elm St. in Montpelier from 8 am - 4:30 pm weekdays and may e-mail him at marc.poulin@vermont.gov.

Sheriff Poulin then reviewed some changes that are going on in the Sheriff's office. He shared that they are experiencing challenges with staffing, are looking at implementing the use of body cameras, that Tasers will be deployed as a less lethal option, there will be more computers installed in patrol cars, they are making an effort to be more efficient, they're encouraging officers to become EMT (Emergency Medical Technician) certified and mandating EMR (Emergency Medical Responder) training, are sending some deputies to full-time Academy in the Fall to raise training experience among officers, and noted that there are many young officers on the force. Thayer asked for clarification regarding the Sheriff's Department funding. Sheriff Poulin shared that the majority of the funding comes from contracts with towns, construction

companies, and security services. He then discussed upcoming increases in the Sheriff's Department billing rates starting July 1, 2023, which he shared is needed to improve retention rates. Thayer noted that the Town budget has not been adjusted to reflect this, so Plainfield will likely be able to afford less patrol hours. Volz, Carlson, and Thayer thanked Sheriff Poulin and Captain Meyer for attending the meeting.

Response to T-Mobile Northeast LLC petition for Certificate of Public Good for co-location of antenna at 1073 East Hill Road – Volz shared that T-Mobile has filed a petition with the Public Service Board to co-locate an antenna at the existing location at 1073 East Hill Rd. Volz asked if the Select Board had heard any objection. Thayer affirmed they had not but that the Select Board had not yet entered their appearance. Volz stated he will look into filing a notice of appearance.

How/whether to proceed with completing survey by March 16, 2023 deadline for application for Congressionally Directed Spending for FY 2024 – Thayer shared that a survey to determine interest in an application for Congressionally Directed Spending for FY 2024 was sent by the Office of Senator Peter Welch with a deadline for completion of March 16, 2023. Volz states someone should be designated to complete the survey, and states he will look at it. Volz suggested Alice Merrill may be able to assist. Thayer suggested it would be nice if there were money available for infrastructure needs, such as bridge repair.

Review of plans for April 3, 2023 (7 pm) Pubic Hearing re proposed changes to Zoning Ordinance – Volz shared that the Planning Commission has come forward with proposed new zoning regulations for which there will be a Public Hearing held April 3, 2023 at 7 pm at the Town Hall Opera House. Thayer stated the meeting notice needs to be published in a newspaper 15 days prior to the meeting. Carlson reviewed what needs to be included in the newspaper notice. Select Board members agreed to a special meeting on March 13, 2023 at 1:30 pm to draft the notice. Carlson agreed to write an initial draft of the notice with input from Will Colgan of the Planning Commission. Thayer states that it would be nice to be able to offer Zoom access for the meeting on April 3, 2023 and expressed interest in the possible use of a microphone to assure that when people speak they will be heard. Volz shared that Keith Swann was going to help broadcast this meeting. He stated that the Select Board is looking into the option of using Zoom with captions. Carlson stated Swann had said that the Town Hall internet service is robust enough to support the meeting being available on Zoom. Thayer explained that the meeting on April 3, 2023 is a regular Select Board meeting that begins at 6 pm and that the public hearing will be held in the middle of the meeting at 7 pm. Thayer shared that the public hearing notice and the Select Board meeting notice are posted on the Town website. She shared that the proposed zoning ordinance is also posted on the Town website on the homepage and on the Planning Commission page. Volz added that copies will also be available at the Town Office.

Transition issues related to new Select board after Town meeting – Volz expressed the need for Thayer to hand off her Select Board responsibilities when her term ends. Thayer stated that Town Administrative Assistant Kristin Brosky will be able to take some responsibilities. Carlson stated that he and Volz are willing to post Select Board notices to the Town website. Thayer shared that she has developed, and will pass on for continued use, user-friendly language for providing the public with Zoom information for joining Select Board meetings. Thayer listed some items she takes care of that will need to be reassigned including posting on the Town webpage for the Select Board and committees as well as keeping track of the number and duration of committee member terms. She stated she will provide the remaining Select Board members with a current list. Thayer stated it would be helpful if committees each designated a committee member to do the posting of their meeting agendas and minutes to the Town website. She shared that Town Website Administrator Bob Fancher has provided protocols for posting to the Town website that she notes should be put on a future agenda for approval by the Select Board. She shared that she is still willing to continue her role as Emergency Management director, which she notes is an appointment that would happen after Town Meeting. She shared that she currently sits on the Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT) Equity, Inclusion, and Diversity Board which she would like to continue to be involved with. She stated that she has saved Select Board meeting agendas on her computer and will provide a thumb drive of those files to the remaining Select Board members. Thayer agrees to field emails and phone calls after her term ends to assist with transition issues as needed. Volz recognized Thayer for her service to the Select Board and expressed his appreciation.

Other Business:

Thayer pointed out that the Town has an ongoing need for community involvement noting that the Town Health Officer has resigned, the Town continues to be in need of a Town Constable and Animal Control Officer, and there is a vacancy on the Development Review Board. Volz shared that the Select Board Chair fills the roll of Town Health Officer in the absence of a Town Health Officer, to contact him if issues arise. Thayer encouraged community members to consider becoming involved by volunteering for a Town position and noted that some positions are paid.

Upcoming Select Board Meeting Agenda Items:

March 13, 2023, 1 pm – Special Select Board meeting

Draft the notice for the public hearing on the proposed zoning ordinance changes.

March 20, 2023

Report from Road Foreman, Mike Bingham

April 3, 2022

Policy for acquisition, use, and monitoring of Town credit card

7 PM Public Hearing re proposed Zoning Ordinance changes

April 17, 2023

Update re Town credit card, Robin Miller

Decisions and/or further action re Plainfield's ARPA funds, specifically Recreation

Committee request

Committee, Board, and Commission appointments

Election of Chair and possibly Vice Chair

Approval of Rules of Procedure

Adjourn: Thayer moved to adjourn at 7:29 pm and the motion carried unanimously.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Kristin Brosky, Town Administrative Assistant.