

**Town of Plainfield Select Board Special Budget Meeting
December 5, 2023
149 Main St. Plainfield, VT 2nd Floor and via Zoom
Minutes - Approved**

Agenda:

- Changes to Agenda
- Town Hall Opera House Budget Discussion
- Highway Department Budget Discussion
- Social Concerns Committee Budget Discussion
- Adjourn

Present: Select Board members Riley Carlson (Chair), Tim Davis, and Jim Volz. Also in attendance were Town Clerk/Treasurer Robin Miller, Keith Swann and Karl Bissex of Plainfield Arts, Road Foreman Michael Bingham, Steve Farnham, and Social Concerns Committee members Judy Cyprian and Marcy Hale.

Chair Carlson called the meeting to order at 5:04 pm.

Changes to Agenda:

There were no changes to the agenda.

Town Hall Opera House Budget Discussion:

Keith Swann and Karl Bissex of Plainfield Arts Board of Directors joined the meeting to discuss the Town Hall Opera House budget. Miller stated she would provide the total for the Town Hall Opera House reserve fund to Swann and Bissex the following day. Carlson stated that the proposed budget looked agreeable to the Select Board.

Highway Department Budget Discussion:

Road Foreman Michael Bingham joined the meeting to discuss the Highway Department budget. He stated that the main change he proposes is an increase to the equipment fund. He stated he has looked at the current cost of new trucks and equipment and how long they're likely able to be in use to determine the suggested budget amount of approximately \$87,000 for the equipment fund which is increased from last year's budgeted amount of \$50,000. He shared that he's still waiting on an estimate for the needed replacement of the one ton truck so that amount will likely be increased in the final proposed budget. Carlson shared that Steve Farnham had commented in the Zoom chat that equipment will cost more in the future. Davis asked what is done with the

revenue from the sale of the Town's old highway equipment. Miller responded that the money from the recent sale of the Mac truck had gone into the Highway Department equipment fund. Bingham estimated that the one ton truck will likely be replaced next winter with the 2008 road grader being the next piece of equipment likely needing replacement in five to six years. Bingham also requested an increase in the budget for the 2019 Mac truck from \$2500 to \$3000 as it's no longer under warranty, noting also that last year more than the budgeted amount was spent for maintaining this truck. He also requested that paving from the Fire Station up to the base of Maple Hill Rd. be considered in the coming year. There was discussion amongst Select Board members, Bingham, and Miller regarding possible grants or FEMA assistance for funding assistance for repaving. Miller stated that currently the paving fund has \$62,000. Bingham gave a rough estimate of over \$100,000 to address repairing that section of road. Carlson noted that Farnham had asked in the Zoom chat for an estimate of the cost difference between maintaining a broken road versus repaving the road. Bingham noted that a newly surfaced road is less damaging to equipment. Davis voiced concern about increasing the budget too greatly and the impact this might have on taxes and Volz added that the state education tax is expected to increase this year. Carlson stated that the priority should be to investigate potential grants prior to increasing the paving fund. Bingham stated that the budgeted amount for hot mix could be reduced from \$10,000 to \$7,000 as less is used since the resurfacing of the Main St. Bridge. He also noted that the amount budgeted for tires could be reduced from \$22,500 to what it had been the previous year at \$9,000 as the tires have already been replaced on the grader.

Bingham voiced concern about cars parked on the village streets overnight, stating this has been a problem which is impacting the road crew's ability to clear the roads following snowfall. He requested that the Select Board contact Constable Keast regarding the issue. There was discussion as to Keast's interest in continuing to serve as Constable. Carlson will follow up with Keast. Select Board members will look into the possibility of authorizing Miller to issue parking tickets and discuss at a future meeting.

Social Concerns Committee Budget Discussion:

Marcy Hale joined the meeting to discuss the Social Concerns Committee budget. Volz noted that the committee is requesting a budget decrease of \$275. Hale noted this is due to a number of groups not applying for funding this year that had applied in the previous year. She asked if the Social Concerns application could be changed for the coming year removing the option for the applicant to request a face to face meeting with the committee and a change of language on the application from "is this a change in what you've requested" to "is this a change in what you've received". Volz stated that the committee can contact Assistant Town Clerk Carol Smith to make the requested changes to the application. Select Board members agreed that the Social Concerns Committee budget request looked good. Judy Cyprian joined the discussion and asked if the Select Board agreed with the committee's decision not to fund Central Vermont Economic Development Corporation (CVEDC). Carlson stated that the Select Board agrees, as CVEDC

doesn't meet the qualifications for consideration, but noted that the organization could petition the town to request funds.

Adjourn:

Volz moved to adjourn at 5:57 pm. The motion carried unanimously.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Kristin Brosky, Plainfield Town Administrative Assistant.