

Plainfield Select Board Meeting
June 13, 2016
Approved Minutes

PRESENT: Betsy Ziegler (Select Board Member), Bram Towbin (Select Board Chair), Ross Sneyd (Select Board Member), Linda Wells (Town Clerk/Treasurer), Keith Swann (Videographer), Cindy Wyckoff (Minutes Recorder), Mary Lane (Main Street Resident), George Cushing (Brook Road Resident and Town Constable), Bob Atchinson (Plainfield Energy Coordinator), Eric Blaisdell (Times Argus), Andrea Day (Dufresne Group), Bob Fancher (Mill Street Resident), Melinda Vieux (Main Street Resident), Michael Billingsley (Hudson Avenue Resident, Plainfield Hazard Mitigation Committee Member, and Proposed New Plainfield Emergency Management Director), Rose Paul (East Hill Road Resident), Dave Strong (East Hill Road Resident), Alice Merrill (Main Street Resident), Nick Meltzer (VTRANS), Kathy Fancher (Mill Street Resident), Karl Bissex (East Hill Road Resident), Ki Walker (Spruce Mountain Road Resident), Dan Olrochenk (Spruce Mountain Road Resident), Robert Bridges (Middle Road Resident and Outgoing Plainfield Emergency Management Director), Ellen Selkowitz (Spruce Mountain Road Resident), George Springston, (East Hill Road Resident).

Bram Towbin called the meeting to order at 6:35pm.

Towbin called for a moment of silence with regard to yesterday's tragedy in Orlando, Florida.

AGENDA

- Announcements/Public Comment
- Town Clerk's Report
- Road Report
- Minutes
- Local Concerns Meeting Regarding New Sidewalk Project: Dufresne Group will be presenting information about the scoping study process and taking public comment in regard to desired pedestrian and/or bicycle improvements along Creamery Street, Brook Road, Mill Street, and Main Street
- Emergency Management Director Transition: Thank you to Rob Bridges; Introducing Michael Billingsley
- Discussion of Spruce Mountain Road
- Plainfield Weather Station
- Adjourn

Appointments to the Resiliency Committee and Follow-up on Hudson Avenue were added to the above agenda. **Ross Sneyd made a motion to approve the agenda as amended. Betsy Ziegler seconded the motion. The motion was approved.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS/PUBLIC COMMENT

- Ziegler volunteered for a committee to begin organizing Plainfield's Old Home Day, which will be held on 9/17/16, and made an appeal for additional committee volunteers.

- Towbin thanked Ziegler for her work on flower beds around the Village and called for additional volunteers. Anyone interested should contact Ziegler, Town Clerk Linda Wells, or Towbin himself.

FOLLOW-UP ON HUDSON AVENUE

- Towbin reviewed the water drainage problem on Hudson Avenue, noting subsequent ditch-digging work done by the Road Crewed to address the issue. Towbin directed Road Foreman Mike Nolan to alert him to the need for re-digging the ditch when necessary. Towbin and Sneyd noted that the Town has been responsive to the situation, and Sneyd called for a formal motion to draft a letter to the landowner stating that the Town will not be making any financial restitution as requested by the landowner. Ziegler noted the notification issue involving cars that park in that area when ditch-digging work needs to be done. Nolan stated that keeping the ditch dug in the summer was not a problem, but that in the winter the ditch under cars gets packed with ice. Discussion followed on an alternative area for parking. **Sneyd made a motion that the Select Board send a letter to the landowner explaining that the Town has no financial obligation as requested by the landowner, that the Town will keep the ditch clear as long as cars are not obstructing access, and that notifications will be placed on cars that are obstructing access to re-digging the ditch. Towbin seconded the motion. The motion was approved.**

ROAD REPORT

- Towbin stated that three bids have been submitted for sand and hauling: \$735 per yard; \$710 per yard; and \$715 per yard. Towbin noted, and Nolan agreed, that the services from the two lowest bids would be identical and recommended that the lowest bid of \$710 per yard be accepted. **Ziegler made a motion to accept the \$710 per yard bid from M. Brown Trucking. Sneyd seconded the motion. The motion was approved.**
- Towbin invited everyone to help themselves to freshly cut peonies that he had brought from his flower farm to share.
- Nolan noted that the Road Crew will be able to finish up grading work this week and will start working on the Recreation Field Road culvert next week. Towbin stated that Dubois & King was doing impressive work on repairing the crumbling wall at the base of Cameron Road, which Nolan said will be completed by tomorrow. Towbin noted that there is severe erosion at a culvert on Country Club Road, which Nolan said he will attend to this week.

REPORT FROM BOB ATCHINSON

- Energy Coordinator Bob Atchinson presented a certification letter stating that the Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Station has been completed and that project expenditures have reached 100% of the grant funding. Towbin signed the document on behalf of the Select Board. Atchinson also read aloud a close-out statement written to the grantors at the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, the Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development, EV Vermont, and the Vermont Downtown Program, noting a few measures yet to be taken and the success of the honor-system coin box used to offset kilowatt usage. Towbin stated that in all the real estate listings for Plainfield, it is noted that that the Town now has an EV Charging Station. Towbin commended Atchinson for his work on bringing both the charging station and the solar array at the Park and Ride to fruition, which was met with applause from the meeting participants.

- In terms of municipal lighting, Atkinson reported on the strobing-light issue at the entrance to Recreation Field Road, that three new lamps will be installed by GMP at no cost, and that he was addressing directional issues regarding a couple of lights in the Village. Resident Mary Lane asked about the absence of a light near her house on Main Street and Towbin stated the issue might be addressed by increasing the brightness level of another light in the vicinity.

TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

- Town Clerk Linda Wells noted her recent discussion with the person responsible for mowing about several areas that need trimming around the Village. Discussion followed regarding a tree down by the tennis court at the Recreation Field and trimming by the solar array at the Park and Ride, which Towbin said would be discussed more fully at a later time.
- Wells noted a correspondence from L&D Safety Marking requesting traffic control from the Town when the company comes to paint fog lines at the end of Creamery Street and stop lines. After determining that the streets could not be closed off during the painting process, Towbin requested that Ziegler ask the company for an estimate on the cost of providing a flagger.

LOCAL CONCERNS MEETING REGARDING NEW SIDEWALK PROJECT

- Ziegler introduced Andrea Day from the Dufresne Group, who is the project engineer for the Lower Village Sidewalk Scoping Study. The purpose of this first public-input meeting is to provide preliminary information on the project and receive feedback from residents on installing sidewalks on Creamery Street and Brook Road to connect to the existing sidewalks in the Village. Day explained that as a result of this meeting, a Purpose and Needs Statement will be created to develop alternatives that address any issues raised, which subsequently will be reviewed at a second public meeting. The scoping phase of the project will culminate in a final report, reviewed by both the Town and VTRANS, in mid-February 2017. Objectives thus far in the conceptual phase involve slowing down speeding vehicles, promoting pedestrian travel and safety, and completing the sidewalk infrastructure around the Lower Village, including addressing such problem areas as the pole in the sidewalk leading up to the Park and Ride. Discussion ensued including widening bridges on Brook Road and Mill Street to accommodate a sidewalk and timing both projects to coincide, pedestrian and bicycle traffic, the narrowness of Brook Road, drainage issues, sidewalk width, potential encroachment on properties, when the actual construction phase would begin, privacy issues with the added presence of sidewalks, proximity of barn to road on Creamery Street, encouraging use of the Park and Ride by enhancing pedestrian safety, and making the Village more attractive and cohesive. Project information presented by the Dufresne Group can be found on its website at www.dufresnegroup.com.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DIRECTOR TRANSITION

- Towbin thanked Rob Bridges for his service on both Plainfield's Development Review Board (DRB) and as the Town's Emergency Management Director. Due to his upcoming retirement in November of 2016, Bridges will be stepping down from both the DRB at the end of his term in March 2017 and as Emergency Management Director effective 9/1/16. Michael Billingsley has agreed to succeed Bridges as Emergency Management Director and Bridges will be available until December 2016 to help with any transition issues. Bridges encouraged the Select Board to consider adding a line item to the budget in support of the position in the future for such things as training, travel, educational

materials, and supplies to support the Red Cross shelter at Goddard College. Meeting participants gave a round of applause in appreciation for Bridges's service. Bridges made a brief statement regarding his work in the position and voiced support for Billingsley as his replacement going forward. It was decided that the formal appointment of Billingsley take place at the next Select Board meeting and that adding a line item for the position be considered when Town budget discussions take place.

DISCUSSION OF SPRUCE MOUNTAIN ROAD

- Towbin reviewed the situation on Spruce Mountain Road regarding varied complaints of unauthorized encampments and issues at the turnaround area before the trailhead parking lot. He gave examples of circumstances where local government has and does not have a responsibility in managing complaints by neighbors. Discussion followed regarding keeping the turnaround area clear and making sure that any vehicles that are parked or being worked on in the area are well off the side of the road. It was noted that there is a car on its side with the potential for leaking fluids into the ground, which the owner of the car assured was not the case. Towbin recommended that the car owner talk with Zoning Administrator Karen Storey regarding any regulations and/or permit requirements. The discussion concluded on this not being a case of the Town dictating what needs to be done to correct the issues, but the concept of maintaining an element of neighborliness and quality of life. Sneyd noted, however, that the car on its side has to be removed and Towbin suggested contacting those in the Town who might be able to help find an inexpensive means of towing it from the premises.

PLAINFIELD WEATHER STATION

- In light of the potential for flash flooding affecting Plainfield, Resident George Springston presented for consideration the idea of setting up a weather station for citizens to access through the internet. He noted a network of amateur weather stations throughout the country and beyond that are quite effective in providing supplemental information and warnings. The cost of an appropriate model for such use is approximately \$1,200, including all the accessories needed to enable it to be web-based. Springston has spoken to Michael Birnbaum, who would be willing to host a station. He noted the necessity of having a dependable internet connection and reliable power, and the advantage of having someone somewhat technically savvy and detail-oriented to deal with such issues as backup battery power in the event of an outage. Towbin noted his enthusiasm for the idea of a weather station, especially in terms of the weather situation going forward, but stated that fitting it into the budget would need to be considered. Sneyd asked about Town ownership of the station, what an agreement might look like with Birnbaum, and the possibility of grant funding.

APPOINTMENTS TO THE RESILIENCY COMMITTEE

- Ziegler noted that two people, Dave Ferland and Loona Brogan, have expressed interest in joining the Resiliency Committee. **Ziegler made a motion to appoint Dave Ferland and Loona Brogan to the Resiliency Committee. Towbin seconded the motion. The motion was approved.**

FLEET PERMIT REQUEST

- Towbin presented a Fleet Permit application for Black Rock Coal, Inc. **Sneyd made a motion to approve the Fleet Permit for Black Rock Coal, Inc.. Ziegler seconded the motion. The motion was approved.**

APPROVE MINUTES

- Minutes from the 5/23/16 Select Board meeting were presented for review. **Ziegler made a motion to approve the minutes from the 5/23/16 Select Board meeting as written. Towbin seconded the motion. The motion was approved.**

HISTORIC SITE PLAN REVIEW FOR THE PLAINFIELD TOWN HALL OPERA HOUSE

- Towbin noted that the Development Review Board had approved the Historic Site Plan Review for the addition to be built on the Plainfield Town Hall Opera House.

RESUMPTION OF DISCUSSION ON FLAGGERS DURING STOP SIGN LINE PAINTING

- Ziegler will check to see if L&D Safety Marking can send a flagger for the line painting work and what the cost would be. **Sneyd made a motion to spend up to \$3,200 on the line painting by L&D Safety Marking. Ziegler seconded the motion. The motion was approved.**

OTHER

- Ziegler requested that going forward the Select Board consider small expenditures for maintaining such things in the Village as gardens and trash/recycling pickup. Both Sneyd and Towbin agreed that these improvements, including benefits to the Town from having an EV Charging Station, are important assets worth supporting.
- Proposed new Emergency Management Director Billingsley provided the Select Board with copies of his resume and presented FEMA and GMP flood maps to aid in the discussion at the next meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 9:10pm on a motion by Ziegler. Sneyd seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

Respectfully submitted by Cindy Wyckoff