

**Town of Plainfield
Plainfield Select Board Meeting
November 28, 2016
Approved Minutes**

PRESENT: Ross Sneyd (Select Board Member), Bram Towbin (Select Board Chair), Betsy Ziegler (Select Board Member), Keith Swann (Videographer), Cindy Wyckoff (Minutes Recorder), Eric Blaisdell (Times Argus), David Strong (Friends of the Plainfield Town Hall Opera House and Pedestrian Bridge Project), Pat Travers (Pedestrian Bridge Project), and Michael Billingsley (Hazard Mitigation Committee and Emergency Management Director).

Bram Towbin called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

AGENDA

- Announcements and Public Comment
- Town Clerk's Report
- Road Report
- Summary of Town Employee Health Insurance Decision
- Preliminary Discussion of Budget and Setting Dates for Meetings
- Establishing Formal Plan for New Rec Field Lean To
- Establishing Formal Plan for Old Bus Shelter
- Library Grant Progress
- Pedestrian Bridge Update
- Hazard Committee Update
- Minutes

Betsy Ziegler added discussion of the results of the recent meeting of the Pedestrian Sidewalk Study project to the agenda and the Pedestrian Bridge project update was moved to earlier in the meeting.

Ross Sneyd made a motion to approve the agenda as amended. Ziegler seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/PUBLIC COMMENT

- Towbin announced a 6:30pm meeting on 12/12/14 at the Town Hall Opera House where a representative from Washington County Mental Health will discuss services available. Andrea Day from the Dufresne Group will also be present to discuss the proposed Pedestrian Sidewalk Study project in the Lower Village. Towbin encouraged those with opinions or concerns to attend. Towbin noted another meeting that evening at the Labor Hall to discuss potential budget cuts resulting from the Trump election.
- Ziegler announced that there will be a meeting of the Resiliency Committee at the Cutler Library on 12/14/16 at 6:30pm to discuss a neighborhood watch.
- David Strong announced that the Friends of the Plainfield Town Hall Opera House has launched a membership drive. Towbin read aloud the appeal letter that has been sent to approximately 100

people. Strong explained that membership fee funds are needed to apply for 501 c 3 status and pay for liability insurance. A budget request will be made through the Select Board to help oversee the building. Strong noted that the Friends are gearing up for a major fund drive in the spring for the planned addition to the building. Discussion followed on several upcoming events at the Town Hall Opera House, including a Farmers' Market on 12/18/16 from 10am to 2pm and a Christmas carol program, the date of which is as yet unknown.

PEDESTRIAN SIDEWALK STUDY UPDATE

- Ziegler reviewed the background and current status of the Pedestrian Sidewalk Study project, funded by the Vermont Department of Transportation, to look into the possibility of completing the sidewalk network throughout the Lower Village and improve the section of sidewalk on Main Street between the Fire Station and the Park and Ride. Ziegler reported that survey responses and comments received via email and Facebook expressed both support and concerns. Towbin noted that additional comments will be collected at the 12/12/16 meeting at the Town Hall Opera House. Ziegler underscored the fact that the project is currently in the study phase and is a necessary step in developing a proposal to fund construction.

TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

- Town Clerk/Treasurer Linda Wells was not present.
- Towbin noted the following items for the Select Board to review and approve:
 - Painting of the interior of the Town Offices;
 - A cost increase of \$202 for the new skating rink liner at the Recreation Field. **Ziegler made a motion to expend an additional \$202 to purchase a new liner for the skating rink at the Recreation Field. Sneyd seconded the motion. The motion was approved.**
 - The new Brookfield maintenance contract for \$250 to service the emergency generator at the Town Hall Opera House. **Ziegler made a motion to approve the sum of \$250 for the Program I Brookfield service maintenance contract. Sneyd seconded the motion. The motion was approved.**
 - An invoice for the repair work on the roof at the Town Hall Opera House, which Towbin presented to David Strong. Strong is working with Wells regarding the 20% match for the cost of the work.

ROAD REPORT

- Road Foreman Mike Nolan was not present.
- Towbin noted a few line items in the Highway Department budget that will need attention going forward. The first is a physical documentation of all of the culverts in the Town. Because of the approximately \$12,000 cost to do the entire project at one time, it will be done in stages. A portion of that cost will be included in the upcoming budget. There is also the need to purchase a part for use on the street cleaning equipment and a sand sifter.

PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE UPDATE

- Local Project Manager Pat Travers reported on the status of the Pedestrian Bridge project, noting that three processes were going on at the present time: 1) the project design itself, which includes the design of both the sidewalk and the bridge, and which consists of conceptual, preliminary, and

final design phases; 2) the right-of-way process; and 3) the historical and environmental review, also called the categorical exclusion.

- Travers detailed the specifics and current status of the project design process. David Strong noted that he and four other community members, appointed by the Select Board, are serving on a local advisory committee to oversee the project. Travers described the proposed style of the bridge and noted that a 20'-30'-foot-long retaining wall on the east side of the river will be required. While the retaining wall will add to the project's cost, both Strong and Travers noted that the increase will be offset by the fact that the actual bridge construction costs have come in lower than the figure budgeted for in the conceptual design estimate.
- Travers stated that the right-of-way process will entail acquiring temporary construction easement agreements from three property owners, and that there will be no permanent takings. The proposed construction easement documents and right-of-way drawing are currently being reviewed by VTRANS and are expected back by mid-December 2016. At that point, the three property owners can be approached. The process will move forward more quickly if all of the property owners agree to the easements without requiring compensation. If any do, additional time will be necessary to negotiate rental specifics and rewrite the easement agreements.
- Travers reported that the archeological study and the historic and environmental review, or categorical exclusion, has been completed and is now being reviewed by the Federal Highway Administration. Because the railings that will be removed from the existing bridge are considered historical, the Federal Highway Administration needs to do a thorough review of the project. This review is expected to be completed by the end of January 2017 after which time a public hearing will be held followed by the submission of the preliminary plan to VTRANS for review. VTRANS will either approve the preliminary design or make modifications that will need to be incorporated. At this point, the final design phase will be complete and construction specifications can be developed. Travers noted that if the right-of-way process goes smoothly, he estimates that the project can go out to bid in early to mid-summer 2017.
- Travers noted that two additional permits will be required. Because the project crosses a river, an in-the-river permit is needed from the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources and a permit for working within the floodplain is needed from the Army Corps of Engineers. In addition, Green Mountain Power has to formally approve the relocation of the utility pole by the kiosk on the east side of the river to accommodate the sidewalk.
- Discussion followed on the timeframe of the bid process and the source of the Town's 10% match, approximately \$40,000, for the project. Strong noted that it had been decided that the Town's match will come from the Arch Batchelder fund, the namesake of which had donated money to the Town in the 1930s and whose property was located on the site of the proposed project. Travers estimated that if construction begins on 9/1/17, the project should be completed by 11/1/17.
- Travers provided a brief update on the State's plans to address the dangerous Route 2/Main Street intersection, noting that VTRANS has gone back through some conceptual designs and is doing additional research.

ESTABLISHING FORMAL PLAN FOR NEW REC FIELD LEAN TO

- Strong recommended establishing a committee to development designs for the new structure and its location. He noted a matching grant that is available through the State of Vermont's Recreational Facilities Program, the application process for which will be coming up in July 2017. Strong

suggested having a design, plan, and cost estimate ready to go at that time. He stated that \$500 was raised at the last Old Home Days event, which needs to be spent before the end of this fiscal year in June 2017. Strong recommended that it be spent on getting someone to help with the design process. A brief discussion followed on the possibility of fundraising to generate revenue towards the Town's matching funds for the project and engaging volunteers.

ESTABLISHING FORMAL PLAN FOR OLD BUS SHELTER

- Strong noted that he had obtained a \$400 estimate from Carroll Concrete to pour concrete for the cement pad at the relocation site of the old bus shelter at the Post Office. Excavation, installation of rebar, and screeding of the concrete would need to be done by volunteers. It was agreed that it was too late to start the project this year, but a plan should be in place for the spring of 2017.
- Towbin reminded that there is a 5,000-gallon plastic tank available that the Town had used for spreading chloride. It has a small crack, but is usable. Anyone interested should contact Town Clerk Linda Wells.

HAZARD COMMITTEE UPDATE

- Michael Billingsley noted the beneficial nature of coordination among the Town's Emergency Management Director, the Hazard Mitigation Committee, the Resiliency Committee, and the emergency response team, stating that they are looking for ways to increase the overlap. He provided an update on the issues being considered by the Hazard Mitigation Committee, including: options for Brook Road bridge improvements if funding is not available; the history of damage caused to road and bridge infrastructures by the Great Brook; vulnerabilities associated with the location of Twinfield Union School; identifying vulnerable households in Town; and building the public's familiarity with the destructive aspects of Great Brook's behavior resulting from various flood loads.
- Billingsley reported on his recent activities as the Town's Emergency Management Director (EMD), noting that at recent trainings he attended, he was informed of the extreme importance of preparation for and documentation of emergency events. Due to the fact that contractors have to stop working after 72 hours in the aftermath of a disaster, Towbin asked Billingsley to explore templates that other towns might use in pre-contracting with vendors. Other EMD activities Billingsley reported on included: getting the Goddard College shelter fully compliant and available, including auxiliary capacity to care for stranded animals; forming an emergency management district with Cabot and Marshfield; building a team of trained volunteers available in a flooding event to help manage traffic and assist in directing others towards safety and away from danger; understanding the changes in the weather to be better prepared for climate-driven disasters; and obtain better mapping from and forming a notification network with Green Mountain Power.

LIBRARY GRANT PROGRESS

- Sneyd reported that the Cutler Library is ready to apply to the State for the planning grant, but before doing so, a public hearing needs to be held. The tentative plan is hold the public hearing on 12/19/16 to give the Library time to apply for the grant before the end of December, with the goal of having a decision by the State in February. The Select Board will need to endorse and authorize the application and therefore will be presented with a resolution at its 12/12/16 meeting.

SUMMARY OF TOWN EMPLOYEE HEALTH INSURANCE DECISION

- Towbin summarized the decision by the Select Board regarding which plan to choose for Town employee health insurance, noting a premium increase of between 9.5-10%. The Town will pay 93% and employees will pay 7% of the total premium.

PRELIMINARY DISCUSSION OF BUDGET AND SETTING DATES FOR MEETINGS

- Towbin noted that budget meetings need to be set up for the Highway Department and the Fire Department. Tentative dates of 12/15/16 at 4pm or 12/8/16 at 4pm were agreed upon to present as options to the two departments. A brief discussion followed on possible budget items needing to be discussed by the two departments, what other department budgets need to be discussed at the meeting, and the deadline for completing the Town budget.

CAMERON ROAD BUY OUT – UPDATE

- Towbin reported that there has been a hold up in the buy-out process of the house on Cameron Road, which is in danger of falling into the Great Brook. Towbin expressed hope that he will know which direction the situation is going in within the next week and a half and be able to report back at the next Select Board meeting.

PEDESTRIAN SIDEWALK PROJECT

- Ziegler noted that a motion was needed to confirm that the Select Board had been officially apprised of the public comments received on the proposed Pedestrian Sidewalk Study project. **Sneyd made a motion confirming that the Select Board has officially accepted the public comments received on the proposed Pedestrian Sidewalk Study project. Ziegler seconded the motion. The motion was approved.** Towbin noted that he had received a public comment via email on the project, which he will forward to Ziegler.

MINUTES

- **Sneyd made a motion to approve the minutes from the 11/18/16 Special Select Board meeting as submitted. Towbin seconded the motion. The motion was approved.**
- **Sneyd made a motion to approve the minutes from the 11/14/16 Select Board meeting as submitted. Ziegler seconded the motion. The motion was approved.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:50pm on a motion by Sneyd. Ziegler seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

The meeting was reconvened to consider a request from Patrick Tibbetts for an access permit at 865 Maxfield Road. After a brief review, **Sneyd made a motion to approve the 30' by 15" access permit request from Patrick Tibbetts at 865 Maxfield Road. Towbin seconded the motion. The motion was approved.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:55pm on a motion by Sneyd. Ziegler seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

Respectfully submitted by Cindy Wyckoff