

Cavendish Selectboard Meeting, Monday, July 17th, 2023, at 6:30 pm
Location: Town Office Meeting Room: 37 High Street Cavendish, Vermont

Present: Bob Glidden (Chairman), George Timko, Shannon Devereux, Stephen Plunkard, Rick Chambers (Town Manager), Jen Leak (Recording Secretary), Noah Schmidt (OVTV) and citizens as listed on the attached sheet.

Absent: Mike Ripley

- **Call the meeting to order**

Bob Glidden, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 6:31 pm.

- **Approval of Minutes from June 12th and June 29th 2023**

Shannon Devereux moved/Bob Glidden seconded a motion to approve the minutes of June 12 and June 29, 2023 as written. All voted in favor.

- **Adjust Agenda**

There were no adjustments.

- **Hear Citizens**

Carl Snyder was present. Carl said he had noticed that the flashing speed limit sign in the school zone going east on Route 131 was not flashing. He also asked why there was no school zone sign on Depot Street and whether a flashing pedestrian flashing crossing sign would be installed in front of the school. George said that since cars must stop at the end of Depot Street before turning onto Route 131 a school zone sign did not seem necessary. George said that the lanes would need to be narrowed if a pedestrian crossing sign was installed, which wasn't practical.

- **New Business**

1. **Flood Update**

Rick said that all the town roads have sustained some damage. He said that most roads are now passable except for parts of Brook and Cavendish Gulf Roads. He added that roads will be closed as crews continue to work on them. Rick said that a lot of local equipment and materials are being used. He added that it is still difficult to get materials trucked in and some roads will take a long time to fix completely. Rick said he believed that the roads to all residences were now accessible although some driveways were not.

Rick said that the emergency coordination worked well, the shelters were opened, communication between all parties was good and the fire departments checked on people. He said that residents should report damages by calling 211 or online at vermont211.org. Rick said that Margo has typed up a summary of the relief efforts to date.

Stephen asked for an update on the state roads. Rick said that he hasn't heard much about the plan for Route 131. He said that he had received the bridge inspection reports that day.

George said that last year the Town was looking at replacing the bridge on Meadowbrook Farm Road. Rick that said both the bridge and culvert were washed out on that road.

Stephen asked if rather than rebuilding things the same way they were, the Town could look at historical records and try to prevent these things from happening again. Rick agreed that this

would be a good time to have a discussion about what can be done with the rivers.

Stephen asked if ARPA funds could be used for any of the repair projects. George said that since the Town set up a Committee and application process he wasn't sure that the Board could now choose to use the money differently. Margo commented that the ARPA funds wouldn't cover much of these projects, but she suggested they could be used for equipment to provide a Zoom option for meetings which would be useful during events like this.

Robert C. Glidden, Emergency Management Director, was present. He thanked Rick, the town office staff and the highway crew for their support and communication during the flooding. He said that the shelter did a great job taking care of people. Bob said that Meadowbrook Campground was the most challenging place to reach and people were stranded there needing food, medicine and water, but they were able to get to them via snowmobile trails. Rick said that he and Bob will meet and review to make future responses better.

Margo Caulfield was present and said that she thought this situation was more difficult than Tropical Storm Irene for homeowners and renters, especially in cases where landlords have not taken care of existing property issues. She said that she thought water and supplies should be cached in areas around town. Margo said that donations are coming in from all over and right now dehumidifiers are in demand.

Rick said that there are dumpsters on Depot Street for disposal of flood debris.

2. Selectboard to Set Rates for 2023-2024 Tax Year

Diane McNamara, Town Clerk/Treasurer, was present. Diane reviewed the proposed FY24 tax rates with the Board. She said that there are four tax rates – a homestead and non-homestead rate for each of the two fire districts. Bob explained that the fire district one budget increased due to payments on a new fire truck spread over the next six years. Diane said that the increase over last year is .25/\$100 for fire district two and .35/\$100 for fire district one.

George commented that the overall grand list value has decreased a little bit from last year. Diane said that while new construction is in progress and house sales prices are higher the grand list values don't increase right away. She added that the values for Velco aren't set by the Town and vary widely year to year.

George Timko moved/Shannon Devereux seconded a motion to approve the tax rates for district one homestead at 2.4572/\$100 and non-homestead at 2.5154/\$100, and district two homestead at 2.3814/\$100 and non-homestead at 2.4396/\$100 as proposed. All voted in favor.

Diane said that the town office had planned to be closed one day last week to print tax bills, but due to the flooding that didn't work out. She said that the office will print those bills as soon as possible, and the first quarter will be due a month after they are mailed out.

3. Lead Service Line Inventory

Rick said that the State has changed the rules and no longer allows lead goosenecks in water systems. He said that the Town needs to identify where they are located, perhaps by digging them up, and create an inventory. Rick said that once they are identified the State will send in contractors to replace them at no cost. Rick said that they need to be identified by end of this year, and replaced the following year. He added that the timeline may be delayed due to the

recent floods.

4. LED Streetlights

Rick said that he believed this project was in progress before he became Town Manager. He said that new lights will cost \$10,073.35 (after Efficiency Vermont incentives) and the estimated savings per year will be \$3,247.20, so the project costs will be paid back in savings within 2-3 years.

Carl said that he thought the fire district owned the lights in Proctorsville and that they had been placed to aid firefighting purposes. Bob said that the lights were installed by the village of Proctorsville. Carl suggested that their placements might be looked at again.

5. MERP (Municipal Energy Resilience Program) Grant

Rick said the Energy Committee would like to apply for a \$4,000 mini-grant which could be used to investigate making the town office ADA compliant.

George Timko moved/Stephan Plunkard seconded a motion to allow the Energy Committee to submit an application for a MERP mini-grant to study ADA-compliance for the Town Office building. All voted in favor.

6. School Board Appointment Recommendation

Sandra Russo was present and read a statement in support of the Board putting forward one candidate for the School Board to approve. She said that she felt Lisa Sanders would be the best candidate.

Megan Jones was present and spoke about her experience with mental health and how she could bring that experience to the School Board.

Rick said that Lisa Sanders had sent a letter for him to read tonight as she could not be here.

Rick added that the Select Board could not appoint a candidate but could make a recommendation for appointment by the School Board.

Steve Perani, School Board representative from Cavendish, was present. He said that a Cavendish Parent Teacher Group has formed since the superintendent introduced the idea of restructuring the schools in the district. He said that the 60-member group has endorsed Lisa Sanders, as do both current representatives and the former representative Dennis Reilly.

Adam Woodell was present and said that he is Megan's partner. He said that he was originally also interested in being appointed to the School Board when there seemed to be two open positions but he decided that Megan was better suited to serve.

Margo said that she was excited to see so many people wanting to be on the Board. She said that she has seen Lisa in the school and was impressed with how she worked with kids. Margo said that she hoped that all these candidates would run in the March elections.

George Timko moved/Bob Glidden seconded a motion to put forth Lisa Sanders as the recommendation for Cavendish representative to the Green Mountain Unified School Board until the next local elections in March 2024. George added that it would be good for everyone

to run in the March election. *All voted in favor.*

Bob said that they will give this recommendation to the School Board and see what they do with it. Steve said that the next School Board meeting will be in August.

- **Old Business**

1. **Tree Removal at Church**

Rick said that he has not gotten any new information from the abutting landowner or quotes from other tree removal services. He said that Steve's son, who had offered to remove the tree, will be here the 3rd week in August. Margo said that she will reach out to the abutting landowner and ask her to contact the town.

- **Managers Report**

Rick said that the stormwater permit for the Proctorsville Green expired during the transition between Town Managers so he will hire an engineer to put together a new permit.

Rick said that the Town has hired a new person for the vacant highway position, Alex Turco, who will start tomorrow.

Rick said that he would like to ask people to be patient over the next few weeks as work on the town roads progresses.

- **Future Agenda Items Proposals**

George asked if it had been determined whether the road behind Murdock's is a town road or not and will the town fix it. Rick said that he had started to look into that before the flooding and it is town land with a town storm drain on it.

- **Adjourn**

George Timko moved/Shannon Devereux seconded a motion to adjourn at 7:28. All voted in favor.

Minutes Approved: _____

Date: _____