

## Selectboard Minutes May 8, 2023

Selectboard Present: Jessica Pollack (chair), Andy Coyne (vice-chair) and Greg Meulemans

Public Present: Paul Fraser, Mike Tuller (Town Administrator), Greg Lakis, Greg Joly, Anne Connor, Michael Connor, Keith Hazard (Road Foreman), Bryan Zieroff, Tiana Smith (GMP), Mike Burke (GMP), Don Mills (GMP), Jacki Brown, Patrick McQuillan

Jessica called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

### *1. Call for any late additions to the agenda*

- Special meeting to ratify actions of Treasurer/Delinquent Tax Collector
- Flag pole

### *2. Approve the minutes from the April 24<sup>th</sup> Selectboard meeting*

Jessica made a motion to approve the minutes from April 24th, seconded by Greg. All in favor.

### *3. Presentation by Green Mountain Power (GMP)*

This winter was tough for everyone. GMP serves 77% of Vermont. There had not been a major storm since Halloween 2019 but there have been 4 major storms this winter. It was a drastic change from what we have seen recently. When it snows at 33 degrees, the effect is like an ice storm.

The storm in March was forecast for 12-18 inches, but some places ended up getting over 40 inches.

They are relooking at their climate plan.

There are plans for resiliency rebuilding.

They are putting spacer cables where there are not any. They are concentrating on all of Route 30. If they do not have the main line on, they cannot fix the smaller connections that come off the main line.

They have plans for each zone, some will be underground lines, some will be cable and conduit. Spacer cable has been run from the Townshend Dam up to Jamaica. Route 100 South will be next. They are upgrading the infrastructure with storm hardened construction. They are also using self-healing distribution lines and battery storage.

Battery panels do help keep some power on, they are powered from solar. Certain types of electric cars can be used to power your home, as a backup. In the future, they hope

that all electric cars will be able to do this!

Projects:

- Route 30, Jamaica to Dummerston, through Townshend and Newfane and parts of Dover and Brookline. They will be putting spacer cable.
- Route 100, Wardsboro-Main backbone from Route 30 along Route 100 into Wardsboro.
- West Hill Rd from Townshend Dam- main feed into rural parts off Dover and Wardsboro. This will also be getting a spacer cable.
- Resiliency Zone in Brattleboro
- Resiliency Zone in Grafton

The goal is to have this all done by next winter but is not guaranteed.

Outreach: They use social media and have an app.

Unfortunately, during some storms, a lot of people are without internet or cell service.

Jamaica was one of the hardest hit towns in the last storm. One road alone had 30 trees down.

They ended up with 3,000 outages. They brought in a lot of extra help for this storm.

They are part of a mutual assistance group that allows them to help others and get help from others. Our neighboring states all had as many or more outages, that is why they had to have help come from farther away.

Restoration Process:

1. Clear Hazards
2. Repair Transmission and Substation Facilities
3. Restore Hospitals & Emergency Response Facilities
4. Restore Main Distribution Lines
5. Restore Areas with Largest number of Customers
6. Restore Isolated Events

**Under no circumstances should anyone be cutting trees from powerlines. They need people to be safe during these times.**

The full presentation is available at [jamaicavermont.org](http://jamaicavermont.org)

*4. Roads Update by Road Foreman*

Keith Hazard, the Road Foreman joined the meeting. The other side of South Hill is going to be paved this summer. There are 9 culverts that are getting contracted out, they are deep so the town equipment will not be enough. They are working on the stream on

Water Street, they are meeting with the river engineer to move forward with this project.

The Pikes Falls culverts project will begin in June. The road will be closed for roughly a month, residents will be able to get to their homes, but it will be closed to thru traffic.

They have been working at identifying needs and updating the culvert map.

They are also short one highway crew member, the person that helped last winter is not an option next winter. They are looking to fill the position with some that has a CDL.

#### *5. Presentation by the Water Street Committee*

Jacki Brown, the chairperson of the committee, shared a presentation at the meeting.

The parcel of land is on Water Street, they want to preserve the land for wildlife while also planting native plants and removing invasive species.

They have focused on making a pollinator friendly ecosystem. They have been engaging the community in the project. The Jamaica School is participating with the project. They will have a presentation at the school on Friday on the importance of pollinators. They have also started receiving donations.

The contractor came in last Friday and prepared the land. He will be removing the invasive species. They will need volunteers to help with getting everything going, dates will be available soon. They will be on Saturdays.

They will be planting over 2,000 starter plants, all native to the area.

They are looking for hay bales, garden supplies and volunteers. There is a facebook page for the project.

#### *6. Proposal by Jamaica Memorial Library for a Poet Laureate*

Michael Connor, one of the library trustees, said it was brought up that the library needs a poet laureate. They are asking the board to give permission to have a contest to name a poet laureate. A poet laureate is a designated artistic person who write poems for special events and occasions.

Jamaica would be the second town in Vermont to have a poet laureate. Robert Frost was a poet laureate. They would like to have it done by Old Home Day.

Jessica made a motion that the Selectboard authorize the Jamaica Library to seek out a Poet Laureate for the town of Jamaica, seconded by Greg. All in favor.

#### *7. Transfer Station Certification*

Mike has been working on this for 6 months. He has a facility plan that he has worked on with Ernie at the Transfer Station and Waste District.

He has abutters letters ready to go out. They go to the state for approval.

Jessica made a motion to approve the application certification as prepared by Mike, seconded by Greg. All in favor.

*8. Commission of surveys for town office and library parcels*

The town owns several properties, including the town office and the library. This started with seeking out grants for the library, part of the grant is to prove you own the property. Greg Joly went to get the deed and it was written with the wrong property description. Greg would like the town to empower the Library Trustees to get a survey of the property, after which they could get a corrective deed.

Jessica added that the town office property is being encroached on and would like to have the property surveyed as well.

Jessica made a motion to approve a survey for the Library and the Town Office, seconded by Greg. All in favor.

*9. Mowing RFPs update*

Andy opened the two cemetery mowing bids.

Will Mowrey: \$10,600

Meeks Maintenance: \$4,610

Andy made a motion to accept Austin Meeks's Bid, seconded by Jessica. All in favor.

**35 miles of Roadside mowing:**

Includes all equipment, fuel and labor

BID \$25,000

Discussion on waiting for full board. Jessica moved to table the motion, seconded by Greg. All in favor.

*10. Review and act on Overweight Permits*

Jessica made a motion to approve the overweight permit for AS Clark & Sons for a fleet, seconded by Andy. All in favor.

*11. Appoint Sexton for Village Cemetery*

Jessica made a motion to appoint Bruce Chapin as the Sexton of Village Cemetery, seconded by Greg. All in favor.

*12. Update on activities of Treasurer/Delinquent Tax Collector Search Committee*

There are 4 resumes, all qualified, one of which is local. The next step is the resumes will go to the committee and they will start to check references and phone interviews.

The Selectboard will hold a Special meeting this week to appoint Sara Wiswall as temporary Treasurer and Delinquent Tax Collector.

The town flag pole needs to be replaced.

*13. Review and approve time sheets for town office, listers, highway and transfer station*

*14. Review and approve pay orders*

*15. Public concerns*

No public concerns

Greg made a motion to adjourn at 9:07 p.m.

Submitted by Sara Wiswall