

Regular Selectboard Meeting
18 December 2024
6:00 PM
Town Office at Isle La Motte School and via Zoom

In Attendance: Peter Brzozowy, Mary-Catherine Graziano, Joe Deller, Pat Treckman, Karen Brunner, Julie Andrus, Dave Andrus, Anne Jobin-Picard, Sylvia Jensen, Vickie Buswell, Barbara Callahan, Bonnie Jarvis, Richard Hill, Steven Reeve, Robin Martin, Ruth Casey (via Zoom), Michele Murray (via Zoom), Charles Gurney (via Zoom), Beth Meese (via Zoom), Michael Simanskas (via Zoom), Kathy Simanskas (via Zoom), Andrea Carbone (via Zoom)

1. **Call to Order:** Meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by Selectboard Chair Peter Brzozowy.
2. **Additions to Agenda:** Additions to the agenda included the following requests, all of which were approved for discussion:
 - Peter Brzozowy requested time to discuss the schedule for the publication of the Town Report. It will be added to the last item under Administration.
 - Peter Brzozowy requested time to discuss the purchase of a computer required for the records digitization workstation in the Town Office.
 - Sylvia Jensen requested time to discuss placing a wreath at the Revolutionary War monument at Burying Yard Point.
3. **Administration**
 - *Approve Selectboard Meeting Minutes from prior meetings -*
 - 13 November 2024 - The minutes were corrected under Roadside Tree Trimming in section 5 to state that Bruce Noble was “generally satisfied with the results” of the first round of tree trimming by Richards Tree Service. A motion to approve the corrected minutes was made by Joe Deller, seconded by Pat Treckman, all in favor.
 - 4 December 2024 - A motion to approve the minutes was made by Pat Treckman, seconded by Mary-Catherine Graziano, all in favor.
 - *Board of Listers - Errors & Omissions -* There were no errors and omissions to review at this meeting.
 - *Warrants for payroll & payables -*
 - 18 December 2024 - Tax refunds in the amount of \$8,379.72. A motion to approve was made by Peter Brzozowy, seconded by Pat Treckman, all in favor.
 - 18 December 2024 - Payroll Transfer for the Internal Revenue Service and Vermont Department of Taxes in the amount of \$1,296.93. A motion to approve was made by Peter Brzozowy, seconded by Pat Treckman, all in favor.
 - 18 December 2024 - Payroll in the amount of \$5,484.61. A motion to approve was made by Joe Deller, seconded by Pat Treckman, all in favor.
 - 16 December 2024 - Payables in the amount of \$39,873.65. A motion to approve was made by Peter Brzozowy, seconded by Pat Treckman, all in favor.
 - 9 December 2024 - Payables in the amount of \$13,359.35. A motion to ratify Pat Treckman’s signature was made by Peter Brzozowy, seconded by Joe Deller, all in favor.
 - *Trustees of Public Funds - discuss line of credit option for Town vs. investment of funds -* The Trustees provided an overview of their options for investing the \$179,576.38 in funds they currently have in their account, a portion of which are being offered to the Town in lieu of a third-party line of credit which may be necessary during the late spring and summer months of 2025. The Selectboard suggested that the Treasurer be contacted to provide a history and a forecast of approximately how much the Town may need during that time, and the Trustees can invest their funds anticipating the amount the Town may need. Also discussed was the outstanding balance due for the LaBombard lots loan which totals \$9,726.11 which will be subject to an interest rate of 0.75%. Peter Brzozowy motioned that the Town will pay off this balance with interest no later than December 15, 2025, seconded by Mary-Catherine Graziano, all in favor.
 - *Dog Ordinance - revised ordinance now in effect -* The ordinance approved in October is now in effect, with the Selectboard overseeing the significant changes being the cost of fines and the reimbursement of the Animal Control Officer expense now being the responsibility of the dog owner.

- *Tree Grant - IPA to discuss possible grant for Veterans Park* - Susan Dunning from the Islands Pickleball Association (IPA) provided an overview of a Vermont tree-planting grant being considered, and Isle La Motte has been included in the draft proposal. Modifying the original plan as discussed with Pat Treckman who had previously shared the plan with the Selectboard, the proposal now envisions placing four large trees around the pickleball/basketball court area. Discussion followed regarding the types of trees, root impact, insect issues, pruning maintenance, and overall size. The trees will be planted and maintained for two years as a part of the grant. The ultimate placement of the trees will be determined around proposed projects planned for the park, and the types of trees to be requested in the grant will be reviewed by Board Member Graziano in conjunction with the Recreation Department, who will also prepare a letter of support from the Town for the IPA to submit with the grant paperwork. A motion to support the project was made by Peter Brzozowy, seconded by Joe Deller, all in favor; Pat Treckman abstained from the vote. Should the grant be received, work must be completed by summer 2026.
- *Tree Cutting in Town Right of Way - review complaint of recent trimming on East Shore Road* - Julie and Dave Andrus were present to read their statement of concern over the recent trimming on East Shore Road near their property in the Town Right of Way. Chair Brzozowy thanked the Andrus' for their statement and time. At this time Robin Martin noted that she had previously stated at a Selectboard meeting that homeowners should need to be advised of tree cutting, which was acknowledged by the Selectboard. Richard Hill requested the opportunity to defend his position regarding emails that had circulated pertaining to his role in the tree cutting on East Shore Road, but as these emails were not part of the statement presented, Chair Brzozowy advised that the Selectboard meeting was to continue. Bonnie Jarvis asked if complaints regarding the roads were to be addressed, and having failed to ask for this topic to be added to the agenda at the beginning of the meeting, she was asked to formally request time at a future meeting by emailing the Board Clerk.
- *Tree Cutting in Town Right of Way - continued discussion of West Shore Road and DEC progress* - The tree cutting by a property owner on West Shore Road has not continued, and the Selectboard has contacted the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) regarding the incident.
- *Town Planning Commission - village center designation discussion* - The Town Planning Commission overviewed two options for designating a village center. There are a number of questions the Selectboard and residents have asked regarding future restrictions of property in the district once the designation is made, and the Commission will follow up after a discussion with Northwest Regional Planning Commission (NRPC). This conversation will continue in the new year, as this designation must be applied for before year-end 2025. It was noted that the assessment survey for the two Town buildings is still pending, and following a meeting that was had today with Members Brzozowy and Graziano, the report is imminently expected. This report will ultimately be shared and reviewed at meetings with the public..
- *March Elections - review deadlines for charter adoptions/amendments/peals* - As requested by the Town Clerk, the Board reviewed the calendar for the upcoming deadlines. Residents may submit petitions for articles to be considered at the March election until January 16, 2025, and paperwork for candidates for the open public office positions is due by January 27, 2025.
- *Town Report Publication* - The Board reviewed the paperwork for the Town Report, which indicates the first draft is due to the publisher on Monday, January 27 for reports to arrive in the Town Office by Monday, February 10, 2025 in order to be delivered per statute. Annual department reports to be included in the publication are to be submitted no later than Friday, January 17, 2025. The number of reports to be ordered was revised from 275 to 300. Reimbursement for the cost of the school budget pages in the Town Report will be discussed with the School Board next year.

4. **Contracts/Grants/Bids**

- *Town Office Sidewalk Snow Removal - review/approve MOU* - The Selectboard reviewed the prior year contract with Keith Bonneville for snow removal and ice mitigation at the sidewalks around the Town Office. Mr. Bonneville has requested one change to the contract to include damages to his equipment which would be caused by debris left on the sidewalks, such as bricks which hold open the doors to the meeting rooms. The Selectboard feels that providing damages to equipment would expose the Town to granting this concession to all contractors, setting a precedent with other contractors; this is not a provision in the Isle La Motte contracts for other roadwork, such as snow removal and roadside mowing. Robin Martin voiced her concern that considerations must be made in this event for human safety. To counter his request, Pat Treckman will suggest Mr. Bonneville increase his hourly rate, as suggested by Mary-Catherine Graziano, to cover the possibility of damage. It was asked if insurance was provided by the contractor; last year's status is unknown, but a copy of the certificate will be requested with the new contract.

- *Laptop for Meeting Room - review proposal/timeline* - The status of the meeting room laptop is pending, but it was discussed at the meeting earlier this week and deemed high priority.
- *Laptop for Records Digitization* - A suggestion was made by Steve Mank to utilize the assistant Town Clerk desktop for records digitization and provide a new laptop for the assistant Town Clerk, configured to match the Town Clerk's desktop. Mary-Catherine Graziano reviewed the Cott Systems RFP, and it is unclear as to whether or not Cott would provide the computer. The scanner is already on site. Peter Brzozowy will ask Steve Mank to review the Cott Systems quote and move forward with Rural Solutions with a computer, if necessary. A motion was made by Peter Brzozowy to approve Steve Mank to conduct the review and obtain the quotation, seconded by Mary-Catherine Graziano, all in favor.

5. Roadways

- *Road Commissioner Report* - There is no update for this meeting, but it was requested that the Road Commissioner job opening be posted on the website. It was clarified that Rusty Spaulding was acting as an interim Road Commissioner responsible for emergency road repairs, and that the Selectboard was covering the administrative duties of the role.
- *FY2025 Grants in Aid/FY2026 Better Roads Grant - scope of work/application progress update* - Member Treckman is still awaiting the scope of work for the Grants in Aid paperwork, which is due to be submitted by year end. The Better Roads Grant application is complete, was reviewed and signed by Peter Brzozowy for submission.
- *Road Commission - review overview for Commission, possible candidate discussion* - Joe Deller will prepare an overview of the Road Commission to share with the public, as well as prepare a matrix of possible Road Commission members. Robin Martin indicated that she had not provided her name as a candidate in the past year due to anticipated conflicts of interest with the prior Selectboard's administration.
- *Salt Shed Camera - review status* - Cary Sandvig has advised Mary-Catherine Graziano that the camera is likely installed; the camera records only, video of which will be downloaded as needed.
- *Winter Driving Safety - review posting of announcement* - Chair Brzozowy reviewed a VTrans winter driving alert that was issued to educate residents about winter road snow removal standards to be expected throughout the season.

6. Town Business

- *.GOV - transition progress update* - The transition remains ongoing, and it was requested to have a specific email created for the Trustees of Public Funds.
- *Town Office - update on tree trimming around office, exterior lights* - Chair Brzozowy has had several conversations with Martin Jensen regarding the pending tree trimming work. As well, Peter Brzozowy has reached out to an electrician in Alburgh twice with no response. Pat Treckman and Sylvia Jensen provided alternate contractors for consideration for the work.

7. 2025 Budget:

- *Budget Requests -*
 - *Recreation Department - review responsibilities of department vs. Town, review appropriation request* - Ruth Casey asked if there was a written document outlining the formal responsibilities of the Recreation Department, to which the Selectboard said there is not. Co-chair Casey will draft a document for review at the next meeting which will summarize the discussion that followed regarding Recreation Department versus Town Maintenance responsibilities, including mowing, tree trimming, and playground equipment maintenance and safety. The Selectboard suggested that the Recreation Department provide a list of concerns and tasks that need to be completed, and the Selectboard will be sure the work is budgeted and contracted. Robin Martin noted in the past that a Town Handyman was on call for miscellaneous work around the Island, and Sylvia Jensen suggested contacting the two school principals for guidance in playground maintenance. The Recreation Department will be invited to a future meeting to discuss any questions on the appropriation requests.

8. Other Business:

- Sylvia Jensen overviewed Wreaths Across America and will hang a wreath on the marker at Burying Yard Point. The Selectboard approved the placement of the wreath and suggested this be an annual event.
- Robin Martin brought to the Board's attention the need to ensure that the snow removal drivers hold Commercial Driver's Licenses and that a current drug test should be ordered. The Selectboard does not believe a drug test is a requirement for the snow removal contracts.

9. **Adjourn:** The meeting was adjourned at 8:56 PM, motioned by Mary-Catherine Graziano, seconded by Pat Treckman, all in favor.

Respectfully submitted on 21 December 2024 -
Andrea Carbone

Peter Brzozowy, *Chair*

Mary-Catherine Graziano

Cary Sandvig

Joe Deller

Pat Treckman
