



Town of Underhill
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SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, November 9, 2023, 6:00 P.M.
Underhill Town Hall

Present:

Selectboard Members: Dan Steinbauer, Patricia Richards, Bob Stone (remote)

Town Staff: Brad Holden, Russ Clark, Amanda Bosley (remote)

Committee Members: Anton Kelsey

Others: Brian Tijan

Note: All votes taken are unanimous unless otherwise noted.

1. *Call Meeting to Order / Adjustments to Agenda*

Dan called the meeting to order at 6:00. At Bob's request, discussion and possible action on a holiday bonus for staff was added to the agenda.

2. *Opening Public Comment (6:00)*

No members of the public wished to comment.

3. *Executive Session to Conduct an Interview (6:01)*

Dan moved to go into executive session based on 1 V.S.A. Section 313(a)(3) for the appointment or employment or evaluation of a public officer or employee, Patty seconded and the motion was passed at 6:01.

Dan moved to exit executive session, Patty seconded and the motion was passed at 7:02.

Dan said the outcome of the interview is that the selectboard wants references to be checked and the candidate to meet with staff.

4. *Westman Road Signage Request (7:03)*

Brian Tijan had sent a memo to the selectboard about an issue he has seen on Westman Road. He feels there has been increased traffic to Smugglers' Notch on Westman Road and that many people drive too fast on the road. He personally saw 3 cars go off the road within 100 yards of his driveway last winter. He is suggesting some type of sign encouraging people not to take that route to Smugglers' Notch. He is going to ask his neighbor to take a similar request to Cambridge for the other end of the road.

Bob suggested putting one of the electronic speed signs on Pleasant Valley Road. Dan said the issue is not just speeding but also people going on a road they are not familiar with. Bob said we don't have data to support the idea that they are all going to Smugglers' Notch. We can start by putting up signs to alert people how fast they are going. He thinks the problem of people going too fast for road conditions exists throughout Underhill. Brian said in winter he can see people with ski racks. He thinks Westman Road has become the preferred cut-through for Smugglers' Notch. Dan asked if there any signs on Westman alerting people to curves or steep hills. Brian said there is nothing like that now. Dan suggested maybe we could put up warning signs or chevrons. The board agreed to consider this issue.

5. TH 25 – Consider New Road Name (7:18)

Amanda Bosley said TH 25 needs to be given a name according to the new E911 regulations. There are two residences on the road. The property owners all gave different suggestions for road names. She thinks they are looking for someone to choose for them.

Bob moved to name TH 25 “Town Highway 25.” Patty asked if that meets the E911 criteria. Amanda said she thinks it does if we spell out “Town Highway” rather than using “TH.” **Dan seconded.**

The board discussed the names residents had proposed. Brad and Russ pointed out that all the suggested names are long and would require a big sign. Russ suggested using a shorter name because a long sign requires dual posts. Brad said he likes to see names that are germane to the history of the area, perhaps relating to people who lived there. He would love to do some research to identify possible names.

The motion failed with Bob voting in favor and Dan and Patty opposed.

6. Tomasi Meadow – Temporary Winter Parking Application (7:27)

Anton Kelsey said the recreation committee wants to put seasonal parking on the south end of the Tomasi Meadow property as in the past couple of winters. They need the board’s permission to apply for a temporary access permit for parking.

Patty moved and Dan seconded to authorize the Underhill recreation committee to apply for a temporary access permit for seasonal parking at Tomasi Meadow as proposed in the recreation committee’s November 2023 memo.

Anton said he thinks the seasonal parking has worked well. Skiers have been good about using the seasonal parking area. Bob asked if there is any additional information about the state providing additional parking in winter so people going up the Mountain Road are not using our lot as a commuter parking lot. And do we have a towing company on retainer for illegally parked cars? Brad said he can contact the towing company we have used before. He doesn’t think anyone is parking at our lot and going anywhere else. Anton thinks a few people use Casey’s Hill for that.

Russ asked where we are with expansion of the Casey’s Hill lot. Brad said we were going to wait for additional fill material from Pleasant Valley Road. Russ said the highway crew has started stockpiling some material for this project. Brad said the crew had to use one or more of the culverts that had been intended for this project for another emergency need. Patty asked if there is anything the selectboard can do to make the parking lot expansion happen. Russ said if the crew can get the culverts in and covered, then as they get fill they can add it. Patty asked that this be put on the highway crew’s to-do list.

Patty moved to amend the motion to add authorization for Anton Kelsey to sign the application, Dan seconded and the motion to amend was passed.

The amended motion was passed.

Bob asked if the board can get a price on the necessary culverts for the next meeting.

7. 2024 Landfill Monitoring Contract (7:37)

Brad said the estimate from Ross Environmental for water quality monitoring at the landfill was a few hundred dollars more than last year. Ross Environmental has a good history with the site and a good reputation with the state. They helped us out with the excavator roll-over on Lower English Settlement. Bob Ross is easy to get hold of,

Patty moved to approve the submitted cost estimate for water quality monitoring in 2024 for the landfill and the town garage drinking water, Dan seconded and the motion was passed.

8. *Underhill Center Post Office (7:40)*

Bob said it was brought to his attention that there appears to be exposed foam in the Underhill Center post office basement and sagging in the floor. He believes it would be a fairly easy fix to use a brace or floor rafter and some jacks to level the floor. He suggests getting a scope of work for taking care of the post office basement and bringing a report to the selectboard in the next 30 days so the board can discuss whether to put the cost of the work in the budget or use reserve funds. Patty noted that we own the building and the post office leases it. **Bob moved and Patty seconded to authorize having a contractor develop a scope of work for repairs to the Underhill Center post office basement.** Brad said he thinks the floor could be fixed and he thinks exposed foam is not lawful so that should be remedied. **The motion was passed.**

9. *Discuss Sale of the Town's 1997 Caterpillar Excavator (7:43)*

Russ said he feels a bid process is in our best interest. He suggests a minimum bid of \$35K. **Patty moved to pursue a competitive bid process to sell the 1997 Caterpillar excavator with a minimum bid price to be set by Russ, Dan seconded and the motion was passed.**

10. *Staff Holiday Bonus (7:48)*

Bob moved to authorize the same holiday bonus for staff that was given last year, as a gesture of thanks. Brad said last year each employee was given a gift certificate to the Village Tavern. Bob and Brad said they think last year's amount was \$50. **Patty seconded and the motion was passed.**

11. *Town Administrator Updates (7:49)*

Brad said a couple of new appropriation requests were received. The Association for the Blind is asking for the \$100 we normally give them. The Jericho Farmer's Market is asking for an increase from \$1000 to \$2000. Their request met the deadline to be added to the town meeting warning. Another appropriation request was also received before the deadline and will be included in the packet for the next meeting.

12. *Closing Public Comment (7:52)*

No members of the public wished to comment.

13. *Warrants and Minutes (7:52)*

Dan moved to approve payroll warrants dated November 9, 2023, Patty seconded and the motion was passed.

Dan moved to approve AP warrants for October 30 to November 9, 2023, Patty seconded and the motion was passed.

Dan moved to approve the minutes of October 26, 2023, Patty seconded and the motion was passed with Bob abstaining.

Dan moved to approve the minutes of October 12, 2023, Bob seconded and the motion was passed with patty abstaining.

Dan moved to approve minutes of the October 30, 2023 special meeting, Bob seconded and the motion was passed.

14. *Member Items, Correspondence, Announcement, Schedule (7:56)*

Brad said the board had previously talked about moving the second November meeting to November 30, but Bob has a conflict so the next meeting will be November 16. It will be mostly budget oriented.

Russ said several years ago the town paid to have a foundation put in for a fuel containment building to house our fuel tanks, but the building hasn't been built. Under our insurance regulations our fuel tanks have to be contained. He thinks we should get the building built. The containment is already in the ground. Brad said this was pointed out in the insurance audit. Russ said originally the building was designed so half of it

would hold the fuel tanks and half would be used for cold patch storage. But we don't use that much cold patch. He feels the space would be more beneficial for general storage. He came up with an estimate of \$5K for materials to construct a 13x24 ft. building on top of the foundation. His thought is that the highway crew could do the work themselves during the winter months. There is a line item for building maintenance that has about \$10K in it. Maybe the cost could come out of that.

Bob asked how far away that building is from the main building. Brad and Russ estimated it is around 50 ft. away. Bob said we will have to get approval from zoning and we will need a state construction permit. **Bob moved to authorize Russ and Brad to work on getting proper permitting and to move forward with the fuel containment building project, Patty seconded and the motion was passed.**

Brad said he wrote a letter to Wayne Howe (a Jericho selectboard member who is resigning) and Dan and Patty have signed it. He will leave it at the town office for Bob to sign.

15. Executive Session (8:04)

Dan moved to go into executive session under 1 V.S.A. Section 313(a)(3) for the appointment or employment or evaluation of a public officer or employee, Patty seconded and the motion was passed at 8:05.

The board came out of executive session at 9:01.

Bob moved to authorize the chair to make an offer to a prospective employee based on the discussions the board had in executive session, Patty seconded and the motion was passed.

Bob said the selectboard is going to continue to work on the issues that were brought to their attention by the town road crew. The board is hoping to have additional information provided by their next scheduled meeting so they can continue the discussions.

16. Adjourn (8:42)

Dan moved to adjourn, Patty seconded and the motion was passed at 9:03.

Minutes submitted by Donna Griffiths

Read and approved as submitted/amended:



Dan Steinbauer, Chair

11/16/2023
Date Signed

11/16/2023
Date Approved