

**TOWN OF UNDERHILL  
SELECTBOARD SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES  
Underhill Town Hall  
Friday April 3, 2020, 10:00 a.m.  
Phone Conference Call**

**Selectboard:** Dan Steinbauer, and Bob Stone and Peter Duval

**Town Staff:** Sherri Morin, Jennifer-Silpe Katz, Brad Holden

**Public:** Kurt Johnson, Matthew Chapek, Ben McKinney (ECI Construction), Angelike Contis (MMCTV)

**10:00 a.m. Call to order, adjustments to agenda.** Meeting called to order by Dan Steinbauer. No adjustments to agenda.

**10:03 a.m. Public Comment Period.** Bob Stone read a comment written by his wife Nicole, who works in the nursing profession at NW Medical Center, regarding the Pleasant Valley Bridge 8 construction and COVID-19. Nicole feels that the Selectboard should consider that each and every interaction could potentially put someone at risk of becoming ill or even critically ill. Continuing the project has the potential of contributing to the overburdening of the healthcare system and also put those workers potentially at a greater risk.

**10:10 a.m. ECI/Bridge 8 change order.** Kurt Johnson explained that when ECI removed the pavement from the westerly side of the bridge they encountered more damage to the concrete than what was originally anticipated. Discussion ensued. Peter asked if the line item for the additional membrane was a new item, Kurt responded that it was. Kurt stated that the westerly edge of the bridge including the guardrail was in very poor condition and there was the potential that the concrete and guardrail would fail if a motorist came into contact with it. Dan explained that after consulting with ECI that the project was considered essential because of the public safety aspect. Kurt had checked with VTRANS yesterday and they concurred. The project was originally scheduled to start May 15<sup>th</sup> but ECI was available to start earlier so lights were needed to run one-way traffic instead of routing a detour. Bob added that a detour would have impeded school bus traffic, also the dirt roads are currently posted. Kurt will check with Nate to see if the roads could support a detour so the lights could be removed. The lights are currently costing the Town \$5835.00 a month rental.

**10:33 a.m.** Dan had Bob restate the public comment from his wife since the beginning of the meeting was not recorded. Dan asked if there was a consensus among the Board about the essential nature of this work. Bob feels we should consider pausing this project in light of the growing pandemic. Bob spoke with Sue Scribner at VTRANS and she explained that no VTRANS projects are currently in progress with the exception of one emergency project on Interstate 89. Jen joined the call and stated her concerns from a fiscal prospective, depleting cash flow, in light of the potential for decreased future revenues.

**10:47 a.m.** Peter stated that this is a capital project that is underway and there shouldn't be a cash flow concern even if the Town needs to borrow money, if necessary. Peter asked if closing the bridge would make the job safer and more efficient. He also asked if ECI could give the Board a rundown on the safety procedures they have in place. Brad noted that the concrete and paving plants are currently closed which may affect the completion of the project.

**10:55 a.m.** Ben McKinney from ECI joins the call. Dan asked Ben about the health safety of the project. Ben explains that ECI sent correspondence regarding the Governor's order and their COVID-19 procedures. ECI is currently working on similar essential infrastructure projects with the owner's permission. Ben states that ECI is taking safety seriously. Dan asked if the project would be more safe and efficient if the road was closed. Ben feels that it wouldn't be worth doing at this point. Ben says that they are a couple weeks away from needing concrete and pavement, if those materials are not available they would need to pull off the job. Bob asked Ben what he thought if the Town decided to shut the job down and asked what it might do to the cost of the project. Ben stated that the cost would be minimal but was more concerned about ECI having the bandwidth to be able to come back and complete it in a timely manner. Bob feels that there are two issues on the table; the continuation of the project and the change order. Bob moves to pause the project, Dan seconds the motion. Discussion ensued. Dan feels that the project should continue due to the road safety concerns of leaving an unfinished project and that ECI is not adding to the public exposure because of the procedures that they have in place. Bob worries about incidents that might occur on the jobsite and those unnecessary injuries, which might not have happened if the project was put on hold, affecting our current health care system. Peter feels the project is underway and it should be up to ECI to decide whether they should continue or not. Peter calls the question. Motion fails 1-2. Bob in Favor, Dan and Peter opposed.

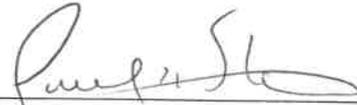
**11:20 a.m.** Peter moves to accept the change order of \$16,227.60, as presented, for the additional work to the concrete deck. Dan seconds the motion and discussion ensues. Dan asks Jen to speak about where the money will come from and will this have an impact on the budget. Jen explains that there is enough money to cover these unexpected cost increases but she is still concerned about the potential for limited future revenues. Kurt confirmed that the Bridge 8 is covered by reserve funds. Dan calls the question. Motion passed 2-1, Dan and Peter in favor, Bob opposed.

**11:30 a.m. Remote meeting discussion.** Brad explains he has been upgrading the operating system on the Town's laptop from Windows 8 Home Edition to Windows 10 Professional this will allow access to the Town's network. There have been new provisions put into the current open meeting law to allow for remote meetings and a Selectboard member does not have to be present at the Town Hall. We are looking into a paid Zoom account and Angelike from MMCTV said that she would be happy to join us for a test meeting. MMCTV is looking to stream these meetings. Dan would like to schedule a test run for this coming Monday.

**11:40 a.m. Adjournment.** On a motion made by Peter Duval and seconded by Dan Steinbauer the Selectboard voted 3-0 to adjourn.

Submitted by Brad Holden, Interim Town Administrator

Read and Approved as submitted/amended

  
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Dan Steinbauer, Chair

4/27/2020  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date