

Selectboard Minutes
2/16/2021

Members Present by Zoom: David Sander, Roger Brown, Bard Hill, Katie Mather
Absent: Christine Werneke

Others Present by Zoom: Josh Arneson, Town Manager; Kathy Daub-Stearns, Admin.; Kyle Kapitansky, acting Police Chief; Linda Parent, Town Clerk; Kendall Chamberlin, Water & Sewer; Pete Gosselin, Highway; Ravi Venkataraman, Planner; the meeting was recorded for MMCTV Channel 15, also present Rod West, Bradley Holt, Steph Kamin, Allen Knowles, Judy Rosovsky, Tyler Billingsley, Chris Cole, Martha, Sue Roberge, Peter Swaine, Tracy Rosen, Gary's ipad, Karen & Don Yaggy, Caitlin Littlefield, Cindy Preston, Tara Arneson, Wright Preston, Dean Slokum, Stores iphone, Diane & Tom Leavitt, Florya, and 802-355-3391

Called to Order: 7:03 PM

Welcome by David

Comments from the public:

Bradley Holtz wanted to bring an issue to the Selectboard that is being heard by the DRB, a proposed development on Hillview Rd. Bradley encouraged the Selectboard members to become familiar with the project and the comments made by thirty (30) residents adding that the sketch plans do not seem to be in line with the Town Plan.

I. Additions or Deletions to Agenda

David noted there is no item 2A tonight

II. Items for Presentation or Discussion with those present

a) Presentation of the FY20 Audit

Postponed

b) Update on Dugway Rd. repair

Josh reported:

- that Tyler Billingsley, of East Engineering, was present
- that SD Ireland was chosen at the last meeting to do the construction
- that SD Ireland wants to move forward right away but FEMA has recommended not moving forward until the town received their approval which may be in the next 2 weeks.
- that if SD Ireland cannot move forward in the next week or two the project will not start until late spring/ summer

Josh said the question tonight is whether the Board is willing to approve the project beginning right away if possible.

Discussion included:

- that Tyler reported on SD Ireland's ability to do the work in the winter weather and that SD Ireland would be covering any additional costs associated with beginning

the work early adding that he had no problem with them beginning early as long as the cold weather pour guidelines are followed as they indicated they would be.

Roger moved to allow SD Ireland to begin the project immediately if possible; Bard seconded. Roll call vote: Katie, Roger, Bard and David voted affirmatively. Motion passed.

c) Consideration of prohibiting overweight vehicles on Dugway Rd. and Kenyon Rd.

Josh reported:

- that in the discussion for repairing Dugway Rd last year residents were glad that overweight trucks were not on the road. After looking into it the overweight permit could exclude Dugway Rd.
- that now is the time to make any decision concerning vehicles on Dugway since the road will be opening
- that residents on Kenyon Rd also had a desire to not have large vehicles on the road
- that once a road is closed to them that trucks will find other ways around adding enforcement will be challenging and the police processing would take a few hours

Discussion included:

- that Kyle said from an enforcement standpoint it would be difficult to enforce adding there would need to be training time involved for officers to enforce the regulation. Kyle described the process as: the vehicle would have to be processed at an overweight station then the paperwork would take about an hour. He thought that if the Selectboard could adopt an Ordinance that was specific about axles and types of vehicles that would be his preference. Kyle felt that with the amount of staffing it would not be realistic to enforce overweight limits on the roads.
- that Pete said that vehicles would move to other roads and those residents would want to have the vehicles off their roads as well. He thought it was a safety issue on these roads and vehicles 26,000 pounds with trailers should be prohibited adding that a dump truck would be ok but a log truck with a trailer would be prohibited. Pete said contractors use the roads frequently. Roger asked Pete if he thought it would be all town roads. Pete said that if we do Kenyon and Dugway then there will be more requests down the road. He felt the trailers were the problem because they cannot stay in their own lane. David said even pickups with horse trailers cannot stay in their own lane. Roger said on Huntington Road there has not been a substantial increase since Dugway has been closed. Roger agreed with Pete that the big trailers are the big risk. He wondered if there could be a lower speed limit for bigger commercial vehicles, like have speed limit for dump trucks. Kyle said speed limits cannot be set differently for commercial vehicles. Pete thought signs on each end of the road prohibiting trailers might work.
- Tracey Rosen said that his issue is people speeding to go to work and logging trucks, full or empty are terrifying on Dugway Road. Kyle responded that he supported restricting a class A CDL or a vehicle of over 26,000 pounds saying it would be easier to enforce. Karen Yaggy said speed is an issue. Gary ipad said local people know the road, he travels a trailer and an excavator on Kenyon Road and the problem is speeding adding 40-50' trailers do not belong on the road. He was opposed to having the road closed to commercial vehicles. Gary said money was put into the road and the road was supposed to be open to trucks. He said the people who put houses there bought knowing there were trucks. Dean Slokum said

- the traffic has continually increased over time. He was not sure why Richmond pays to keep improving Kenyon to make a throughway for Huntington residents. He was opposed to improving Kenyon. Gary's ipad responded that he uses Kenyon Rd to get where he needs to go, and he was not looking for added speed on the road. He said Faye's Corner to Kenyon Road will be developed eventually.
- that Bard thought exploring the pros and cons of Kyles suggestion and whether residents think that would help
 - that Tracy Rosen said if there are different solutions, what is required to change the classification of the road asking if signs could just be stuck up. Kyle responded that it would have to be done by Ordinance adopted by the Selectboard and there would need to be a public hearing before it was adopted. Josh said there would be a warned meeting, hearing, vote on the Ordinance, then 45 or 60 days later it would go into effect. Josh said if we amend the overweight permit it could be voted on at the meeting. As to lowering the speed limit it would require a speed study and would probably be the least effective way of doing it. Tracey Rosen wanted to do both, the permit, and the Ordinance. Stepanie Slokum was not sure if Kenyon was included in the solution for Dugway and she thought there is no way for trailers to safely be on the road with line-of-sight issues. David said tonight we are talking about weight limits on Dugway and Kenyon Roads. Bard supported what Josh said about speed studies and asked Kyle and Pete if they had an opinion. Kyle said overweight permit enforcement would be more difficult and would be more advisory. David asked if Dugway needed an overweight ban due to being closed. Josh said there was a resolution to close the road already. Josh said nothing had to be done for Dugway tonight.
 - that Chris Cole said Kyle's idea about doing by class of license should be looked at.
 - that Pete suggested getting information from DMV for a solution. Bard asked that the options be explored and reported back on. Kyle said he could get DMV's take on it. It was decided to come back to the next meeting with additional information. Tracy Rosen said he wanted to do something now. Josh thought there was time to do this in a thoughtful way and whether we did it tonight or in April would make no difference. Tracy Rosen then agreed.
 - that Dean Slokum asked how the Town sees Kenyon Rd saying it seemed to him that the Town, in improving the road continually was creating issues and wondered who made the decision. David said drainage, culverts and road maintenance is the Towns responsibility and clearing the banks back is a safety issue. Pete said he gets compliments that the road is being well kept adding the road is well used. Dean said the more it is maintained the more it is used. Pete said the intent is not to increase the use of the road. Dean Slokum said the commuter traffic keeps increasing and the road is becoming a major thoroughfare to Huntington. Gary said law enforcement should be parked there at commute times.

d) Consideration of approving a letter from the Selectboard regarding Vermont Senate redistricting

Josh reported:

- that the MMUSD has provided a letter for consideration.

Josh turned the floor over to members of the Schoolboard.

Tara Arneson reported:

- that the letter is being provided to all the Selectboards in the school district

- that there is time for the Selectboard to review the letter and hoped to get their support

Bard moved to approve the letter provided; Katie seconded. Roll call vote: Katie, Bard, and David voted affirmatively. Motion passed.

Cindy Preston thanked the board for their time and consideration.

Josh asked if the letter should go to the Board of Civil Authority. Tara Arneson said yes. Josh said he would talk to Linda Parent the following day and let her know that the Selectboard was in favor of the letter and was signing the letter.

e) Update on emerald ash borer plan

Caitlin Littlefield reported:

- that there has been a grant provided to manage Ash trees in the village area
- that she was looking for approval of a more comprehensive plan in the coming years
- that Caitlin thought ongoing removal of trees would need to be funded in the FY23 budget

Discussion included:

- that Bard said the board had approved the \$15,000 match. Judy Rosovsky thought the funding of the plan had been approved and the Conservation Reserve Fund may be tapped for additional money. Josh said that the grant has been awarded and the match would come from the Conservation Fund. Roger remembered discussing a substantial need from the town for expenses. Caitlin Littlefield said she would prepare something for the next Conservation meeting and then back to the Selectboard in a month or two.

f) Consideration of approval of Conservation Fund request for Phase 2 Ecological Review and Trail Design at Andrews Community Forest

Wright Preston reported:

- that in December the Andrews Community Forest (ACF) Committee asked the Selectboard to approve Arrowwood to design trails
- that two (2) grants have been received totaling \$5,000
- that ACF logging revenue will be \$5,000
- that they are asking for \$2,000 from the Conservation Reserve Fund to have the \$12000 funding needed

Discussion included:

- that Judy Rosovsky said this is a unique collaboration for the trails that could become a model across the country

Bard moved to approve \$2,000 from the ACF; Roger seconded. Roll call vote: Roger, Katie, Bard and David voted affirmatively. Motion passed.

g) Update on closure of the Richmond branch of TD Bank

Josh reported:

- that there was a meeting with TD Bank regarding the closure and whether there would be a restriction on the property for another bank to be located there

- that there would not be any restriction
- that employees of the branch have been offered other positions
- that they are looking for an ATM location in Richmond

Discussion included:

- that Roger said TD Bank did not want to keep the residents from having another bank
- that Bard said TD Bank was closing 81 branches on the east coast
- that Wright Preston said Tom Leavitt was on the call and that Northfield Savings Bank is a good place to work and he was glad Northfield wanted to come to Richmond
- that Tom Leavitt said the NFSB board has approved the application to the FDIC to have a branch in Richmond and was happy that TD Bank is open to allowing another bank to purchase the property. He said they are looking at a temporary location until a transition can be made. He thought that by July they may be operational. Roger said that was very exciting. Bard thought this was the best possible outcome.

h) Consideration of appointment of Zoning Administrative Officer

Josh reported:

- that a new Zoning Administrator has been found and turned the floor over to Ravi Venkataraman

Ravi reported:

- that the information he supplied in the packet provided on the website
- that by partnering with Huntington the position will be 30 hours in Richmond and 10 hours in Huntington
- that the Planning Commission chose Keith Osborne

Roger moved to appoint Osborne for a three (3) year term and E911 Coordinator; Bard seconded. Roll call vote: Katie, Roger, Bard, and David voted affirmatively. Motion passed.

i) Update on the Planning Commission's current community outreach work

Ravi reported:

- that the general idea of the outreach work is to gain feedback and find any gaps from residents
- that each meeting focused on a different topic
- that there are two (2) more meetings scheduled

Chris Cole reported:

- that this will follow the Town Plan
- that this has been a transparent, thoughtful, and inclusive process
- that the Planning Commission has not made any decisions
- that in March a drafting of changes to the zoning regulation will begin

Discussion included:

- that Bard asked if there have been any surprises in the discussions had so far. Chris Cole said he was a little surprised by comments of Renters vs Property Owners adding that he was glad that it was other residents that pushed back on that saying that renters do participate and have a stake in Richmond adding that one of the goals was to have a Housing Committee which has now been established.

j) Update on the Mobil Station wetlands permit

Ravi reported:

- that this is state jurisdiction, but he wanted to let the Selectboard know that the Mobil Station owners have applied for a permit that is open to comments from the public
- that the public comment period is open until March 4, 2021
- that the Planning Commission has been getting up to speed on wetlands development and permitting because in the Zoning Regulations there is no development in class 2 wetlands and so after informing themselves the Commission is not inclined to approve any changes to the regulations that would allow the Mobil Station project to move forward.
- that Bard asked if there was a way to understand the history of wetlands in that area, specifically was the highway built on a wetland. Ravi said that he did not know but it was likely. David said back then they were called swamps that should be filled in and built upon.
- that Katie asked what the Planning Commission learned that made them feel they would not want to approve the plan. Chris Cole replied that the Mobile station wants to build a station like the Randolph gas station they own there, and it is too large to not get into the wetland buffer adding that the buffer houses all the flood water in events like Irene. He said the Commission did not want to set a precedent of having a building in the buffer adding that the parking would have to be behind the building according to regulations and that would mean the parking was in the buffer. He thought that Richmond is a town that floods and preserving the buffer zone is important. Chris said there is an area the Mobil Station wants to trade off by making a reserve and have a different septic solution. Bard said that the Mobil owners have been contemplating joining the Towns sewer system.
- that Chris said if they get their permit then the only permit to obtain is the local permit and it would put more permitting pressure on the Town as to whether to change regulations. Ravi said that with this property we are talking about the wetlands only and the wetlands restrictions are strict in our zoning.
- that Chris Cole said they could stay out of the buffer and they are choosing not to.

k) Update on status of website Request for Proposal

Josh reported:

- that he and Katie met to put together an RFP
- that the library is interested in bringing their website into the new town website
- that he will be reaching out and getting feedback from recreation
- that payment options will be explored
- that fillable forms will also be looked at
- once the budget is voted on and should it pass, we will be ready to move forward

l) Consideration of approval of the Certificate of Highway Mileage

Bard moved to approve the Certificate of Highway Mileage; Roger seconded. Roll call vote: Katie, Roger, Bard, and David voted affirmatively. Motion passed.

m) 2020 Richmond Rescue statistics

Josh referred everyone to the statistics available in the packet that is available on the website. If anyone has questions Josh said they can contact Rescue or let him know.

n) Reminder of Australian ballot information hearing on March 1

Josh reported:

- that the first meeting took two (2) hours
- that the next meeting will be within the ten (10) days
- that there is a link on the website to the first session

o) Discussion of March Selectboard meeting schedule

Josh asked the Board if they wanted to move the regular meeting to the 2nd and 4th Monday in March

Discussion included:

- that Roger said we have been meeting every week due to special meetings
- Bard and David said moving the meetings was ok. Katie abstained since she would no longer be on the board
- it was decided to move the March meetings to the 2nd and 4th weeks

III. Approval of Minutes, Warrants and Purchase Orders*

Bard moved to approve the Minutes of 2/01/2021; Roger seconded. Roll call vote: Bard, Katie, Roger, and David voted affirmatively. Motion passed.

Roger moved to approve the Minutes of 2/08/2021; Bard seconded. Roll call vote: Bard, Katie, Roger, and David voted affirmatively. Motion passed.

Warrants:

Bard moved to approve the warrants and invoices as presented; Roger seconded. Roll call vote: Bard, Katie, Roger, and David voted affirmatively. Motion passed.

Josh will send the warrant out for signatures using DocuSign.

Purchase Orders:

Bard moved to approve PO 4096 to MMUSD, in the amount of \$1,687,221.08 for the 3rd quarter taxes; Katie seconded. Roll Call Vote: Roger, Katie, Bard, and David voted affirmatively. Motion passed.

IV. Discuss Items for Next Agenda

audit

Hillview zoning

next meeting March 8

V. Executive Session – Personnel Issue

Bard moved find that premature general public knowledge about a personnel issue would clearly place the Town at a substantial disadvantage; Roger seconded. Roll call vote: Bard, Katie, Roger, and David voted affirmatively. Motion passed.

Bard moved to enter into executive session to discuss a personnel issue under the provisions of 1 VSA 313(a)(3) of the Vermont State Statutes and to invite the Town Manager, Josh Arneson, into the executive session; Katie seconded. Roll call vote: Bard, Katie, Roger, and David voted affirmatively. Motion passed.

Executive session began at 9:34 pm

Katie moved to exit executive session; Bard seconded. Roll call vote: Bard, Katie, and David voted affirmatively. Motion passed.

Executive session ended at 10:38 pm and the meeting resumed.

VI. Adjourn

Katie moved to adjourn; Bard seconded. Roll call vote: Bard, Katie, and David voted affirmatively. Motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 10:39 pm.

CHAT

00:24:43 TRACY ROSEN: back

00:57:36 Allen Knowles: Are speed humps an option?

01:09:11 chriscole: Probably not in the winter because of plowing issues and then grading issues in the non-winter.

01:14:13 Allen Knowles: Burlington and multiple roads I have ridden in Quebec and (I think) Skunk Hollow Road have speed humps and survive the winter.

01:15:39 chriscole: Are they dirt roads?

01:28:07 Allen Knowles: Perhaps not dirt roads. Dirt roads may need geese, chickens, goats, sheep, and other traffic calming methods that have been used successfully. Or, we could just continue abdicating every right of way to the tyranny of anyone who can unthrottle an engine.

01:29:56 chriscole: I hear you but fear for the animals. Lae enforcement of the speed limit is really the only answer and limiting tractor trailer trucks as well.