

Minutes of the January 26, 2015 Select Board Meeting

Present: Board members Bill Hall, Carl Russell and Lisa Hill. Others present: Town Manager Keith Arlund, Assistant Town Manager Abbie Sherman, Geneva Gaiko, Mary Floyd, and Eleanor Griffin.

Chairman Hall call the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Public Comment: None

Reports, Motions, and Ordinances:

1. Discussion re. Potential Discontinuance or Reclassification of TH #124 and TH #126. Hall explained the process the Town has undertaken thus far regarding review of the two Town highways, including: receipt of the request for discontinuance, notification to abutting property owners, site visit, public hearing, and two deliberative sessions. The Board came to the conclusion that although they felt there were good arguments for discontinuing the roads, there may be a number of other roads in the same situation and a Town process for discontinuance has not been set up at this point in time. The Board wants to look at reasons that may be acceptable for discontinuing roads. The Board intends to reactivate the Ancient Roads Committee to develop guidelines and to review roads that potentially should be discontinued, with input from the Bethel Planning Commission and the Conservation Commission. Additional members may be appointed to the Committee and the Vermont League of Cities and Towns will be looked to for providing guidance in terms of other towns that may have already done this. Motion by Carl Russell, seconded by Lisa Hill, and unanimously carried to approve the following Report and Order which will be recorded by the Town Clerk:

“WHEREAS the Bethel Select Board determined at its meeting of October 6, 2014 that it would consider the Discontinuance or Reclassification of Town Highways #124 and #126 and the highways would be examined in accordance with the provisions of Vermont Statutes Annotated Title 19 Sections 708 to 711, and

WHEREAS Public Notice of the Board’s intention to consider discontinuing or reclassification any part, or all, of the subject highways was given by certified mail, return receipt on November 3, 2014 to all statutory parties owning or interested in lands through which the highway passes or abuts, and

WHEREAS all other requirements for notice in satisfaction of Vermont Statutes Annotated Title 19 Sections 709 and 771(c) were accomplished on November 3, 2014, and November 20, 2014 when the Public Notice was published in The Herald newspaper of record for the Town of Bethel, and

WHEREAS a site visit for purpose of examination was duly warned and held on December 5, 2014 and a Public Hearing was held on December 8, 2014 to receive public comment, and

WHEREAS, the record of the Public Hearing were published and approved in the Minutes of the December 8, 2014 Select Board Meeting which were edited and approved at the Select Board meeting on December 22, 2014, and

WHEREAS in a deliberative session held on December 22, 2014 the Bethel Select Board determined that the public good, necessity, and convenience of the inhabitants of the municipality required that there be no change to the classification of Town Highways #124 and #126 at this time.

THEREFORE on motion made, seconded and passed at the Select Board meeting held on January 26, 2015 the Bethel Select Board voted not to make any change to the current classification of Town Highways #124 and #126.”

2. Approval of 2015 Certificate of Highway Mileage.  
This item was deferred to the next meeting.
3. Approval of Warning for Town Meeting.  
Motion by Carl Russell, seconded by Lisa Hill, and unanimously carried to approve the Warning for Town Meeting 2015.

4. Discussion of Town Meeting Solutions Evaluation Questions.  
The Board reviewed a survey developed by the Town Meeting Solutions Committee. Hall did not concur with many of the items the survey contained as he feels they are looking for solutions to problems that don't exist. Bethel's participation at Town Meeting is better than most Towns and Hall feels it would be a mistake to make a lot of changes. In particular, Hall had issue with question #10 of the survey as many of those items are already on the Board's agenda and a few pertain to the school which does not pertain to the Town. Russell suggested changes to the introductory sentence. Russell and Hill endorsed question #10, Russell feels the charge of the committee is to make Town meeting more engaging and effective. The Board made minor changes to wording in the survey and also agreed they would like to see the survey results when they are available.
  
5. Review of Conceptual Drawings of Buy-Out Properties and Discussion re. Project Construction and Grant Funding.  
The Board acknowledged receipt of the schematic drawings from DuBois & King, Inc. and the correspondence from Mary Russ of White River Partnership regarding potential application for a construction grant. Arlund stated that he is seeking clarification in regards to timing for additional grant funding. The Town does not yet have the final report and cost estimate from DuBois & King and funds have not been budgeted in the current year or FY'16 for the matching portion of the grant. Hill stated that Bethel resident, Gary Wood, had contacted her regarding the properties and he would like to see them be handicap accessible.
  
6. Potential Appointment of Members to the Recreation Committee.  
Eleanor Griffin of the Recreation Committee informed the Board that Mark Cook has resigned from the committee due to time constraints. Lucien Hinkle has expressed interest in joining the committee, which the committee is in favor of. The Board approved appointment of Mr. Hinkle to the Recreation Committee.
  
7. Discussion of Potential Application to Land & Water Conservation Fund for Improvements at the Bethel Recreation Facility.  
Eleanor Griffin explained to the Board that Lucien Hinkle had presented ideas for alternative design and location of the parking area in Plan C of the Recreation Center Master Plan. Arlund and Sherman discussed Mr. Hinkle's ideas with the project's architect, Andrea Murray of Vermont Integrated Architecture (VIA), who felt that the changes were possible since the multi-purpose building is no longer part of the plan. Sherman presented the Board with new sketches from VIA, which delineated the piece that will be constructed with FEMA Alternate Project funding and the pieces of the plan that remain to be done (specifically relocation of the parking lot and tennis courts). It is hoped that the Town will be able to apply for funding from the Land & Water Conservation Fund in the upcoming round of grants to further the implementation of Plan C. Sherman is working with VIA to obtain cost estimates and to determine if the Town has enough in matching funds to complete the project. The Board was pleased with the progress on this project and looks forward to viewing the grant application at their next meeting.
  
8. Town Manager's Report:
  - a. Status Update re. FEMA Alternate Projects. The Town has received notification from FEMA of approval of the Alternate Projects request. Sherman provided the Board with clarification in regards to the Town's share and the projects that will be completed.
  
  - b. Status Update of Action Items. Arlund is continuing to work with Tony Lamberton in regards to the logging access road at the Recreation Center.

Minutes and Communications:

1. Selectboard Minutes of January 12, 2015.  
By motion of Lisa Hill, seconded by Carl Russell, and unanimously carried, the minutes of the January 12, 2015 meeting were approved.
  
2. Committee Minutes.  
The Board acknowledged receipt of meeting minutes for the following Town committees: (1) January 6, 2015 minutes of the Town Meeting Committee; (2) January 14, 2015 minutes of

the Recreation Committee; (3) January 13, 2015 minutes of the Conservation Commission; and (4) January 20, 2015 minutes of the Red Cross Emergency Shelter Committee.

Any Other Business Necessary to Come Before the Board.

1. Hall informed the Board he was in receipt of a letter from the Rutland Town Selectboard Chair requesting their endorsement on a resolution to “increase input of Vermont municipalities regarding siting of renewable energy products in certificate of public good proceedings before the Public Service Board.” Hall gave a brief summarization of the issues Rutland Town is facing with regards to the placement of solar farms in front yards and the fact that it is a State decision which Rutland Town would like more emphasis on town input. Russell stated that he is not interested in signing the resolution, but that he is sympathetic to their dilemma.
2. Sgt. John Helfant, State Police Commander in Royalton, has been in contact with Hall and would like to arrange a public meeting with the Selectboard to discuss significant heroin trafficking in the area towns. It is preferred that this meeting would be held at the Town Hall to encourage greater attendance by the community. Arlund will follow-up with Helfant on this matter.
3. Hill noted on the accounts payable warrants that there were a number of interest charges incurring on invoices which is in part due to the timing of Selectboard meetings. This could be remedied by appointing a member of the Board to review and approve payables on a more regular basis. Hall would also like to have payroll approved before issuance. Motion by Carl Russell, seconded by Bill Hall, and unanimously carried to appoint Lisa Hill as the signatory for accounts payable and payroll.
4. Sherman informed the Board that Spaulding Press would be coordinating the mailing of Town Reports through their mailing center.

At 7:00 PM, Lisa Hill made the motion to adjourn, seconded by Carl Russell, and unanimously carried.

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Bill Hall

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Carl Russell

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Lisa Hill