

## Special Strafford Selectboard Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, January 5, 2022 at 6:00pm  
Strafford Town Office

Members participating: Toni Pippy, Rett Emerson, Pat Kelly, Jeff Solsaa, Mary Linehan

Others participating: Lisa Bragg, Greg Colling, John Freitag, David Paganelli, John Hawkins, Susan Tiholiz

Meeting called to order at 6:00 pm

1. Public Concerns. Greg Colling asked if a public safety report was filed regarding the fuel spill near Brook Road Bridge; Lucy Hemenway took pictures but did not contact the police. Both highway liaisons went to look at the site the next day and did not see any evidence of run off into the river. Orange County Sheriff has been contacted by Jeff Solsaa to investigate the accident and determine if a claim can be made, and Pat Kelly will contact the Fire Department to look at it. Residents are advised to contact the police in the event of road accidents.
2. Town Road Crew, Highways and Equipment Update. Jeff reported that the Road Crew is handling the situation very well. Equipment situation is satisfactory, except one of the trucks needs new brakes and power steering repairs. Crew was authorized to send the vehicle out for repair; vehicle is under warranty. Shelving has been planned for the garage mezzanine level to organize the supplies and materials for each vehicle; two cost estimates have been submitted for the work. Water condensation is an ongoing problem, and current shortages of insulation compound the challenge to fix the problem. Gravel will be purchased this week and taken directly to road sites, rather than stockpiling. Road Crew has requested a cordless reciprocating saw. On Jan 25th an advisor will come to clarify what is needed to ensure radio communication (ie, booster or new radios). The new refrigerator arrives tomorrow. Discussion re compensation policy. Jeff will discuss with crew re: obtaining additional sand.

Motion passed to spend up to \$2500 for the shelving in the Town Garage, with one member voting no.

Motion unanimously passed to provide the current temporary crew member a \$250 bonus for work on Christmas.

- a. Vacancies. New application has been received and will be reviewed by liaisons. Discussions re: staffing needs for road crew. Liaisons recommend hiring one additional road crew member immediately, and making no changes to the current management structure, which is working well.
- b. Accident damaging Brook Road Bridge, Strafford Village. Orange County Sheriff has been contacted by Jeff Solsaa to investigate the accident and determine if a claim can be made, and Pat Kelly will contact the Fire Department to look at possible oil spill. Residents are advised to contact the police in the event of road accidents of this kind.
- c. Time sheet data entry and new system at town garage progress report. Lisa conducted training for the Road Crew on Monday; Road Crew has started using the system; Lisa will follow up again tomorrow to troubleshoot any issues.

- d. Sidewalk snow removal bids. No bids have been received. Many thanks to the wonderful volunteers (David Harris, Craig Allen, Michael Stoffel) who are currently doing the sidewalk snow removal in S. Strafford. Toni will reach out to follow up with them. Notice for bids will be posted again.
  - e. Correspondence – David Harris, RE: Snow Removal – Elizabeth Dycus, RE: For your consideration – Todd Eaton, Vermont Local Roads, Branch Manager, RE: New CDL Training Requirements – Mike Hebb, RE: Driveway safety issue – Hunter Snyder, RE: Extremely Steep Slope/vegetation management – Nancy Butler, RE: Fuel Spill – Gregory Colling, RE: Brook Road oil spill.
3. Approve minutes to the December 6th special, December 8th regular December 10th emergency, and December 14th special meetings. Motion passed to approve the minutes of the December 6th special meeting. Motion passed to approve the minutes of the December 8th regular meeting. Motion passed to approve the minutes of the December 10th emergency meeting; Pat did not vote because he was not in attendance. Motion passed to approve the minutes of the December 14th special meeting.
4. Sign Ashley Forest Interlocal Agreement. No changes have been made and Sharon Selectboard was supposed to sign last week. Agreement signed.
5. Strafford Owned Properties. Property on Oneil Road has been confirmed as a suitable building site. The property on Blanchard Road does not appear to be suitable for a home due to setbacks from road and brook, however, engineered septic system may be possible. To sell town properties, approval is required from town by a vote. Rett will seek guidance from Paul Gillies about process for proceeding with property sales.
6. Town Office Immediate Repairs update. Essential repairs have been completed to allow safe use of the Town Office second floor through the winter. Selectboard acknowledged that significant additional repairs remain.
7. Budgets 2021 review and 2022 draft review and discussion. Preliminary review confirms that expenses for both highway and general 2021 funds are within approved budget limits. There are many more entries still to be made. Discussion re: anticipated budget for 2021 based on current submissions and projected costs, highway equipment budget and amortization schedule, when to replace vehicles to optimize expenditures. Town Clerk proposed increases in permit fees to cover costs being incurred by the town. Discussion re requested increases in salaries and stipends by committees and organizations.
8. Town Meeting planning. Discussion re forthcoming State guidance for 2022 Town Meeting. Should know more for next week Selectboard meeting. Deadlines would be very short if we decide to use Australian Ballot, but waivers may be possible.
9. Junk Yard Update. Legal representative of Benjamins and Durkees has provided a letter clarifying that fencing will be put in place by June 1, 2022. Mine Road property has not been moved; liaison is meeting with Orange County Sheriff to clarify next steps. Miller Pond clean up seems to have slowed since snowfall, but progress has been made. Town Clerk will send a letter to owner of Pixley property on Brook Road to notify of junkyard restrictions.

10. Liaison updates.

- Planning Commission eager to finalize the Unified Bylaws and hopes to hold hearing for the town in 2022.
- Community Nurse committee intends to submit a petition for the town to support a community nurse. Carol Langstaff will attend the Jan 12 Selectboard meeting.
- Recreation Committee wants to submit a petition for support for the Pocket Park. Rec committee representative is invited to attend the Jan 12 meeting.

11. General Correspondence

- a. Rocky Fuller, RE: Trustees of Public Funds: Mix Fund
- b. Byron Breese, RE: town ordinance, RE: your letter dated 20 Dec 2021. Lisa will contact Paul Gillies to follow up.
- c. John Freitag letter dated 12/4/21 – email dated 12/21/21 RE: draft article on road crew and -- email dated 12/13/21 RE: recording how selectboard members vote
- d. John Hawkins, Trustees of Public Funds, RE: Clarify our duties. Chair would like to undertake additional research to better understand the issues before making any decision. John Hawkins noted that the trustees recognize that this may need to wait till after town meeting.
- e. TRORC, Town Plan Determination of Energy Compliance reviewed and approved and RE: Town Plan Approval and Confirmation of Municipal Planning Efforts

12. Other

- Congratulations to Paul Kifner who was awarded the 2021 Community Building Award.
- Vermont has authorized COVID boosters for children ages 5-12.

Meeting adjourned at 8:52 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Linehan  
Recording Clerk