

**Draft**  
Selectboard Meeting Minutes  
May 9, 2024  
Town Office, 227 Justin Morrill Hwy, Strafford, 05072

Selectboard participants in person – Toni Pippy, Andrew Duncklee, Kelly Harman, Hannah Levinger

Selectboard participants via Zoom – Jeff Solsaa

Participants in person – Stephen Marx, Jessica Tidman

Participants via Zoom – Mary Thompson, John Freitag, Betty-jo Duncklee, Bryan Kovalick Rodrick Maclay, Roberta, Susan Cloke, Steve Willbanks

Meeting called to order 6pm

Meeting Timeline

Personal Concerns – Stephen Marx reported that there is still a lot of debris from the property that burned down on Taylor Valley Rd and was wondering if the Town could classify it as a junk yard or require a fence to be put up, or mandate that the property be cleaned out. Also, Stephen is getting more reports of garbage being dumped on the side of the road as well as reports of people burning trash. He is concerned that with Debbie retiring that these incidents will only increase.

Jeff Solsaa reported that the Zoom audio is very poor, and it is hard for people joining via Zoom to hear everything that is being said in the Selectboard meeting. Andrew Duncklee volunteers to investigate possible solutions to improve the audio quality of future meetings.

Highway Department updates

- Roads and equipment- The new member of the Highway Department has been able to get out in the roads with the grader in the past couple of weeks, with good results and increased productivity.
- Toni Pippy moves to approve and sign two Final Highway Access forms. One for Nelle & Eric Donaldson and one for Peter & Carol Orgain. Jeff Solsaa seconded the motion. All approved and the forms were signed.
- Jeff Solsaa made the Selectboard aware that the condition of Brook Road has deteriorated to the point where if it stays the way it is, Brook Road will not be able to be plowed this winter. He recommended that we grind down the asphalt and roll the road to make maintenance possible this winter. This action will also make it easier to replace the 8 culverts that are scheduled to be replaced this year if there is no asphalt to cut and replace during the replacement process. The estimated cost to grind and roll Brook Road is \$22,000. The Selectboard discussed where the money for this project will come from. The Selectboard anticipates there will be excess monies available to use from the Freeman Bridge replacement project that we will use towards grinding and rolling Brook Road. Jeff Solsaa moves to grind and roll Brook Road in anticipation of re-paving it in the future. Hannah Levinger seconded the motion. All approved.
- Toni Pippy moves to sign a deal for a 2024 International 4x4 truck, the terms of the deal are \$153,000 paid over 5 years at an interest rate of 6.7% with a warranty, payments to start next year. Kelly Harman seconded the motion. All approved and the papers were signed.
- Freeman Bridge update- Jeff Solsaa informed the board that the engineer had sent him email communications with 4 potential bridge designs and potential contract terms for each. The most promising and lowest price design being a concrete arch design with an estimated cost of 1.2 million dollars.
- Currently there is no update for the repeater.

- Route 132 project of 2023 flood repair update payment to the town is taking longer than anticipated as the process has changed at the State level. Lisa Bragg is aware of this change and is working to complete the new process.
- Retirement celebration Toni Pippy is still looking for help, even if it only picking up ordered supplies we have bought. Anyone able to help, please email Lisa, Regina or Selectboard and let us know.

Andrew Duncklee moves to approve the minutes of the meeting on April 25, 2024, with minor corrections to add missing last names. Toni Pippy seconded the motion. All approved and the minutes were finalized.

Capital Budget update – Bryan Kovalick informed the Selectboard as to the current progress of the Capital Budget project. He has met with a majority of the committees listed but is still waiting on some of the committees' next regularly scheduled meeting. Bryan has begun to fill in the standard spreadsheets with initial projects and estimated numbers. Bryan wanted to make it clear that this is still a work in progress, and he does not have all the necessary information and numbers to make the documents useful as anything other than a list of committees he has met with, and a first round of project collected. He is still collecting potential capital projects and researching financial information. The Selectboard asked if we are still on target to complete this project on time and Bryan confirmed that we are still very much on schedule.

Orange County Restorative Justice Center – moved to another meeting due to sickness.

Complete Elezabeth Superfund Site 2024 Five Year Review. Toni Pippy read the questionnaire and the Selectboard answered the questions. Jeff Solsaa questioned the absence of the Stanley Property from the review questionnaire. The Selectboard discussed the property and even though it was impacted by the Superfund Site, only a small portion of the property was included in the Superfund Site and that all questions were addressed in the review.

Liaison updates – the Selectboard has decided to move forward with the preliminary application for the EVSE Grant for the Park and Ride. This only confirms if the Town is eligible for the grant and will allow us to formally apply for the grant if we are indeed eligible.

Strafford Historical Society Masonic Hall property line & Handicap Parking – Steve Willbanks advised the Selectboard that the current parking at the Masonic Hall does not comply with ADA standards. The Selectboard and Steve discussed potential solutions, with the Historical Society's preferred solution being adding the spaces up front and to the left of the building. The only issue is that there is confusion around where the property line sits as there are conflicting documents describing the property line between the Red Barn and the Masonic Hall. There was more discussion around what will happen with the current parking spaces around the building if this goes forward, and the current lack of parking in both villages. The Steve and Jessica will bring back the Selectboard's concerns to the Historical Society for discussion and come back to the Selectboard.

Town Office committee- The ballots have been mailed out and the informational meeting has been held. The Town Office committee is now moving on to answer questions and create a "Frequently Asked Questions" document to share official, accurate information and to combat some of the misinformation that has made its way into social media.

Personnel policy draft – this is on hold as it is still in review by the Town's lawyers.

Rubbish options- Debbie Clark is retiring and will no longer be collecting rubbish on Saturday's during recycling. Kelly Harman is reaching out to different vendors and independent contractors to let them know there is an opportunity to expand their business to Strafford.

Other- Lisa Bragg will be out for two weeks while recovering from surgery. This means the Town Office will be closed May 13 and May 20, 2024, due to being short staffed.

Due to the FEMA funds that Strafford has and will be receiving, the Town needs an auditor to come in and audit our financial records. There has been no response to the initial RFP and the

Selectboard discussed possible ways to contract with an Auditor or CPA to audit the Town's financial records.

Hannah Levinger moves to adjourn the meeting. Toni Pippy seconded the motion. All approved and the meeting was adjourned at 8:04pm.

Recording clerk Andrew Duncklee