Greensboro Selectboard
December 9, 2020
Meeting Minutes

[Meeting was held via Zoom conference call]

SELECTBOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Peter Romans, Andy Kehler, Gary Circosta, Matt McAllister, Tracy Collier

SELECTBOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: None

OTHERS PRESENT: Janet Steward, Kim Greaves, Josh Karp, Naomi Ranz-Schleifer, Linda Ely, Michael Porrazzo, Nancy Riege, Clive Gray, Miriam Rogers, Jed Feffer, Brett Stanciu, Chief Aaron Cochran

CALLED TO ORDER: 6:30 PM

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

MINUTES
Minutes were unanimously approved: 11/11/20 as amended; 11/16/20 as written; 11/23/20 as written.

PUBLIC CONCERNS

Manure spreading incident – Janet Steward. Janet told the Board that her husband Ray was spreading manure, and while he kept the road pretty clean, some managed to get onto the road. Information was conveyed to Ray that the Fire Dept. would have to be called in to clean up the road, and that Ray would be billed for their time.

Janet asked whether the town has a policy that would address manure in a town road; Peter said there is no such policy.

Janet told the Board that in order to take an action, a Selectboard member must be directed by the Board to do so. It’s inappropriate for a Selectboard member to act unilaterally, and such behavior puts the town at risk since the town is liable for their behavior. She felt that the Selectboard member in question was engaging in harassment.

Janet said she’d like to work with the Board to come up with a resolution to this incident so all concerned can feel better about the situation. Peter said that this is a new situation for the Board and that further discussion will be necessary.

Josh noted an incident a number of years ago when Fairmont Farm was spreading liquid manure. A significant amount was tracked onto a town road and at least one car skidded off the road. The Fire Dept. was called in to clean up, and Fairmont ended up making a donation to the Fire Dept.

Tracy thanked Janet for sharing her concerns and apologized that she felt upset about the situation. She added that the Board should look into the issue of unilateral actions taken by a Selectboard member.
**POLICE**

1. **Police report.** The Board reviewed the November police report. Chief Cochran reported that an officer contracted COVID-19. In such a small police department, this had the potential to become a disaster, but luckily there was no spread within the HPD. The officer recovered and is back at work.

   Tracy asked how often the HPD patrols in Greensboro. Chief Cochran replied that they aim for a minimum of 2.5 hrs. of patrol per shift, and with three shifts a day it ends up being about eight hours of patrol daily.

   - The Dept. is replacing antiquated body cams.
   - As the rail trail becomes more used, the Dept. is seeking grant funds to purchase a UTV to assist them with getting around on the trail.
   - Public notices, policies, and procedures will soon be accessible on the HPD’s newly redesigned website. This will make it much easier for the public to access these documents and will increase transparency.

2. **Police contract.** Gary said no substantive discussions have been had since their last meeting.

**GREENSBORO FIRE DEPT.**

No report was available.

**ROADS & DRIVEWAYS**

1. **Road Foreman’s report – Tom Camarra.** Tom was not present this month.

2. **New Town Garage planning – update.** Gary noted that the lot just below the town garage is for sale. The mobile home burned on the .8 acre lot, it has been removed, and the property is now for sale. Peter said that if the town ends up utilizing the existing site for a new garage, this lot might be useful as a site for a septic system. The Board will keep this option in mind as planning continues.

   **JP Sicard – sand screening.** Sand screening at the town’s Glover pit was undertaken to save the town money on winter sand, but inefficiencies made the project cost about twice as much as anticipated.

   - At some point, Tom asked them to change to a coarser screen; Tom didn’t like the result so they changed it back.
   - Sicard had to stockpile the screened sand in a different part of the pit.
   - Because there was so much stone in the bank where they were set up, they tried moving to another location. This new spot had too much silt, so they moved back to the original location. While the stone they pulled out will be good for crushing next year, moving the screener twice, and handling the stone, added considerable time.

   Matt said that they had to move sand away from the screener anyway, so it seems like it shouldn’t have taken much more time to move it a little farther. Peter said that Sicard’s bid was based on them using just a loader – but they ended up using trucks.

   Peter said Sicard seemed to realize that the job cost way more than their bid was, that the Board may not have been aware that the cost overruns were occurring, and that he may be open to some negotiation on the price.
Sicard suggested that if screening is done again, the town should schedule crushing at the same time for efficiency.

Andy wondered if the extra work was due to Sicard not doing a thorough assessment of the pit. Matt also wondered if the original bid was not realistic. Discussion of a ‘bid’ vs. an ‘estimate’. Matt agreed to get in touch with Jason Sicard to discuss the cost overruns.

**GREENSBORO CONSERVATION COMMISSION – Clive Gray**

1. Clive said that the Greensboro Conservation Commission (GCC) has approved spending $150 towards the installation of the ‘beaver deceiver’ on Whetstone Brook Rd. Peter told Clive that the necessary funds have already been raised by individuals. Clive withdrew his request.

2. Clive said that the GCC has requested that $2000 from the Greensboro Conservation Fund be paid to the Green Mtn. Monastery as a contribution to their conservation easement on the property. This payment was approved at a prior Selectboard meeting. There was some confusion about account balances related to this disbursement; it was agreed that the payment may be made now, but that the accounting issues should be cleared up as soon as possible. Andy made the following motion:

   *The Board approves that a $2,000 check be written to contribute to the conservation of the Green Mtn. Monastery, with funds coming out of the Greensboro Conservation Fund as approved by the Board at an earlier meeting.*

   Tracy seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

**GREATER GREENSBORO WALKABILITY/BIKEABILITY TASK FORCE – Naomi Ranz-Schleifer**

1. **Greensboro Village Center Pedestrian Safety Initiative.** Naomi reported that the task force has been working with Local Motion and VTrans to improve pedestrian safety in center of Greensboro village. A Pop-up demonstration is planned for next summer to test out new potential crosswalk locations and traffic barriers. Based on the results, the task force will make recommendations to the town about permanent changes to make. Local Motion will manage this event at no charge.

   Naomi asked the Board for approval to hold the event, noting that both Willey’s Store and Miller’s Thumb will be involved.

   The Board approved the event. Naomi and Local Motion will choose a date for the event, picking a time of year where there’s lots of pedestrian activity.

2. **Gravel for rec. paths.** Naomi said the task force is working on improving and developing rec. paths, and asked whether town gravel could be utilized for such projects. One project is putting in a path out to the ball field; they are working to get approvals from landowners. Matt said that there is plenty of gravel, and asked Naomi to estimate how much might be needed. If grant funds are pursued to develop the rec. paths, town gravel trucked by the road crew could count as an in-kind match.

**TOWN CLERK – Kim Greaves**

1. **Town meeting 2021.** The state legislature is giving Selectboards the authority to hold 2021 Town Meeting by Australian ballot, for this year only.
The legislature also may allow towns to postpone their town meetings until May; this will be decided in January. It’s unclear when the town report would need to be sent out if the meeting is delayed. Discussion of postponing town meeting. Peter noted that the weather can be plenty unsettled in May, meaning that an outdoor meeting may not be practical – and, it’s likely that COVID-19 will still be a big enough issue that an indoor meeting won’t be possible. After discussion, Tracy made the following motion:

*The Board agrees to cancel the floor meeting and hold the 2021 town meeting using Australian Ballot.*

Matt seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

For Australian Ballot votes, there must be an informational meeting within ten days of the vote. Kim said that if the town’s tabulator is used to count Australian Ballot votes, it would cost approx. $900 to program the card, with ballots costing an additional 45¢ each. Machine counting of votes would make things much easier and quicker for the town office staff, vs. hand counting paper ballots. There may be state funds available to offset such costs.

Discussion of whether to mail out ballots to all residents, or have them request a ballot. Would this be a printed machine-readable ballot or an in-house produced ballot?

2. **Town Hall lights.** Kim reported that lights have repeatedly been left on in the Town Hall. No one present knew who might be doing this.

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**TREASURER**

1. **Treasurer.** Barbara Brooke has resigned as treasurer. After discussion, Andy made the following motion:

*The Board appoints Kim Greaves to be town treasurer and Brett Stanciu to be assistant town treasurer.*

Tracy seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

2. **FY 2022 budget.** It is anticipated that the state education tax rate will see a major increase next year. Discussion; should the town try to cut municipal spending to lower the overall tax rate? It was pointed out that this may not make much of a difference because approx. 75% of property tax bills are due to the education tax rate.

3. **Appropriations.** Kim said that it’s pretty common for appropriations to be listed as separate articles on a town meeting warning.

4. The FY22 budget will be finalized ASAP, likely at a special meeting.

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**ONGOING BUSINESS**

1. **Caspian Lake Watershed Action Plan.** Jed Feffer, a member of the Stewards of the Greensboro Watershed, explained some of the water quality improvement projects being proposed, including Lakewise Assessments. After discussion, Andy made the following motion:

*The Board approves $1000 to support the Caspian Lakewise program, with funds coming from the FY21 budget.*

2. **Personnel Policy & CMV Drug and Alcohol Policy.** Gary reported that VLCT completed a basic review of the town’s newly adopted Personnel Policy and CMV Drug and Alcohol Policy. No comments were received regarding the CMV policy.
On the Personnel Policy, a few suggestions were made. Andy made the following motion:

_The Personnel Policy will be amended to incorporate the changes suggested by VLCT._

Tracy seconded the motion, which carried unanimously. 
Gary added that a next-level review could be undertaken at a pretty low cost, if desired by the Board.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

1. **Updating Town Website.** Gary observed that the town’s website is in need of an update. Kim said that Maya McCoy maintains the town website and can be asked to make changes.

   A list of specific changes and updates needed will be drawn up; Maya will be asked to complete anything not done by the town office staff.

   Peter noted that is not a major website redesign, just an update.

2. **Town employee year-end bonus.** After discussion, Tracy made the following motion:

   _As a small token of appreciation, the Board approves sending a holiday bonus of $100 to all full-time staff, and $50 to part-time staff._

   Andy seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Andy made the following motion:

_The Board will enter executive session at 9:02 PM to discuss ongoing police contract negotiations._

Tracy seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

The Board left executive session at 9:54 PM, and took no action.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The Board voted unanimously to adjourn at 9:55 PM.

Respectfully Submitted: Josh Karp, Selectboard Clerk

*AMENDED 1/13/21 J.K.*