

Stockbridge Board of Selectmen -Draft

July 16, 2020 7:00 PM

Zoom Meeting Info

+1 929 205 6099 Meeting ID: 812 3647 3737 Password: 903310

Present: LeeAnn Isaacson, Jim Shands, Mark Pelletier, Carl Groppe, Katelynne McKinstry, and Lori Scott.

The meeting came to order at 7:03pm. Mark read the minutes from the last meeting. Lee Ann motioned to approve, Jim seconded, and the minutes were approved.

Road Report

1. Jim continues to have questions on the road name change of Prior Dam Road to No Town Road. The Selectboard will take a ride out there to investigate. They are planning for 7/24/2020. They will meet at the garage at 8:00am.
2. Dave is investigating a Better Roads Grant to upgrade culverts and ditching on the Class 4 section of Fletcher Brook. There are quite a few culverts and some major ditching to do out there
3. Jamie Kinney from Montgomery Logging will be logging the Common side of Lyon Hill. He will be logging for 2 months.
4. The grass is growing in on the work done on Stony Brook. Dave is expecting improvement there at the end of winter and mud season.
5. The Whitcomb Hill culverts, ditching, and ledge breaking is completed. The road now has much better ditches and an area for the snow to go. There are just a couple of cosmetic things left to do out there including finishing moving a stonewall across from Lynn's and fixing a low spot on the side of the road above his driveway.
6. The Lyon Hill project dirt work and debris removal has begun. We are removing a tree berm to help prevent the water from running down the road onto the Common for a long stretch. This work should prevent the continuing problem of water outlets plugging up causing the catch basin at the bottom to plug. Krickitt McCusker has been on board with this project design and stopped out to make a couple of recommendations.
7. New Loader is expected to be delivered mid to late August.
8. The 2020 International truck was picked up at Clark's Friday last week. There was a problem with the fuel rail that required that the truck be towed up there. While we were up that way, we picked up materials for hydro seeder at Milton Rental.
9. Dave is working to submit a Better Back Roads grant to repair and upgrade the area down on Blackmer Boulevard. This is the location where the road continues to settle. He submitted this for a class 2 grant from the state but so far have heard nothing.
10. Dave still has not gotten an update on the Grant work applied for on Mount Hunger Road. He inquired about those grants and it is possible we might not hear anything until August.
11. Army Corps of Engineers approved the permit for the grant work to be completed down on the area above the Lilliesville Brook Bridge on River Road. This is ready to go out to bid now. Jim moved that we send the River Road project out to bid. Lee Ann seconded. The motioned was approved.

School Board Update – Carl Groppe

Carl reported that there is a constituency group that is concerned that the school board is taking too long to resolve building and space issues. The School Board had a conversation in April/May with the state that the budget could level fund from last year approved budget. However, the legislature stalled on that advice and changed to allow towns to hold a one cycle Australian ballot to try to get an approved budget. The board proposed a budget that was under last year's budget. They felt they had a good chance to get that approved through a vote. After it was voted down, the board had a special meeting on 7/7 and proposed not using the high school building for any education related purpose.

They are working to engage a consultant to tell them how to shut down the building safely and maintain it properly in the most cost-effective way. Administration and the Business office then looked at the proposed budget to identify costs that could be further reduced. They found approximately \$20,000. The board agreed to warn another vote to coincide with the 8/11/2020 Primary. The school board is also going to meet with the Rochester Selectboard in Executive session to investigate how they might take over the building and the costs involved. The results of that discussion will be brought to the pre vote informational meeting to be held prior to the 8/11 vote. A flyer (4-page mailer) will be sent out to the voters as well.

Jim said to Carl that it would go a long way to be able to provide a timeline and plan to shed the high school building. Mark expressed that during the original merger vote the plan presented was to remove the day care and the high school. That is why when residents see the study on the buildings requiring many dollars to repair and enhance the high school, they are duly concerned that the plans are not transparent. Lee Ann added that the merger indicated both towns should have the same goals and objectives, which led to the school choice option for 7-12 rather than using the high school.

The original intent of the study was to get to one building on the Rochester campus. Carl indicated that the group that did the study did not produce the level of guidance they were seeking to determine the best way to use the buildings. He has offered to come to the next Selectboard meeting to advise the board on the results of the Executive Meeting with the Rochester Selectboard.

Katelynne had joined in a little late but asked about the school board deciding to appoint a replacement for a vacancy rather than add a ballot item. Lori indicated that by statute, vacancy replacements are appointed by board majority to fill the resigning member's term.

Public Communication

The Selectboard approved moving the first tax payment due date to 9/15/2020. The communication below will be placed on the Town Website.

Stockbridge 2020 Property Tax Bills – Update for Property Owners

Due to COVID-19 related impacts to Income Tax and Homestead Declaration filing deadlines and the fact that the RSUD budget was voted down on 6/30/2020, the Town of Stockbridge will not be able to produce tax bills this month as normally would be done.

Not having an approved school budget prevents the Vermont State Agency of Education from calculating the education component of the property tax rates that is needed for the tax bills. The School Board is warning a new budget vote on 8/11/2020.

8/15/2020 is the new estimated tax bill date with the due date for the first payment moving to 9/15/2020. The Selectboard has waived penalties and interest for the first payment.

Property owners need to understand that this delay is very impactful to the town's operational cash flow. The town must borrow money for operations in anticipation of the tax receipts. If you can pay estimated taxes based on last year's bill on the original due date, it would be very much appreciated.

Lori also reported that the Trustees of Public Funds has approved a bridge loan to the town should we have a shortfall from the existing Tax Anticipation Note with the bank. Mark asked for an accounting of how much tax revenue is normally collected in August. **Action Item:** Lori to prepare this for the next meeting.

2020 Census update:

The Census team has provided a flyer on reporting 2nd or seasonal homes. That flyer is posted on the town's website.

Other Business:

Fire Response from 7/4/2020. The response was posted to the town's website on 7/8/2020. There have been no questions asked to date.

June Financials were reviewed by the Selectboard. **Action Item:** Lori will be putting together a grant analysis for next meeting.

The board is continuing to monitor cash flow

Correspondence:

Campground Concerns. Todd Trzaskos reported that there was some overnight camping over the holiday weekend. The board is recommending additional signage. **Language** Town Property. Day use at your own risk. No overnight parking or camping. **Action Item:** Lori to send Jim the language and he will have sign made.

Gaysville Parking Concerns: Board would like Dave to determine how many No Parking Signs are needed for Bridge ST and up the River Road side.

Paul Dinger concerns on Kelly Road. The Selectboard has reviewed the issues reported and all are on a private road. Private Road concerns must be addressed by the property owners and the town has no jurisdiction. **Action Item:** Selectboard will send a letter to the property owner.

Mirror request for Mount Hunger Road: Selectboard approved the letter to the property owner.

Orders were sent electronically to the board members and will be signed and scanned back to the town office.

Jim moved to adjourn, Lee Ann seconded, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:36pm.

Lori Scott, Town Clerk
