

TOWN OF CLARENDON BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING
REGULAR
April 11, 2022
Minutes

Attendees:

Select Board

Mike Klopchin, Chair
Bob Bixby, Clerk
Robert Congdon
Cash Ruane
Art Menard

Katie Nop, Secretary
Gloria Menard, Town Clerk
William Chmielewski, PEG-TV
Tom Miles
Riley Hoff
Madison Akin
Bex Akin
Bob Underhill
Kevin Peck

Call to Order

Chairman Klopchin called the meeting to order at 6:11PM.

Agenda additions/deletions

Selectman Congdon motioned to add Tom Week's resignation under New Business, Selectman Ruane seconded, and all Board members approved.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Selectman Congdon motioned to approve the Regular Meeting minutes from March 28, 2022 as presented, Selectman Bixby seconded, and all approved. Selectman Menard motioned to approve the Special Meeting minutes from April 4, 2022. Selectman Bixby seconded and the motion passed 2-0. Selectmen Menard and Congdon abstained from the vote because they were not present at the Special Meeting.

Highway

Road Commissioner Report- Road Commissioner Ruane reported that they replaced a 60ft culvert on Schoolhouse Hill Road that had a hole in it. They are presently taking out dead trees. They are also trying to finish up grading. Selectman Bixby mentioned the corner at "Shehee's Corner" could use a low shoulder sign. Cash said they could do that as well as put one up near the Clarendon Springs corner.

White stop bars- Road Commissioner Ruane explained that a lot of people are running through the stop at the intersection of Walker Mtn and Creek Road. Its only a 2-way stop at that intersection. There used to be a two way stop sign below the stop sign and its no longer there. The State says that the town could make it an all stop intersection, but if it remains as a 2-way stop, no sign can be put up because the town then assumes liability. Cash would like to paint white stop bars at this intersection as well as Middle Road/Moulton Ave and Cold River Road/North Shrewsbury Road. Chairman Klopchin thought that the Walker Mountain intersection is priority. Cash said it has to be warmer before they can paint but that's his plan.

The Road Commissioner also mentioned that he will be looking for a temporary laborer at the end of April since he will be out of work due to a health issue. The temp that he had hired last year was a real asset to the team but has taken on other jobs since, and is unavailable. The Board asked Katie to post the position. Katie asked about parameters around it- the Board responded by instructing her to go off of the temporary worker description in the personnel policy.

Approval of Select Board Warrants

All new warrants and warrants previously signed by the designated Select Board Member were approved and signed by all Select Board Members.

Guests

Tom Miles was present at the meeting and said he was there to answer any questions regarding the Inclusion Statement that was talked about at the last meeting. Chairman Klopchin said that the Board has looked over the state's inclusion proclamation as well. Selectman Menard and Congdon said that the feedback they've received is that it should be put on the ballot for the people to decide. Madison Aiken said the comments she has received is that "why wouldn't there be an inclusion statement in town?" She felt that in this day and age, our town on paper is "monolithic." Ms. Aiken said it's difficult to learn in a public setting with a camera on, but was wondering if the Board had any questions for them on this subject. Chairman Klopchin's main concern was the legality aspect of adopting such a declaration and what it could mean for the town. He then read the last 3 paragraphs of the state's inclusion proclamation. Selectman Menard stated he had good conversations and questions with some of the people after the last meeting. Madison Aiken asked if he wanted to talk about those questions now. Selectman Menard thought that one line in the inclusion state mentioned that individuals should feel they can speak their minds freely, but Carol Geary contradicted that when she mentioned that she didn't like the offensive Biden flag that was flown; Selectman Menard felt that that resident had the right to speak his mind freely as well, and for him that meant flying the offensive flag. Ms. Aiken responded that adopting the inclusion statement may not change behavior, but it would try to show who Clarendon truly is. Selectman Menard asked if Clarendon should be inclusive to all groups, such as the "KKK?" Ms. Aiken clarified that the inclusion statement is inclusive of identities, not interest groups or clubs such as the KKK. Selectman Menard also asked why white Europeans were not included in the statement? Madison responded that it does in fact state "all races" are included and yet, unfortunately, by default people have a tendency to think that white Europeans are not included in that. Riley Hoff mentioned that he is for the adoption of this inclusion statement, but feels the entire decision should not be left up to the 5 men on the Select Board. Tom Miles said Selectman Menard had some good questions about the statement, another one being if Clarendon adopted the inclusion statement and essentially welcomed "all people" would that mean criminals as well? Mr. Miles said he would look into that.

Public Comments

N/A

Old Business

Electrical work quotes for Town Hall and Transfer Station- Selectman Congdon motioned that to save some money, the Board approves the bid from Voity Electrical, Selectman Menard seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

New Business

Chippenhook Cemetery additional headstone request- Kevin Peck of the Cemetery Committee, was present to discuss this request that was received from Elizabeth Wehse. Elizabeth has a plot that was designed for 4 caskets. But because protocols have changed, they are allowed

room for 4 urns and 2 headstones. Her request was that her plot have a third headstone with room for 2 urns so that her son and daughter-in-law could be buried there if the wish. Kevin Peck of the Cemetery Committee reviewed the plot location and recommended 1 flat headstone for 2 additional urns. Selectman Congdon noted that his grandparents are buried in the East Clarendon Cemetery, which is a privately owned cemetery, but their policy is as long as there was room in the family row, they were allowed additional flat headstone space. Bob Underhill, another member of the Cemetery Committee, went to the site as well and agrees with Kevin that there is space for a flat headstone. Selectman Congdon motioned to grant the request and Selectman Menard seconded for discussion. Kevin said that there needs to be clear documentation on the allowance of this additional stone, since most members of the Select Board will have passed on when this stone is set. The Board then clarified if Elizabeth was the original purchaser of the lot and had the authority to make this request. They would like to see the deed. Selectman Congdon amended his motion to: the Board approves Elizabeth Wehse's request so long as her name is on the deed for this plot. Selectman Menard seconded. The motion passed unopposed.

Bob Underhill said that he is doing some work in the Chippenhook Cemetery and working on the monument and found the missing finial. It ended up in someone's possession in Pennsylvania and they sent it to Bob. Bob has been cleaning up the monument and needs to purchase more cleaner He is looking for authorization to purchase more. The cost of the cleaner has gone up but the Treasurer did note that there was about \$3,000 left in the cemetery maintenance budget. Selectman Congdon motioned for Bob to go for it, Selectman Ruane seconded, and all Board members approved.

ARPA- standard allowance election- Katie explained that the first reporting period is due at the end of this month for the ARPA funds. Even though Clarendon has not expended any funds, the report still has to be filled out. The town must elect during this reporting period which revenue loss option they want to go with. They can either elect the 10-million-dollar standard allowance or go with the revenue loss replacement equation option. VLCT highly recommends selecting the first option because it offers a lot more flexibility for spending. Selectman Menard motioned that Clarendon elects the standard allowance for ARPA, Selectman Congdon seconded, and the motion passed 4-0.

FEMA DR4022 closeout letter- Katie explained that Vermont Emergency Management reached out to the town recently to make sure we got reimbursed for the demolition of the building at 814 Cold River Road, after Tropical Storm Irene hit. The Treasurer was able to confirm that we were reimbursed. VEM also needed a letter from the town stating that no permits were required from the town to do the demo. Once they received the letter, they could close out the project in their system. Selectman Congdon motioned for the Chairman to sign off on the letter, Selectman Bixby seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Tom Weeks resignation- Katie read Tom Weeks resignation letter aloud. He has decided to fully retire from the town's transfer station. There are now only two attendants with the most senior man in his nineties. Chairman Klopchin suggested posting Tom's position for 2 weeks. Selectman Congdon motioned to draft a letter of thanks to Tom for his many years of service and wish him the best and have all board members sign the letter. Selectman Bixby seconded the motion and all approved. Katie confirmed that she would post the job.

The Town Clerk had provided the Board with a copy of the new Zoning Administrator's approval notice for them to look over. They were pleased with the open communication between the new ZA and the Board.

Town Officer's Report

Approved April 25, 2022

Secretary, Katie, mentioned doing the ARPA report was on her docket of to-dos and asked if she needed a motion from the Board for her to go ahead and fill it out. Selectman Congdon motioned that Katie do the reporting for ARPA, Selectman Ruane seconded, and the motion passed unopposed.

Select Board Member Concerns

The whole Board expressed their thanks to Tom Weeks for his many years of service to the town and he will be greatly missed at the transfer station.

Adjournment

Selectman Congdon motioned to adjourn at 7:01pm, Selectman Bixby seconded, and all Board members approved.

SIGNED: Mike Klopchin Mike Klopchin, Chair

SIGNED: Bob Bixby Bob Bixby, Clerk