

**TOWN OF CLARENDON BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING  
REGULAR**

**September 26, 2022**

**Minutes**

**Attendees:**

Select Board

Mike Klopchin, Chair

Bob Bixby, Clerk

Robert Congdon

Cash Ruane

Art Menard

Heidi Congdon, Treasurer

William Chmielewski, PEG-TV

Matt Jakubowski, Fire Chief

Ed Baker

Jim Todd

Dick Pratt

Stephen Hill

Cindy Davis

Art Peterson

Mark Reardon

Rita Flanders

Gloria Menard, Clerk

Joel Baker

Michael J. Pedone

Mark Meszaros

Tim Mumford Jr

Kevin Peck

Don Pratt

Dave Potter

Mercedes Rabideau

Norm Flanders

Ralph Ford

**Call to Order**

Chairman Klopchin called the meeting to order at 6PM.

**Agenda additions/deletions**

N/A

**Approval of Meeting Minutes**

Selectman Congdon motioned to approve the September 12<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes and Selectman Bixby seconded. The motion passed unopposed.

**Highway**

*Road Commissioner Report*

Road Commissioner Ruane gave an update on the Teer Road project. They have been working on 3 segments which have been funded by 2 grants. It's almost complete.

The grader needed to be fixed again today and will be on the road as soon as weather permits. Cash has been speaking to dealers about a new grader. Delivery of a new one is about a year to 1 ½ years out if ordered now. The estimated cost of one is \$300k.

Mark Reardon wanted to make comments regarding the amount of work the road crew has been able to accomplish in a short amount of time, and that they are to be commended. He encouraged the public to check out the work up at Teer Rd. The work hasn't even been completed and it already has made a huge difference. Everyone should be proud of the road crew and what they accomplish.

**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.

Approved October 10, 2022

**Guests**

N/A

**Public Comments**

N/A

**Old Business**

*Cemetery Committee- draft cemetery rules*

Kevin reached out to many different towns regarding cemetery rules. He worked together with Bob Underhill, and came up with a draft of cemetery rules to present to the board. The towns of Barnard and Westford had been in a similar situation that Clarendon is in now. Chairman Klopchin stated he's read through the draft and he thinks doing this would be the right thing. Chairman Klopchin would like to see the Town Clerk post it to the website for public input. Selectman Congdon stated they could do that, but ultimately the rules fall to the Board's shoulders and thanked Kevin and Bob for their work on this. Selectman Bixby did have a question regarding mandating memorials to be placed within a year. Kevin explained that if something comes up then the Board can choose to have allowances due to circumstances. The Board decided to post the draft on the website for public input and it will be revisited at the next meeting.

Kevin collected quotes for tree removal needed in Spafford cemetery. Below are the following estimates:

Jeff Lear - \$3550

GM Tree Tech - \$4000

Ace Arborist - \$5000

Trees Inc - \$3300

Selectman Congdon made motion to award the bid to Jeff Lear and Selectman Bixby seconded. Chairman Klopchin asked the Treasurer if they have the money to pay for this in the budget. Last year the cemetery budget had \$3000 fall in to the general fund and the Board had also budgeted for maintenance in this year's budget. Chairman Klopchin called the vote and the motion passed unopposed.

Kevin reported a broken stone in Marsh Cemetery. The Board reviewed photos of it. The mowing company, Intrinsic, needs to be phoned about the broken stone to remind them of the reporting requirements in our contract, as well as to request they pay for the repair of the damaged stone. It seems to have been made by a mowing machine and they had been mowing earlier in the day, the day the broken stone was found.

**New Business**

*ARPA Funds: Clarendon FD tanker discussion-*

Chief Jakubowski thanked the public & Fire Dept members for showing up to support the purchase of the Tanker. The purchase of a new tanker would be replacing a 1991 tanker (over 30 years old). The current truck holds 1300 gallons and the new truck would hold 2,000. The Chief said trucks these days should be multi-purpose and not be a single use thing. This truck would not only be a water tanker, it would also carry a second set of jaws of life, could be used as block truck, tool carrier, and would be used to assist the road crew by flushing culverts. The approximate cost is \$330k. The Fire Department's truck fund has about \$50k in it. Fire Department Treasurer, Mike Pedone, researched paying the current truck off and then starting a new loan for the tanker and the interest rate would be more on a new loan, so it would be beneficial to not have to take out that new loan.

Approved October 10, 2022

Heidi gave a financial picture. The total ARPA awarded was \$721,300. The total amount received to date is \$486,960.04. Selectman Menard expressed everyone he has spoken to has been in favor of this possible purchase, no one has disapproved.

Selectman Menard made motion that the Board approve \$330k.

Eddie Baker asked if there's been a weight study on the chassis, and other detailed questions regarding rubber, chassis, motor, and axle etc. Matt answered yes to the weight, and that he can double check on the concerns presented about the build. If the funds are approved, Chief Jakubowski would love to have Eddie join the Fire Dept Truck Committee to help on these details. Dave Potter asked what would happen to the old truck. The Chief thinks he'd approach his board to pay it forward to a town around us that is maybe in need. It is not worth much as it has some gauges that aren't working.

Chairman Klopchin called the vote but the motion died.

Selectman Congdon made a motion to approve \$300k and Selectman Menard seconded.

Selectman Bixby had concerns because of the need for a new grader, town garage repairs/building issues, and he would like to see some money reduce taxes for the taxpayers. Selectman Ruane wanted to know what was wrong with the old truck. Cash explained "new trucks" aren't made the way they used to and have more issues as far as emissions, def fluid, etc. Selectman Menard responded by asking if that was going to be the same philosophy for the grader Cash is looking to purchase as well. Selectman Ruane said there's no choice with the grader because of the condition its in.

Mark Reardon asked the Board how they are going to decide what the ARPA funds are going to be used for. He said he is not against any of this, but he feels the taxpayers need to know what the town has for ARPA funds and what the options are. He also feels these things need to be posted around town.

Chairman Klopchin explained historically the requests for the Fire Department on the ballot has never gone down. Chairman Klopchin asked Heidi to explain the intent/purpose and requirements of the ARPA funds. Selectman Congdon explained that by providing this money to the Fire Dept now, the town will be offsetting taxes for the taxpayers, maybe not tomorrow, but in the future. The fire department will be asking for the money on the ballot eventually either way. He continued that if the Board authorizes this amount for the Fire Dept, and then replaces the grader (because at this point the grader can barely be kept on the road), the Board should then ask the voters for permission to put the remaining funds into municipal buildings fund. This would best serve the tax payers. If the Board is able to offset some of these expenses now with this money and then create a fund to tackle the building needs in the future, it would be very beneficial. This is a way to take care of the current needs of the town without placing a large impact on the voters in the future. In Selectman Congdon's opinion, there is enough money here to meet several needs.

Norm Flanders reiterated that statistically, folks overwhelmingly support the Fire Department. He also recommends posting information showing how the money is used, so that folks can better understand how this will affect tax impact in the future.

Selectman Bixby would like to know how long it would be before the Fire Dept would be looking to replace another truck. Chief Jakubowski responded 10-15 years. Selectman Bixby then asked if there were any grants available that the Fire Dept could apply for. Chief

Approved October 10, 2022

responded that there are none available at this time. The last time a grant was received was 2013. Chief applies every year and it's rare to receive them.

Dave Potter would like to know what difference between the 1300 gallon vs 2000 gallon tanker is. Mark Meszaros stated the gallons added, equates to 200-250gal/minute which gives the Fire Dept an additional 3-4 minutes. Chief noted that fires burn faster with all of the synthetic materials in today's construction and every minute is critical especially if someone is trapped in a building.

Art Peterson would like to know if these were the only folks that came forward to request funds. Selectman Congdon answered yes. Selectman Menard expressed the importance to designate and use this money so as not to have to return it. Heidi stated that the designation deadline and the expense deadlines are December 31, 2024 and December 31, 2026 respectively.

Eddie Baker expressed that the town needs to be consolidated into a place similar to Automobiles International for cost savings. Selectman Congdon reiterated the need to establish a Town Buildings fund. Selectman Menard stated that when he met with John Russell about the Town Garage, John did not recommend constructing a new building at the current location.

Chairman Klopchin called a roll call vote in regards to authorizing \$300,000 be given to the Clarendon Fire Department from the ARPA money. Selectman Menard was yes, Selectman Congdon was yes, Selectman Bixby was no, Selectman Ruane was no, and Chairman Klopchin's tie breaking vote was yes. The motion passed.

*Route 7B Speeding/School Zone-*

Selectman Congdon read the letter from the resident. She had concerns about speeding on 7b S near the elementary school exit and requested school zone signs. Selectman Bixby stated that just south of where the resident lives is a school zone sign, but it seems one is missing on the opposite side of the school zone. Selectman Congdon motioned to purchase a school zone sign for where one is missing, and to request the sheriff to step up patrol in that location. Selectman Bixby seconded and all Board members approved.

*Bear issues at Transfer Station-*

Chairman Klopchin explained the current issue to the public (bears are getting into the food waste at the Transfer Station). Rather than a chain-link kennel like structure, Horst recommended putting up an electric fence to be charged overnight and turned off during open hours. The downside however, is the liability of forgetting to turn the fence off. Selectman Congdon made motion to continue pursuing a kennel like structure with a top and Selectman Menard seconded. The motion passed unopposed. Mike will let Horst know. Katie and Heidi will continue searching for quotes for said structure.

*RRPC/TAC appointments-*

Selectman Congdon motioned to reappoint Brownson Spencer to the RRPC as Clarendon's rep and Dave Potter and Bob Bixby to the TAC. Selectman Menard seconded the motion. Selectman Bixby abstained since he was up for reappointment. The motion passed 3-0. There is a vacancy for the RRPC alternate that Katie will post.

Approved October 10, 2022

**Town Officer's Report**

Heidi gave update about tax collection. So far there has been about ½ million collected with several million left to go. The tax due date is Saturday 10/15.

Matt asked if the Rec should put any bear signs up at the Rec fields and Chairman Klopchin thought that was a good idea for the Rec Committee to discuss.

**Select Board Member Concerns**

Selectman Ruane wanted to thank the Fire Dept for all that they do.

**Adjournment**

Selectman Congdon motioned to adjourn at 7:21PM. Selectman Bixby seconded the motion and all approved.

SIGNED: Mike I. Klopchin Mike Klopchin, Chair

SIGNED: Robert Bixby Bob Bixby, Clerk