

TOWN OF CLARENDON BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING
REGULAR
January 23, 2023
Minutes

Attendees:

Select Board

Mike Klopchin, Chair
Robert Congdon
Cash Ruane

Heidi Congdon, Treasurer
Katie Nop, Secretary
William Chmielewski, PEG-TV
Bob Underhill, Lister
George Ambrose, Lister
Kevin Peck
Thomas C. LaVictoire
Lisa LaVictoire
Gene Stone

Call to Order

Chairman Klopchin called the meeting to order at 6:00PM.

Agenda additions/deletions

The Colonial Life Insurance representative was unable to attend due to illness. Chairman Klopchin wondered if they should delete them from the agenda. Selectman Congdon requested that they stay on the agenda so the Board can have a brief discussion about it.

Gene Stone attended the meeting and wished to discuss his land/property. Mr. Stone has a history with the town and his property near Spafford Cemetery, a history that goes back at least a decade. He felt there was unfinished business and he's trying to get his affairs in order. Gene would like the town to pay for a survey for a piece of land that he owns (but wished to donate to the town years ago). Of the Select Board members present, only Chairman Klopchin knew what he was referring to. Selectman Congdon told Gene that the rest of the Board members will have to look at this file to get an understanding of what's going on and what the history is. Gene said the Board could take their time and get back to him.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Selectman Congdon motioned to approve the Regular Meeting minutes from January 9, 2023, and Selectman Ruane seconded. The motion passed unopposed.

Highway

Road Commissioner Report- Road Commissioner Ruane updated the Board that the box culvert project on Creek Road has been announced and posted. There is a mandatory pre-bid conference for interested contractors on February 8, 2023 at 10am at the site. Additional info can be found on the notice on the town's website. A list of contractors was given to the engineer and he has been reaching out directly to them to invite them to the pre-bid conference, in hopes for more competitive bidding.

The Western Star is still giving the crew issues and will be headed to the shop for repairs.

With the recent snow storm, Road Commissioner Ruane is having concerns about private contractors pushing snow across town roads and then leaving the snow on the roads. When this happens, the snow freezes overnight and then causes slippery/icy patches on the road. It's also a safety hazard because when the plow blade hits the iced-up snow, it throws the truck and jolts the driver. Cash urges the public to be considerate of the state statute that restricts the public from depositing snow onto town highways. The Select Board asked that Katie put a notice on the website about this issue. Tom LaVictoire was invited by the Road Commissioner to attend the Select Board meeting after having conversations with Tom the same day about leaving snow in the road. Chairman Klopchin gave Tom a copy of the state statute and asked if he had any questions on it. Tom stated he did not. On Monday, Tom was issued a ticket from the Sheriff's Department for leaving snow on the roadways. Tom explained in depth the way his car lot is positioned, the difficulty he has in plowing it, without leaving snow on the roads. He told the Board that with this recent storm, his plow truck was down and they had to use a snowblower which further exasperated the issue. It was found that Tom was issued a warning a day before for the same offense, and was ticketed Monday after it occurred again. Mr. LaVictoire mentioned he has a disgruntled neighbor that he feels is constantly out watching for him to make a mistake. He figures she called the Sheriff's on him. After much discussion between the Board and Tom, Tom committed to doing his best with the snow removal from his car lot but could not promise that it wouldn't happen again. Road Commissioner Ruane suggested to Tom, a different approach to plowing his lot to avoid leaving snow on town roads and avoid future visits from the Sheriff's Department. Tom was agreeable to Cash's idea and said he would try it out. The Board asked Katie or Cash to speak with the Sheriff's Department to let them know that they've had a good conversation with Mr. LaVictoire and for them to patrol across the whole town for these kinds of plowing offenses.

Paving Reimbursement sign off- Selectman Congdon motioned to have the Selectmen sign off on the paving reimbursement paperwork and Selectman Ruane seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Katie explained that the paving grant was for \$32,000 for South Creek Road, for the original plan of a shim coat. The Fuller bill came to around \$72,000 for South Creek but that's because the town decided to use their budgeted funds to do the top coat as well.

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

Kevin Davis, Colonial Life Insurance- Kevin Davis was unable to attend due to sickness. Heidi, Treasurer, explained that Colonial Life Insurance stopped in to the office to see if any of the employees would be interested in taking advantage of their services. Their company lines up similar to AFLAC but they offer different programs as well. Katie and Heidi explained to them that it would be best practice if they approached the Board about these benefits and then go from there. Heidi said currently there are 2 employees taking advantage of AFLAC. Selectman Congdon suggested that the different departments discuss amongst their employees if they are at all interested. If there's no interest then the Board won't be wasting their time or Colonial Life's. Cash and Katie will get a consensus from the employees and report back to the Select Board.

Public Comments

Chairman Klopchin said that Selectman Bixby was unable to attend tonight due to sickness, however Selectman Bixby had wanted to announce at tonight's meeting that he will not be running for Select Board in March. Chairman Klopchin said that he will definitely be missed.

George Ambrose said that some weeks ago Bob and him had a conversation about George running for Select Board because Bob was not interested. George thought it over and got back to Bob and confirmed that he will run. With Bob Bixby's blessing, George Ambrose announced he is officially running for the Select Board seat. George is currently a Lister with the town and if he won the election and became a Select Board member, he could not hold both offices. He throw out the idea of being contracted with the town for his listing services. He said that that can be figured out later if he wins or not. The Board wished George the best of luck.

Old Business

N/A

New Business

FY24 Budget Approval- Heidi provided the Board with the proposed FY24 budget. She told the Board an appropriation request came in on January 18 from the Rutland County Parent Child Center. The deadline for appropriations is December 31. Selectman Congdon motioned that they stick to their deadline and not add the Parent Child Center's request to the budget. Selectman Ruane seconded the motion and it passed unopposed. Heidi said the budget reflects the Board's decision to reduce the fund balance by \$65,000 while having a slight tax increase. Selectman Congdon motioned to approve the FY24 budget and 2023 warning. Selectman Ruane seconded and all Board members approved. Selectman Congdon wanted to confirm that Article 1 was worded correctly so that it can be voted on from the floor. Heidi confirmed.

FY22 Selectmen's Report- Katie presented the Board with the Selectmen's report. Selectman Congdon questioned whether to keep the paragraph about fireworks in it. Chairman Klopchin wanted to keep it. Selectman Congdon motioned to approve the report as presented, Selectman Ruane seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Town Officer's Report

Treasurer, Heidi, received the report back from the external auditors (Sullivan Powers). She has given a copy to each Board member. There were no auditor adjustments. Copies are limited, but if folks around town would like one, they can pick one up at the town office. Heidi said the internal auditors should be having their first meeting tomorrow.

Kevin, Cemetery Committee member, received a text from GM Tree Tech saying they wouldn't be able to get to the tree in the Spafford Cemetery until Spring due to personnel, but the town could move on to someone else if they wanted it done sooner. Selectman Congdon suggested putting everything on hold until they figure things out with Spafford, given the guest they had at the meeting tonight. Selectman Congdon asked George Ambrose and Chairman Klopchin if they knew if the town had that cemetery surveyed. Selectman Congdon asked that the file/documents be sent to the newer board members so they can review what's gone on in the past. Kevin asked if the Board would like GM Tree Tech to remove the tree or go with a different contractor. The Board asked Kevin and Cash to follow up with GM Tree Tech one more time and then figure things out at the next meeting.

Select Board Member Concerns


Selectman Ruane said that a transfer station attendant made a comment about opening up the transfer station with his personal plow if the road crew doesn't get their on time. Cash said the crew does their absolute best to get there in a timely manner and does not like the idea of having an employee using their personal vehicle to plow because of liability.

The Board thanked the road crew for a job well done in the last 24 hours. This winter storm was not an easy one.

Approved February 13, 2023

Adjournment

Selectman Congdon motioned to adjourn at 7:22PM, Selectman Ruane seconded and all approved.

SIGNED:  Mike Klopchin, Chair

SIGNED:  Bob Bixby, Clerk