

**TOWN OF CLARENDON BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING**  
**REGULAR**  
**March 27, 2023**  
**Minutes**

**Attendees:**

Select Board

Mike Klopchin, Chair  
George Ambrose, Clerk  
Robert Congdon  
Cash Ruane  
Art Menard

Heidi Congdon, Treasurer  
Katie Nop, Secretary  
William Chmielewski, PEG-TV  
Jane Richards  
Kaelyne Thompson  
Kevin Peck

**Call to Order**

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

**Agenda additions/deletions**

N/A

**Approval of Meeting Minutes**

*Regular Meeting: March 13, 2023 -*

Selectman Ambrose motioned to approve the meeting minutes from March 13, 2023 and Selectman Congdon seconded. Selectman Ruane said he had a correction. He clarified for the section regarding paving, that from Bowen's bridge headed north to Wilders bridge; that section would be reclaimed, shimmed and overlaid. The rest of section from McCormick's to Route 133 would be just a shim and overlay. Selectmen Ambrose and Congdon stood with their motion to approve the minutes with those corrections and the motion passed unanimously.

**Highway**

*Road Commissioner Report-*

Cash has been in contact with John Conley from Alpine Construction who is the contractor for the Kingsley Covered Bridge rehabilitation. Cash will be meeting with him next week. He said he had a brief discussion with John about Gorge Road being a one-way road for the duration of the project. Cash suggested to the Board about closing Gorge Road completely for the project. Selectman Congdon mentioned maybe having John come to meeting to discuss the traffic plan more in depth. The Board reminisced how Gorge Road was closed a couple years ago due to a major washout. The homeowners on that road liked it closed, but the Town did receive flak from others about the closure. Cash said this is all preliminary right now and he has to meet with John to see. The Board would like John to come to a meeting in April to discuss.

Selectman Menard mentioned to the Road Commissioner potholes needing cold patch along Walker Mountain Road.

**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

*Jane Richards, Clarendon Elementary Principal*

*Kaelyne Thompson, Mill River High School Principal*

Jane and Kaelyn introduced themselves to the Board. They are both new to their positions at the schools. The Board brought them up to speed on some conversations they've had in the past with the schools. A couple of those conversations have been about the speeding issues on Middle Road and possible installation of a veteran memorial garden at the elementary school. Katie informed Kaelyn that she's applied for a grant for a speed feedback sign on Middle Road to encourage safer driving. Kaelyn was appreciative of that especially in regards to the young drivers that commute to the high school. Selectman Ambrose asked the principals if they knew Brian at the Supervisory Union. They confirmed that they did and George asked that they tell Brian he's disappointed. Selectman Ambrose also asked about the walking path at the elementary school. Jane reported that it's used every day and she's working with the buildings and grounds director to discuss the continued maintenance of it.

The Board thanked the principals for coming in to introduce themselves.

### Public Comments

N/A

### Old Business

*Transferring remaining ARPA money-*

The remaining ARPA money in the amount of \$170.06 was motioned in a past meeting to be moved to the General Fund. Heidi was wondering if the Board would like to move that to voter approved and new established Clarendon Municipal Buildings Reserve fund, which is where the other remaining ARPA money was moved. Selectman Congdon motioned to move the \$170.06 to the new building fund, Selectman Ambrose seconded, and all Board members approved.

*Purchasing Policy drafting-*

Selectman Congdon wondered if there was proposed language about purchasing commodities, as requested. Heidi explained that in order to come up with language there needed to be further direction so the field could be narrowed. Katie had emailed the Board a list of questions after herself, Cash, and Heidi met which would help focus on what the Board wanted included in the policy. The questions were as follows and the Board's discussion on them in red:

• *Does the Board want a concise policy? (see Rutland Town policy)*

**Yes, keep it simple.**

• *Does the Board want something more detailed? (see VLCT model policy)*

**No.**

• *Clarify- what does the Purchasing Agent or its designee mean? and who are they? List out positions.*

**The Board decided that the language in Clarendon's 2004 policy can be changed from "Purchasing Agent or its designee" to Department head or its designee. Selectman Ambrose made a point that those with budgets (ie, Road Commissioner, Treasurer, Town Clerk) should be able to make the purchases since they are responsible for monies spent within those budget lines.**

• *Does the Board want commodities listed as an Exception or part of the Purchasing definitions and Procedures?*

> *Discuss language about thresholds on commodities price per ton/yd/gal.*

> *Ex: salt is currently \$94.40/ton. Consider language about commodities over*

*\$50/ton/yd/gal requiring Select Board approval- or whatever price point you choose.*

Commodities being discussed were salt, sand, gravel, MagChloride, etc. Heidi, Cash, and Katie discussed when they met, about having a threshold for commodity unit prices if they go over a certain price point. If the commodity is over a certain price, then it would have to go before the Board for approval. Currently, the Road Commissioner solicits quotes for salts and brings them before the Select Board for approval. The other commodities have not needed approval but they cost much less per ton/yd than salt.

Selectman Congdon suggested that the Road Commissioner should gather pricing from the surrounding quarries each year and create a spread sheet for each product with it's unit price and the Board can review it every year. After Board approval for the pricing that year, the Road Commissioner is free to purchase those goods without having to ask for further permission, unless prices rise from what was previously approved.

•*Are committees and commissions required to act under this purchasing policy or function within their own budget?*

In reviewing other town's policies, Heidi and Katie found that some reference how town committees and commissions will follow the purchasing policy, while others don't. Communication between the Select Board and town committees has always been good and they've always been upfront with larger project costs. The Select Board felt that there was no harm with requiring the different committees to fall under the purchasing policy.

Selectman Ambrose asked the Treasurer if there would be any issues with the updates to the Purchasing Policy if the external auditors were to review it. Heidi said she went through invoices and with the thresholds for Major, Minor, and Incidental Purchases that were talked about from the last meeting, there shouldn't be any issue. Heidi also said that they'll be working on coming up with verbiage to put in the policy about the bid process.

Selectman Ambrose motioned that based on the question and answers that he advises the committee to make changes to the policy and give the Board something for next time, Selectman Congdon seconded, and all approved.

### **New Business**

#### *Tree Warden appointment-*

The Board received a letter of interest from Josef Peterson to be the Tree Warden and he has done it in the past. Selectman Congdon motioned to appoint Joe Peterson as Tree Warden for the upcoming term and Selectman Ambrose seconded. The motion passed unopposed.

#### *MGRP Annual Report-*

The Municipal General Roads Permit (MRGP) annual report is due April 1. Katie explained that this is certifying that the town met it's 2022 milestone (bringing 15% of it's noncompliant segments up to date) and that those updates were captured on the online portal. Selectman Congdon motioned to approve and have the Chairman sign, Selectman Ambrose seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

#### *Gouchberg Liquor/Tobacco License-*

Selectman Menard motioned to approve Gouchberg's Liquor and Tobacco license, Selectman Ruane seconded, and all Board members approved.

#### *Public Works Mutual Aid Agreement discussion-*

Selectman Congdon motioned to round file this discussion and not entertain it; Selectman Ambrose seconded and all approved. Selectman Congdon clarified that this is an agreement that Rutland County towns can sign on to if they'd like. He felt the Board historically has not wanted to be a part of it because there's a sense of other town's being able to "take" other town's equipment if called upon. The Board has not wanted the town's equipment to go to

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another town without one of their operators. If surrounding towns are ever in need after a disaster/sever storm, Clarendon has been willing to work directly with them, but they don't feel they need the agreement in place for that to happen.

#### **Town Officer's Report**

Katie, Secretary, explained that she reached out to ZBA members again to see if they wanted to be reappointed. Brownson Spence and John Colvin would be reappointed. Gale LiCausi did not want to be reappointed. She served for 20 years on that Board so Katie will be writing her a thank you note. Katie said she would also write a thank you to Ashley Robinson as she served on the Community Center Board for a year, but did not wish to be reappointed this year. Selectman Menard made mention that he did not think she had been officially appointed to that committee and didn't serve on it. Katie said she was unaware of that. The Board had no issue with Katie sending her a letter of thanks since Ashley did think she was on that committee.

Katie explained that her and Cash have been working on a written procedure for the control of hazardous energy in a vehicle for the Highway Department. This is an OSHA required document to have on hand at the garage. They've worked with Wade from VLCT insurance and are finalizing it. Katie explained that this is something that has been at "medium priority" on the town's risk assessment (as provided by insurance) for years and should be tackled.

Katie also said she will be reporting on ARPA expenditures after the 1<sup>st</sup> of April. The report will be on the period from April 1, 2022-March 31, 2023.

#### **Select Board Member Concerns**

Selectman Ambrose wanted to bring up the fact that there was discussion at the last Board meeting about the lack of voter turnout and wanted to discuss how to change that. The Board discussed the lack of voter turnout across the nation. Selectman Ruane feels that people are more concerned about their family, finances, and survival right now. The Chairman thought that people would turn out more if it had more to do with their taxes or house appraisals. Selectman Ambrose said that with the Chairman's permission he may bring this topic up again to discuss further.

#### **Adjournment**

Selectman Congdon motioned to adjourn at 6:55PM, Selectman Ambrose seconded, and all approved.

SIGNED:  Mike Klopchin, Chair

SIGNED:  George Ambrose, Clerk