

TOWN OF CLARENDON BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING
REGULAR
June 26, 2023
Minutes

Attendees:

Selectboard

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

Heidi Congdon, Treasurer
Katie Nop, Secretary
Gloria Menard, Town Clerk
William Chmielewski, PEG-TV
Sgt. Cross, RCSD
Kevin Peck
Bob Bixby
Horst Gebauer
Cheryl Gebauer
Rick Wilbur

Call to Order

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

Agenda additions/deletions

Katie explained that there was an Access Permit submitted this morning for a property on East Tinmouth Road and Cash had been up to the site. Selectman Ambrose motioned to add the Access Permit to the agenda and Selectman Congdon seconded. The motion passed unopposed.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Selectman Ambrose motioned to approve the Regular Meeting minutes from June 12, 2023 and Selectman Congdon seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Highway

Road Commissioner Report- N/A

Winter Sand Pricing-

Katie reported that Cash had received pricing for winter sand from Pike. It was for \$8.30/ton for 2,500 tons. Katie said the Board had approved commodity pricing spread sheet and that included pricing for winter sand. They had approved that Cash could not exceed \$12/ton. This pricing was for informational purposes.

Access Permit-

Selectman Congdon motioned to approve the access permit with the Road Commissioner's recommended culvert (18-inch, 30 foot). Katie described the location for reference. It is approximately 175 feet onto East Tinmouth Road, off of Walker Mountain Road. There is a field on the east side of the road. Selectman Ambrose seconded the motion and all Board members approved. The Board agreed that Chairman Klopchin would sign off on the permit.

Approval of Select Board Warrants

Approved July 10, 2023

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

Guests

Rick Wilbur- speeding complaint

Rick Wilbur was present to discuss speeding in town. He feels there is a speeding issue all over town, but specifically on Middle Road near his home. He said between the hours of 6-9am and 6-9pm are the worst. That section of Middle Road is 35mph and he feels motorists are driving well above that. He cited a car that speeds frequently past his house at a rate of 60/mph (estimate). Creek Road also has speeding issues. Rick's proposal to the Board was to institute a town wide 35mph speed limit. He explained that this is also bicycle and pedestrian season. He suggested keeping the 25 mph speed limits in town and lower or keep all other roads at 35mph.

Chairman Klopchin asked if there was a procedure to follow if a speed study were to be done. There was a speed study done on Middle Road a year back or so and it showed interesting numbers. A couple of cars around 10:30/11 at night were going between 65-80mph. Sgt. Cross targeted that area and they did not drive by on the nights he sat there. He wondered if it was because the car was there, that they sped past it. Rick's concern for his end of Middle Road was because there are children that live there.

Katie mentioned that she received a complaint for speeding on Bump Road and had passed it on to Sgt. Cross. Because of the increased traffic from the bridge, the Sheriff's Dept. has committed to more patrolling time over there.

Bob Bixby was present and added that he has seen increased speeding across town as well. He has noticed it on East Clarendon Road.

Selectman Ambrose asked Sgt. Cross if this is a trend amongst other towns as well. Sgt Cross said speeding is up across the state. During Covid, they were encouraged to do less traffic stops so there were fewer interactions. He explained that people have gotten used to speeding. Since Memorial Day, there have been 7 fatalities on the highway. Selectman Ambrose asked if changing the speed limit was the solution. Sgt. Cross was not sure it was. He admitted that Clarendon's deputy has been involved in very in-depth cases and has not been able to do as much patrolling as he'd like and they still lack staff.

Chairman Klopchin asked if the public present had noticed any speeding. Horst Gebauer mentioned the speeding on East Street and Bump Road probably because of the bridge closure, but he has noticed a Sheriff sitting there more often.

After more discussion regarding speeding, the Board asked Sgt. Cross to investigate the process of changing speed limits. Sgt. Cross said he would also find other town's traffic ordinances for the Board to review.

Rick also wanted to talk to the Board privately regarding an employee matter. The Board explained since it was not added at the beginning of the meeting, or on the agenda prior, they would not hold an executive session. They suggested that Rick leave a note for the Board to review. If the information warranted an executive session they would follow up on the matter.

Public Comments

Bob Bixby-

Approved July 10, 2023

Bob Bixby reported that the group that has tried to start a Neighborhood Watch has not been as successful as they had hoped. Bob asked if it would be okay if they left a stack of flyers with information about the group, at the Transfer Station for the public to grab. He asked if the Transfer Station attendants could hand them out. The Board responded that it would be okay for a stack of flyers to be left at the Transfer Station, but the attendants would not be handing them out. They talked about the recent reports of car break-ins on Airport Road/Rutland Airport, and how a Neighborhood Watch would be beneficial to deter such crime.

Rick Wilbur let the Board know that he was still in possession of town constable equipment, from his time as one. He asked the Board if they would like him to return it to the town or bring it to the Transfer Station. Rick said most of it was outdated and did not work. The Board told him to bring it to the Town Hall and they would determine if it should be brought to the Transfer Station.

Old Business

MERP Grant Execution-

Katie explained that the MERP grant is back on the agenda because it was tabled from last meeting. She received clarification on the grant language. Based on her understanding, she said within 30 days of the execution of the grant the town will receive the money. These funds are not reimbursement based. Once the money is received, the town can use it within the guidelines and there is a fiscal year end reporting on it, until all of it is expended. Selectman Congdon motioned to have the Board Chairman sign the grant and Selectman Ambrose seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

New Business

Fireworks Permit-

Katie explained that she received 2 requests for fireworks permits for the 4th of July. One was for 698 Knipes Drive and the other was 2737 Walker Mountain Road. The one for Knipes drive was submitted within the deadline (requests must be submitted 15 days in advance of the date of display), while the other one was submitted only 12 days in advance. The Board discussed whether they have had issues with this location on Walker Mountain Road before or not. They also discussed whether to approve it since it did not meet the date requirement set. Selectman Congdon motioned to approve the fireworks permit for Knipes Drive and have the Chairman sign. Selectman Ambrose seconded and all approved. Selectman Ambrose motioned to deny the request for the Walker Mountain Road fireworks permit based on failure to submit before the deadline. Selectman Congdon seconded the motion and it passed unopposed.

Transfer Station maintenance needs-

Horst Gebauer, lead at the Transfer Station, was present to discuss some maintenance needs at the Transfer Station. He had submitted a list to the Board prior to the meeting via email. It listed out signs that should be ordered, lighting that should be purchased, and other various maintenance needs. Selectman Congdon motioned to have Katie order all the signage listed on the sheet, and discuss heat pumps, windows, and door upgrades at their next budget workshops (Nov/Dec); and authorize the town credit card to be used for the purchase of lighting. Selectman Ambrose seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Horst also explained that they are having issues with the garage door for the electronics room. It will not stay down. It has been open a couple of times when the attendants arrive at work. Selectman Congdon motioned to authorize the purchase of a padlock and side hasp. Selectman Ambrose seconded and all approved.

Horst went onto explain an incident he had with an irate citizen at the Transfer Station who was bringing in brush much larger than allowed. He asked if the Board had any ideas on how to better control it. Selectman Congdon said to get the signage ordered and see if that helps. If not, then they will have another discussion.

Town Officer's Report

Heidi, Treasurer-

Heidi reported that the town is in the last week of the fiscal year. She provided the Board with the current budget status. She is working with Cash to get the \$80,000 deposit out to Wilk for paving before the end of the fiscal year. There will be one final check run on 6/29. Heidi notified all department heads to get invoices in by then. The town was going to reduce the fund balance but the delinquent taxes on the revenue side have done well. Overall, Clarendon has done well budget wise, this fiscal year.

Katie, Secretary-

Katie reported that the final Teer Road survey was filed with the town. She asked if the residents on Teer Road should be invited to the next meeting to discuss a road project. Selectman Congdon asked if anything had been received in writing from the State on what must be done. Katie explained that herself, Cash and Art had met with Steffanie from the RRPC to discuss possible solutions. Cash had met with Alan May from Vtrans about the road. The only thing provided from the State in writing is the MRGP permit and the Better Roads manual.

In addition, Katie received the FY24 Better Roads grant agreement. That grant was specifically applied for to be put towards Teer Road. The money cannot be moved to a different location. The grant does not expire until September 30, 2024 so that does give the town time to mull on things. There is also Grants-In-Aid money that the town has, but that can be moved to a different project. Grants-In-Aid money expires September 30 of this year.

Selectman Congdon and Chairman Klopchin discussed the importance of coming up with an "iron clad" solution, that is preferably signed off by RRPC or Vtrans. If there is not a project to present, then the residents do not need to come down yet. Katie asked for clarification, to keep things moving forward, what next steps should be. It was decided that a workshop will be held with the Road Commissioner and the Board to be prepared to present a project to the residents of Teer Road. Selectman Congdon asked that prior to the workshop, the Road Commissioner come prepared with a project, drawings, materials, etc.

Chairman Klopchin reported that currently the residents on Teer Road are pleased with the road crew's upkeep of the road.

Katie followed up with the execution of the Better Roads grant. She asked the Board if they wanted to sign it at their next meeting. It was recommended by Vtrans to get it executed and at least claim the funds. It was decided that before the next meeting, a workshop should be set up to come up with a project and go from there.

Kevin, Cemetery Committee member

Kevin reported that they had a good work day at Chippenhook Cemetery, despite the rain. There were members from the community, VOCA, Clarendon Fire Association, and Clarendon Historical Society. Many thanks were given to those who volunteered time and resources.

Approved July 10, 2023

Select Board Member Concerns

George Ambrose-

Last Thursday there was a workshop to discuss ideas and share information about the issues on the dirt portion of Quarterline Road in Rutland Town. The concerned residents and Clarendon board members are invited to meet with Rutland Town on July 20th to discuss.

George also reminded the Board that they have the issue of possibly incorrect ownership for the Chippenhook schoolhouse parcel. He welcomes ideas on how to solve the issue.

Adjournment

Selectman Congdon motioned to adjourn at 7:03PM and Selectman Ambrose seconded.

Horst remembered that the zero-sort machine at the Transfer Station is not running again. He has had a very difficult time getting ahold of Casella to fix it. They will provide another container in the meantime. The Board asked that the attendants do not climb up the ladder to dump into the container, as it is a liability. Selectman Congdon said the Treasurer has contacts at Casella and advised she reached out to them to get the machine fixed in a timelier manner.

The motion to adjourn passed unopposed.

SIGNED: Mike J. Klopchin Mike Klopchin, Chair

SIGNED: George Ambrose George Ambrose, Clerk