

TOWN OF CLARENDON BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING
REGULAR
Monday, March 11, 2024
Clarendon Town Hall @ 6:00PM
MINUTES

Attendees:

Mike Klopchin, Chair
Robert Congdon
George Ambrose, Board Clerk

Heidi Congdon, Treasurer
Ashley Robinson, Secretary
Will Chmielewski, PEG-TV
Barbara Noyes Pulling
Kevin Peck, Lister
Shelly Lutz
James 'Jimmy' Austin
Kendra Anderson

Call to Order

Chairman Klopchin called meeting to order at 6:00PM

Election of Board Officers

Selectman Congdon motioned to re-elect Selectman Michael Klopchin as Chairman of the Select Board. Selectman Ambrose provided the second. The motion was approved unanimously.

Selectman Congdon motioned to re-elect Selectman Ambrose as the clerk of the board. Selectman Ambrose and Klopchin provided the second/third. The motion was approved unanimously.

Selectman Congdon noted that Selectman/Road commissioner Cash Ruane would not be attending as he was still out working on the roads due to multiple trucks being down. Selectman Congdon also noted that Selectman Menard would also not be attending due to a personal issue.

Agenda additions/deletions

PACIF Grant application update

Selectman Congdon motioned to move to new business and Selectman Ambrose provided the second. The motion was approved unanimously.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Regular Meeting: February 12, 2024

Selectman Congdon motioned to approve the regular meeting minutes. Selectman Ambrose provided the second. The motion was approved unanimously.

Highway

Selectman Congdon received a call from Road Commissioner Ruane. The town is currently down 3 trucks, finishing current storm with the 1 ton, looks like weather is ok until end of week. Nervous as these are our three large trucks and hopeful the weather that does come is not ice. One truck is down with broken leaf springs, the Western Star has a few issues that had been taken to be fixed last Thursday, and the last truck is not as big of an issue, sand link chain, and will be back on the road in the next day or two.

Shelly noted that she knew something was wrong when she noticed the Rutland Town end of the road had been plowed, and Quarterline Road hadn't yet. Selectman Congdon assured residents that the crew was making their way toward Quarterline Road when he had spoken to the Road Commissioner. There was small chatter about how much the recent storm had brought into town.

James states there are things that could have been done to continue plowing the roads, saying the new road grater could have been used. James then questioned if we have a Road Commissioner or a Road Foreman. Chairman Klopchin says the position is Road Commissioner.

Chairman Klopchin notes problem with new grater is that dirt roads are all loose and shifting dirt to sides of roads, until the roadcrew gets used to using the new equipment that is why it is not being used. James does not agree and saying that Mr. Baker is very clever with the grater. James thinks that we have issues that need to be dealt with at the town garage, and that he doesn't want the job (referring to commissioner/crew) however wants to help. Chairman Klopchin noted that Eddie Baker has mentioned the same and we will hold an executive session in the near future regarding what has been brought up.

James notes that in the state statute it says if you're a commissioner you are an elected official, where if you are a foreman, you are hired by the board. Chairman Klopchin and Selectman Congdon reflect that the statute of the town changed to being an appointed Road Commissioner, and they went through Secretary of State as well as Vermont Leagues of Cities and Towns when this happened. If something has changed, we will need to check into this.

Approval of Select Board Warrants

All new warrants and warrants previously signed by the designated select board members were approved and signed by present select board members.

Guests

Barbara Noyce Pulling re: Upcoming Rutland Regional Plan Update

Barbara speaking on Rutland Regional Planning Commission's plan for our regions 27 communities. They would like input from towns through a survey. This is available on their website or through a QR code that is available. There are thirty questions regarding transportation, water quality ect. Survey is open until end of month. Clarendon is half way to where the numbers will be able to be used for data. They need more surveys taken to be able to finalize. Barbara notes that there will be some community events coming up. Chairman Klopchin wanted to make sure our own towns planning commission has this survey to take, Ashley will make sure that is the case.

Public Comments

N/A

Old Business

N/A

New Business

Tax Sale Minimum Bid

Delinquent Tax Collector Ashley Robinson speaks of current tax sales that will be taking place on April 8th. There were five properties to start with in town, we are now down to three as two of the residents have paid in full to Corsones lawyers office. The two that have been paid were the two that selectmen were most worried about not being able to sell during sale and the town having to take them over. The three remaining have had inquiries with interest. The current sales are the oldest delinquencies dating back to 2017.

Selectman Ambrose motions to approve the minimum Bid on the three tax sales. Selectman Congdon provides the second. The motion was approved unanimously.

Selectman Congdon asks about upcoming and future sales of other properties in town. Ashley provides information that there are many more to come, however the process is not fast moving. Hoping that residents will start taking the notices more seriously seeing as the town is indeed now holding tax sales again. She is working with VLCT on some clarification for some properties that have been lingering also.

Vermont Digital: Town Server Replacement

Treasurer Heidi Congdon speaks that our server has been starting to fail. It hasn't been replaced in years. The town did look into replacing it during covid however the price was well over \$6000. We have since gotten another quote as the current server is not supported anymore. The quote received is half of what it was during covid due to supply and demand issues. Chairman Klopchin spoke with Town Clerk Gloria Menard earlier in the day and she suggests the board being proactive in replacing as soon as possible.

Treasurer Congdon states the 'contingency fund' has \$2600 available and the town could take difference from 'office system supports and upgrades'. There is only a couple hundred dollars left in that budget for this year, and there is also a small amount of money remaining in the 'selectman expenses' account. Treasurer Congdon suggests using the remaining contingency funds and book the rest of the expense to the office system supplies and upgrades.

Selectman Ambrose motions to approve the replacement. Selectman Congdon provides the second, ensuring that Selectman Ambrose was motioning to use as Treasurer Congdon suggested. The motion was approved unanimously.

MRGP Annual Report Sign-off

Selectman Congdon asks Ashley Robinson if this is the standard yearly report. She replies that indeed it is and that we were fully compliant for MRGP.

Selectman Congdon motions to approve the Chair to sign off on the report, Selectman Ambrose provides the second.

Selectman Ambrose spoke with Treasurer Congdon earlier in the day not realizing there was a fee involved. Treasurer Congdon says there is a annual permit fee of \$1350 that we have to pay that goes along with the report. This is a non-negotiable.

After discussion the motion was approved unanimously.

PACIF GRANT application sign off

Selectman Congdon talks about the PACIF grant being for safety items for the road crew.

Ashley Robinson speaks of the application change due to quantities of items that will be ordered, as well as a small pricing difference. The town has already been approved for the grant with a fifty percent match.

Selectman Congdon motioned to approve the board chairman to sign off. Selectman Ambrose provided the second. The motion was approved unanimously.

Town Officer's Report

Nothing to report at this time.

Select Board Member Concerns

Selectman Ambrose wants to compliment Town Clerk Gloria Menard and election officials that worked the polls on election day. He wondered how legal it is to bring in cards and such that would assist voters in casting ballot. After looking at statute he found that it is legal however nothing should be left behind in a voting booth/table. Selectman Ambrose did notice that there were a few cards around and that voting official needs to watch for that. Selectman Congdon noticed that Gloria was making sure cards were not left in booths for voting and James Austin noted that Gloria did return cards that were left behind to the proper persons.

Chairman Klopchin suggested we look into new poling booths/tables as there is a section that we have that is falling apart.

Selectman Ambrose George reports on towns about school consolidation questionnaire. He has heard back from all three towns. We will be holding a meeting for towns to come together to come up with what will be on said questionnaire.

Selectman Congdon motioned to close above comments/concerns. Selectman Ambrose provided the second. The motion was approved unanimously.

Adjournment

Selectman Klopchin moved to close meeting at 6:30. Everyone motioned and approved.

SIGNED:  Mike Klopchin, Chair

SIGNED:  George Ambrose, Clerk