**Select Board Meeting Minutes February 14, 2022 Zoom Teleconference 5:30 pm**

**Call to Order**: Bob Manners called the meeting to order at 5:31 pm. Others present: Selectboard members Margaret Payne, Andrew Baker, and Town Administrator Terry Narkewicz.

**Acceptance of Meeting Minutes:** A motion was put forth by Andrew to approve the minutes of January 31. This was seconded by Margaret. Roll call vote: Bob – yes; Andrew – yes; Margaret – yes. Motion passed 3-0-0.

**Department Liaison Reports:**

**Police Department** – Andrew said he would be meeting with Chief Bardwell later in the week.

**Downtown** – The grant for streetscape furniture has been approved but the amount of funding is still unknown. Several people have mentioned that the garage adjacent to the Village Information Center is for sale and that it would make a good location for accessible year-round public restrooms.

**CPA** – A public information meeting will be held on February 16.

**Energy Committee** – Andrew said that a grant for $15,400 has been received from the Mass Save program. The grant is for outreach and technical assistance concerning efficient and renewable energy. A consultant will be hired to help.

**Town Hall** – Terry and Mark Shippee met with the Energy Committee at Cowell Gym. With the help of the Energy Committee and FRCOG, Terry hopes to apply for a Green Communities grant for a new heating system for the gym. The grant application is due by April 8.

Auditors have been on site at Town Hall doing the FY’21 audit.

**Highway Department** – Bob said the crew has been trimming roadside brush and patching potholes.

**Appointments:**

**6:00 pm James Richardson, Tree Warden RE: Public Shade Tree Hearing, Little Mohawk Rd** – The hearing was opened at 6 pm. Due to the upcoming reconstruction of Little Mohawk Road, 25 trees, of a variety of species. have been marked for removal. Jim and Mark Shippee had marked the trees that need to be removed prior to road reconstruction. Some of the large marked maples are unhealthy and most of the marked trees are in decline. Jim had heard no comments from abutters, though he said he often doesn’t hear comments until the work actually starts. He said that removing the marked trees would give the healthy trees located behind them a place to grow. The wood from the marked trees could go to the landowners or Jim will add it to his stockpile. There is no marketable wood, only firewood. No members of the public were present. The hearing was closed at 6:12 pm and Jim left the meeting.

A motion was made by Margaret to approve the proposed removal of trees along Little Mohawk Road as presented by the Tree Warden. This was seconded by Andrew and opened for discussion.

Andrew asked if any other experts should be consulted about the trees, as they had been in the case of the trees on Bridge Street. Bob said that technically all the trees were on the town right of way and that due diligence had been done. Abutters had not been individually notified. Terry said the notice in the paper and the fact that the trees had been marked served as notice. It was agreed that abutters will be sent notices. The vote on the matter was tabled until February 28.

**Old Business:**

**Senior Center Expansion RE: West County Senior Services District** (Sylvia Smith, Expansion Committee Chair) – Margaret hopes that a meeting of the three Selectboards can take place on March 8. The working group has responded to several issues raised by the Board at the previous meeting. The number of people on the Board of Managers will remain at six, if there is ever a tie vote it will be counted as a “no” vote. The Board of Managers may have to contract with an outside group for payroll, etc. However, there will be a transition period and the current consortium will continue to handle such things until a plan for the future is in place. The other Selectboards have also raised questions, which will be discussed at the three-board meeting. Andrew asked about the budget process and whether there would be a chance for public and Selectboard input. Margaret said there was a provision in the document that if budgets or assessments were not acceptable, the budget would revert back to the previously accepted version. Bob mentioned that he was glad to see there was a process of transitioning employees from the current consortium to the future district. Margaret added that the transition phase could last as long as necessary, there was no time limit. Bob noted that this was a large document to have ready for town meeting. That was one of the reasons for the executive summary. Hearings will be held in each of the three member towns. A mailing to all residents may be done, possibly of the executive summary, with a note that the full document was available on town websites, or by requesting a copy.

**Proposed Police Regionalization Efforts** – Buckland has sent a memo regarding the possibility of an interim shared chief, since the idea of a permanent merger of the two police departments is too complex an issue to have ready for this year’s town meetings. Bob felt this matter was better discussed in Executive Session since contract negotiation is involved. Town Counsel has been asked if an Executive Session is appropriate. Once her response has been received, Terry will set up a meeting time.

**Community Development Strategy Document RE: Final Review and Adoption** – Andrew had one addition to the document. Where energy efficiency and renewable projects are mentioned, he would like to add that the town is encouraging wider residential and commercial efforts to improve energy efficiency and the transfer to renewable energy sources. A motion was put forth by Andrew to adopt the Community Development Strategy document as amended. This was seconded by Margaret. Roll call vote: Bob – yes; Andrew – yes; Margaret – yes. Motion passed 3-0-0.

**New Business:**

**Miramax Productions RE: Film Request** – Representatives from Miramax met with town officials from both Shelburne and Buckland. They would like to film on Saturday, March 5, starting in Buckland during the day and moving to Shelburne in the evening. They would need one or two days prior to filming to set up and one day following filming to break down. Andrew said he advised them about the material being used for “snow” and also that they should reach out to residents of the upper floors of nearby buildings. Andrew had asked that a donation above the $100 film permit fee be made. Andrew said that $100 was enough for amateur filmmakers but not enough when roads need to be closed and residents impacted. Bob felt it was awkward to ask for a donation, better to raise the fee for a film permit. He noted that other film productions had offered donations without being asked. Andrew thought if roads were to be closed a much higher fee, perhaps $1,000 should be charged. Terry will look into what other small towns do. Buckland has a $200 fee. The Board thought the fee structure should be discussed, before more film permits are given, but at the present time Miramax needs an answer or they would have to find another location. Terry added that Miramax has the permit in hand, it wasn’t fair to change the fee now. Andrew said Miramax had asked for guidance about the size of a donation. Bob was uncomfortable in setting an amount. A motion was made by Margaret to approve the film request of Miramax, with a fee of $100 per day, with a request for a donation based on that given by other film companies. This was seconded by Andrew. Roll call vote: Bob – yes; Andrew – yes; Margaret – yes. Motion passed 3-0-0.

**Amanda Joao, Senior Center Director RE: Letter of Resignation –** Amanda has submitted her letter of resignation with her last day at work being February 18. The Board was saddened to learn this, but it had to be accepted. The first step will be for Margaret and Terry to meet with Senior Center staff to see how the director’s job will be covered. Terry plan to advertise the position immediately. With only a two week notice there will be no overlap but Amanda has said she would be happy to be in conversation with the next director. A motion was made by Andrew to accept the resignation of Amanda Joao as Director of the Senior Center. This was seconded by Margaret. Roll call vote: Bob – yes; Andrew – yes; Margaret – yes. Motion passed 3-0-0.

**Daniel Churchill RE: Resignation as Part-time Transfer Station Operator** – A letter of resignation was received from Daniel Churchill. His last day will be February 22. He works four hours per week. Terry will ask the person who currently acts a spare operator if he is interested in the position and maybe reach out to other towns. A motion was put forth by Andrew to accept the resignation of Daniel Churchill as part-time transfer station operator. This was seconded by Margaret, Roll call vote: Bob – yes; Andrew – yes; Margaret – yes. Motion passed 3-0-0.

**Joseph Judd, Town Clerk RE: Vote to Set Town Election on June 14, 2022** – Joe had submitted a schedule for the annual election process. He asked the Board to approve holding the town election on June 14. A motion was made by Andrew to approve holding the town election on June 14, 2022, with polls open from 10 am until 8 pm. This was seconded by Margaret. Roll call vote: Bob – yes; Andrew – yes; Margaret – yes. Motion passed 3-0-0.

**Any Other Business:**

**Town Meeting Information Session** – Andrew asked if a pre-town meeting information session was to be held this year. Such meetings had been held in the past, but not in recent years. There are several complicated items to be brought before Town Meeting this year. The Board will discuss dates, times, and locations at a future meeting.

**Mask Mandate** – Terry said that, procedurally, the mask mandate should be discussed at a Board of Health meeting to which the Selectboard is invited. The Board of Health typically meets at 9 am on a weekday. Terry will let the Board know of a date and time.

**Special Commission on Rural School Districts** – Superintendent Sheryl Stanton has asked for a letter of support from the Board, to Senator Adam Hinds, for the recommendations prioritized by the school district. A motion was put forth by Margaret to endorse a letter of support for the recommendations set forth by the school district for the Commission on Rural School Districts. This was seconded by Andrew. Roll call vote: Bob – yes; Andrew – yes; Margaret – yes. Motion passed 3-0-0.

**Next Meeting** – The next Board meeting will be held on February 28, at 5:30 pm.

**Correspondence:** None

**Public Comment:** None

**Adjournment**: At 7:15 pm a motion was made by Margaret to adjourn the meeting. This was seconded by Andrew. Roll call vote: Bob – yes; Margaret – yes; Andrew – yes. Motion passed 3-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Faye Whitney, Recording Secretary