**Selectboard Meeting Minutes October 21, 2024 Zoom Teleconference 5:30 pm**

**Call to Order**: Rick LaPierre called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm. Others present: Selectboard members Andrew Baker and Tricia Yacovone-Biagi, and Town Administrator Terry Narkewicz.

A motion was put forth by Andrew to approve the revised minutes of October 7. This was seconded by Tricia. Roll call vote: Rick – yes; Andrew – yes; Tricia – yes. Motion passed 3-0-0.

**Department Liaison Reports:**

**Town Hall** – Tricia reported that more delinquent taxpayers have either paid their taxes or have created payment plans. She asked if the message board or blackboard connect could be used to remind people that taxes are due in November. Tricia thanked Terry and Angel for locating and sending the herbicide legal advertisement to the applicator so he could have it in hand when he did the spraying. Joe Judd is finalizing the election schedule. Tricia will be taking the first amendment audit class.

**Emergency Management** – The table top exercise will be taking place on Thursday, Oct. 24. It will be a chance to look at procedures and discover any holes in the plan.

**FRCOG** – Andrew attended the most recent meeting and reported that finance and personnel committee members are needed. Funding is available to the towns for cyber security and election security. Most of the meeting was spent on reviewing the $10 million budget. Shelburne can continue for a short time with the shared accounting system. FRCOG charter changes have not been done since 1996. Some potential changes were reviewed. Two-thirds of the member towns must approve the changes by two-thirds majority votes. The Franklin County legislative delegation will be invited to a January meeting to explain the process of filing bills and how towns can get involved.

**Highway Department** – The temporary bridge over Dragon Brook is still in process. The solar project on the pole barn is to start this week or next. The Patten Road culvert replacement has been approved by the Conservation Commission. Herbicides have been applied to the knotweed on the Clarke property. Jeff Johnston is ready to cover and smother the knotweed on the Cosby property. Paving on Old Greenfield Road will be done this week; guardrails and line painting remain to be done.

**Franklin Regional Planning Board** – A seven-element tool kit for dirt road storm water management is available. Individual meetings with highway superintendents will be held.

**Franklin Tech Contract Negotiations Subcommittee** – Rick attended this meeting which consisted of a group of select board and school committee members. The purpose was to choose one town’s selectboard chair to serve on the negotiations subcommittee. After a ballot vote, the selectboard member from New Salem was chosen to be on the committee. Negotiations will start at the end of November.

**Veterans Service District –** The district has been recertified until July 2026. All towns have paid their budget assessments for FY25. Requests for services have increased significantly. More than 1,000 people in the district are getting benefits, which amount to over $2 million per month.

**Appointments:**

**5:45 pm Weston& Sampson RE: MVP Action Grant – Expression of Interest** (Emily DeFranco, Allison Gage) – A map of the Dragon Brook watershed has been created and overlaid with a map of the high-risk crossings developed by FRCOG. The highway department provided a list of the top 10 areas with drainage problems and Allison added those to the map as well. Weston & Sampson and FRCOG cannot do a plan for the entire town but could address the high-risk areas in the Dragon Brook subwatershed. If the grant criteria from last year is still in place, Shelburne should not need to provide a match. If that has changed it may not be worthwhile to do this plan. This plan would take two years. Weston & Sampson and a local geomorphologist contracted by FRCOG would gather data to create hydrologic and hydraulic models and suggest nature-based solutions for areas of concern. Allison has been working with Buckland on a similar project for Clesson Brook. Another goal of the project is to involve landowners in resilient land practices. Tricia said once budget numbers are in place the deadline for submitting the Expression of Interest for the MVP action grant is November 1. The grant would be for a study, not its implementation. The highway department will be fully involved throughout this process.

**6:00 pm MTRSD Sustainability Study Update** (Sheryl Stanton, Martha Thurber, Elizabeth VanIderstine) – After considering many ideas, the five most promising options have emerged. These are as follows: 1) no change; 2) merge the Mohawk and Hawlemont districts; 3) move grade six to Mohawk; 4) move grade six to Mohawk and close one or more elementary schools; 5) create a single pre-K through high school campus at Mohawk. Each of these options will be studied in depth by BERK12, who will try to come up with one model to be studied in more depth. Any decisions will be up to the voters in all eight district towns. Andrew commented that options one through three could require the difficult to accomplish changes to the regional agreement for not much gain. He added that options four and five could cause a lot of backlash.

**Old Business:**

**Knotweed Management Plan RE: Old Greenfield Rd –** See highway department liaison report.

**ARPA Funding Requests** – The promised second quote for repair of the Village Information Center foundation had not been received and it was felt that time was running out to get the repairs done this fall. A motion was made by Andrew to award the bid for repair of the Village Information Center foundation to Deane Concrete and Excavating for the price of $2,750. This was seconded by Tricia. Roll call vote: Rick – yes; Andrew – yes; Tricia – yes. Motion passed 3-0-0. One quote had been received for the clapboard repair and window replacement for the information center. A motion was put forth by Andrew to accept the bid of Donelson Builders for $7,800, provided no other reasonable quotes are received by Friday, October 25. This was seconded by Tricia. Roll call vote: Rick – yes; Andrew – yes; Tricia – yes. Motion passed 3-0-0.

It was decided that the pothole observation deck needed only minor repair and that ARPA funds would not be needed for that. Andrew advocated for $35,000 of ARPA funds to be used to finish the pocket park. Tricia suggested that a playground structure might be a good thing to have at the park. Rick said the lease did not allow a playground. Andrew said a garden and landscape plan was available and had been reviewed by the Board last year.

**Transfer Station Operations RE: Window Decal Survey** – Area towns had been surveyed as to fees and the use of window decals. Terry suggested purchasing enough decals for one year and giving them out for free to see if it helps the situation at the transfer station. Tricia suggested that a notice about decals could go out with excise bills. The tax collector had agreed to that idea. The consensus of the Board was to pursue the use of decals, charge no fees for the first year, and include a notice with the excise bills. More discussion to come.

**Solar Array Installation @ Highway Pole Barn** – See highway department liaison report.

**Christopher Curtis RE: Deerfield River Watershed Association – J. LaPierre Interested** – Joan LaPierre will attend the next meeting of the DRWA as a non-voting member. The Open Space Committee will officially appoint her as their representative at their next meeting.

**New** **Business:**

**Proposed Application for Transient Vendors, Peddlers, and Solicitors** – It seems that no one (police, Town Clerk, Town Administrator) is in charge of permitting solicitors, etc. Terry, Rick and Chief Bardwell reviewed vendor applications from other towns and came up with one for Shelburne. Mass. General Law defines transient vendors and peddlers. The word solicitors will be removed from the application to avoid confusion as to its meaning. Questions were raised about “grey areas” such as those people promoting religious groups, or campaigning for political candidates. Further discussion will take place at the next meeting.

**Chief Bardwell RE: ASHER Equipment Grant** – This grant, which has 100% funding and no match required, is for acquiring ballistic personal protective equipment. A motion was made by Andrew to authorize Chief Bardwell to apply for a Western Region Homeland Security Advisory Council ASHER equipment grant. This was seconded by Tricia. Roll call vote: Rick – yes; Andrew – yes; Tricia – yes. Motion passed 3-0-0.

**Zoning Board Request to Appoint: Jesse Seaver, 1184 Mohawk Trail** – The Board had received Jesse’s letter of interest. The ZBA had discussed the appointment and would like to have Jesse join them as an alternate. A motion was put forth by Andrew to appoint Jesse Seaver to the Zoning Board of Appeals as an alternate member. This was seconded by Tricia. Roll call vote: Rick – yes; Andrew – yes; Tricia – yes. Motion passed 3-0-0.

**Any Other Business:**

**Memorial Hall Building Maintenance** – Andrew explained that when Renaissance Builders and architect Joe Mattei were looking at needed repairs to the Memorial Hall ceiling, it was discovered that a drain on the roof had been plugged and may have been the cause of some of the leaks. There is no one specifically in charge of building maintenance. The janitor does not want to expand his role to that of building maintenance. Tricia asked if volunteers could be used to do some maintenance. Insurance and liability issues would likely prevent volunteer help. Terry said there is a buildings and grounds position which includes mowing and snow removal, but there has never been anyone in that position on a long-term basis. At this time Terry said that three or four people are doing various small jobs. Andrew said a maintenance person could also do jobs at Cowell Gym, the libraries, the police building, etc. There is still probably not enough work for even a part-time position. It would need to be more of an on-call position. Andrew will see if anyone from the highway department could be the on-call person. Rick said that someone from the highway department should immediately check the roofs on town buildings to make sure other drains are not plugged. Andrew then asked who would pay for the damage already done in Memorial Hall. There is a roof stabilization account that could be used. Further discussion will take place at the next meeting.

**Appointment to FRPB** – The town should have two representatives to the Franklin Regional Planning Board. Paul Hollings is the representative from the Planning Board. Rick was the Selectboard representative but felt that another Planning Board member would be a better choice. John Wheeler is willing to do it. A motion was made by Andrew to appoint John Wheeler as the town’s second representative to the Franklin Regional Planning Board. This was seconded by Tricia. Roll call vote: Rick – yes; Andrew – yes; Tricia – yes. Motion passed 3-0-0.

**Film Permit** – A request to amend a previously approved film permit was received. The request would be to block off four parking spaces near Mirick Insurance while filming is being done inside Mirick Insurance. This would happen on October 24, from 9 am until 5:30 pm. Chief Bardwell has approved the request. Blocking the parking spaces will require an additional $200 fee. A motion was made by Andrew to amend the film permit as described. This was seconded by Tricia. Roll call vote: Rick – yes; Andrew – yes; Tricia – yes. Motion passed 3-0-0.

**Next Meeting** – The next Board meeting will be on November 4, at 5:30 pm via Zoom.

**Correspondence:**

A brief discussion was held on how email conversations with one Board member regarding Board business between meetings gets reported to the other members without violating the open meeting law. Terry gets cc’d on the emails and alerts the other members who are then aware of, but do not participate in, the conversations.

**Public Comment:** None.

**Adjournment**: At 8 pm a motion was made by Andrew to adjourn the meeting. This was seconded by Tricia. Roll call vote: Rick – yes; Andrew – yes; Tricia – yes. Motion passed 3-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Faye Whitney, Recording Secretary