

TOWN OF CRAFTSBURY
REGULAR SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY, JULY 25, 2023
7PM | CRAFTSBURY TOWN HALL

Present: Susan Houston, Jim Jones, Bruce Urie | Steve Moffatt, Michelle Warren

Meeting Agenda

Jim called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM.

● **Action – Adjustments / Changes to Agenda**

Topics added: Speeding; Radar Sign; Buying Chairs; Letter to Hardwick Electric; Invasive Species Sign (costs coverage) **Select Board approved adjusted agenda.**

● **Action – Approve Select Board Regular Meeting Minutes of July 13 / 20 2023**

Bruce Urie motioned to approve the below meeting minutes; Susan Houston seconded. June 28 meeting correction on tax rate required. No further discussion. **All aye. Motion passed.**

- June 20 – meeting minutes
- June 28 – meeting minutes (correction on tax rate)

● **Discussion – Craftsbury Public Library/Conservation Commission Update – Steve Moffatt**

Select Board understands that Conservation Commission is not promoting any zoning agenda.

- *Committee Tasks / Goals* – committee tasks in relation to Town Plan in the future. Invasive species might be an issue; let people be aware. Tough issue.
- *Water Quality / Recreation* – Caspian tested; swimming (from Vermont Department of Health) but not drinkable; working on clarity issues. Town Planning Commission Chair Farley Brown could point Town inquiries in right direction. Water from flooding went into lakes, rivers. Conservation Commission will obtain updated Town Plan; a project that's coming. Good reminder/reference as chair (town has goals; objectives that were approved and start working on them).
- *Signage & Solar Battery* – invoice for signage submitted. On the library board. Library is extremely tremendous resource; lot of use. A really good investment for Town. Select Board will act on invoice at future, separate meeting. Only Library Issue: basement flooded. Battery in new solar system got wet; was on floor – basement has no drainage. Called the manufacturer; manufacturer completed a diagnostic test (it tested fine) but advised not to use it. No safety issue. Will use and see what happens. If damaged: insurance will not cover (no flood insurance); cost will be for battery replacement. If multiple-day power outage, unsure if there's enough power. Power issues reported at Library by community members on day of flood. Battery is size of a mini fridge; drainage issue. Legally no safety issue; has built-in safety issue feature – if there's a short, system automatically shuts down. Library wants to be as much of an asset to Community as needed and capable. Town considerations: Fire Department, School with generator;

Library is not an officially designated emergency site/communications center. Must go through a process; it's a Town resource. Emergency management planning starts this winter; work with Red Cross Emergency Management. School may have a generator.

- *Book Sale During A&U Festival* | Book sale went well. Next year if on the same day, parking must be revamped, restricted. Library parking made it difficult for the fire department to manage traffic.
- *Bathroom on The Common* | The port-o-potty is owned by the Church. Restroom facilities on the Common is an issue.

Public Comment: Steve Moffatt said in addition to the updates, he wanted to add a public comment as a resident who lives on Wild Branch Road. "Traffic on the road is kind of crazy. Huge increase of traffic." Lots of heavy truck traffic going through; posted for 40K. Not expecting to solve problem tonight; just sharing that there are lots of concerns about traffic and speeding on Wild Branch Road. "No one even remotely obeys the speed limit. Just a matter of time before there's a serious accident on Wild Branch Road." Mr. Moffatt stated that car speeds at time near 80 mph. When considering solutions, he asked that the Select Board be thoughtful and equitable when considering answers for traffic situations: "The Common gets the speed signs but Wild Branch gets the most traffic."

Follow-Up Discussion | Re: request for Library to be the Communications Center during emergencies, Susie asked why the Select Board cannot merely designate the Library as a Communications Center. Vermont Emergency Management (in coordination with FEMA and Red Cross Emergency Management) involved in making designations as part of Emergency Management Plan. There's a process, any additional funds available must be done through that; Craftsbury Fire Department already works with them; will assist with updating the town Emergency Management Plan.

- **Discussion – Flooding**

Three working on culverts on roads. Grading; emergency lasted many days. No longer in emergency mode. Require studies. Documentation of where waste/debris / flood debris removed. Crops and farm field damages. Twin Bridges road washed out; loader was used to fix culvert. Will wait to determine how many roads.

- **Discussion – Broadband**

Michael Birnbaum from Kingdom Fiber unavailable to attend; flooding impacts. Topic was a follow-up on Craftsbury dark fiber transfer. Internet often goes out; is it worthwhile to look at a backup: if Town Office is an emergency hub, difficult to be effective/useful without consistent internet connection.

- **Discussion – Hidden Sign at Paul Pitt Town Line Road**

Topic postponed.

- **Discussion – Aleta Akerlind Request for "Hidden Driveway" Signage**

Another in a years-long request for a hidden driveway sign. Not sure where sign should be placed; traffic / trucks looming and fast traffic (trucks) taking the corner so fast, makes it "very scary." Off East Craftsbury Road; Select Board will investigate.

- **Action – Radar Sign**

Bruce motioned to pay the \$445 invoice payable to Elan City; Susan will email back approval. Susan seconded. No further discussion. **All ayed. Motion passed.**

Elan City Repair Costs for Radar Sign: \$445 = \$47 for box \$182 for control board \$216 for labor

- **Discussion – Speeding**

Reports of young man speeding on motorcycle on the Common; driving 70-80-mph through the Common. Doing it twice a day. Deliberately accelerating. Suggestion: contact the individual and speak directly with him about concerns.

- **Action – Chairs**

Renting vs purchase: rented 70 for A&U. Buy 50 @ \$3each. **Bruce motioned to purchase 50 chairs, stackable, at a price of \$3 per chair; Jim seconded.** Paid out of Committee funds. **No further discussion. All ayed. Motion passed.**

- **Discussion – Letter to Hardwick Electric**

Letter to Hardwick Electric Department: addressed to Hardwick Select Board Chair Eric Remick and Town of Hardwick Electric Department General Manager Mike Sullivan. as a municipality / rescue and fire support center, must know what is going on; Hardwick Electric must provide info to Towns so decisions can be made. Does mutual aid agreement allow for uninterrupted service?

- **Action – Signage for Invasive Species**

Request received to post signage about invasive species project in Mill Village. **Susan motioned to approve payment (out of Committee funds) of the \$88.17 invoice for the Invasive Site Demonstration sign. Jim seconded. No further discussion. All ayed. Motion passed.**

- **Committee Reports**

- *Antiques & Uniques*: final tally still pending (credit card receipts pending); costs; debrief on Friday; discuss benefits. About 3-4K people; water stations were new; food trucks; music. Vendors did well, especially food vendors. Feedback surveys scored 4 or 5 on feedback (five is highest) it went well. Complimentary breakfast for vendors was appreciated.
- *Conservation* – already updated; updated on solar project.
- *Energy Committee* – firewood project still ongoing; volunteers; window insert program has received three grants; have a few more households to measure; Vermont Community Foundation; VEC (Vermont Electric Company); consider grant for purchasing a wood splitter (\$1,000 to \$1,200)?

Planning Commission – Must do rewrite of Town Plan (done every eight years); Town received \$17K grant for Northeastern Vermont Development Association to oversee the entire project (NVDA Senior Planner Alison Low). Changing approach to Town Plan format: going to be much more user-friendly, engaging, more like a story. Communities Connections (and four topics – below - beneath it). Towns are being encouraged to go this way: June 24, 2024 for first draft. Just

the start of the rewrite. Will be more useful as a document; already reviewing old plan.

1. BUILDING CRAFTSBURY SOCIAL CAPITAL | Craftsbury strives to be an inclusive community; welcoming and multi-generational; maintain active working landscapes. Includes 12 goals and case stories.
2. STRENGTHENING CULTURAL CONNECTIONS | Things such as support and encourage opportunities for education; expand school areas.
3. MAINTAINING ECOLOGICAL CONNECTIONS | Protecting Craftsbury's natural heritage: creeks, watersheds, lakes; management Town forests as stewards.
4. CONNECTING PEOPLE AND PLACES THROUGH SERVICES & INFRASTRUCTURE | Keeping roads safe for all users; decrease road traffic; recreational transportation systems. Craftsbury as welcoming and more secure; everyone is food secure, and no one is hungry (case studies).

- **Clerk Report**

- P&L – provided for review
- Concert on the Common to Raise Money for funding: money disbursement (\$4,700); Committee will decide. Neighbor-to-Neighbor organized. Who gets money collected in donation boxes? Who decides how it's distributed? Equitable criteria?

- **Road Foreman Report**

Depleted gravel supply; crushed 6K yards; wanted to do 8K. Too many requests. Just ran into sand. Cannot make gravel out of sand. Trucks went down occasionally during flood; volunteers and road crew did well.

- **Upcoming Projects to Keep on Agenda**

- Electricity on the Common
- Triggers for Opening the Emergency Shelter, Providing Assistance, Activating N2N
- Group Process: Throw Up Class 4, TH 23, Bruce Awaiting Word from VTrans
- VOREC Grant: Upgrade Sterling Trailing; Parking Signage - Gina Campoli
- Appreciation Certificates
- Act 172 Municipalities
- Assessing Spaces and Needs

- **Other Business & Walk-ins With Business to Come Before the Select Board**

Painting and scraping to start on Town Hall tomorrow

- **Decide Next Meeting Date & Adjourn**

Next meetings scheduled for 7 pm on Tuesday, August 8 and 22, at Town Hall. Meeting adjourned at 9:23 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Victoria Hudson
Select Board Clerk