

TOWN OF CRAFTSBURY
REGULAR SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 2023
7PM | CRAFTSBURY TOWN HALL

Present: Susan Houston, Jim Jones, Bruce Urie | Town Clerk Michelle Warren; PUBLIC: Farley Brown, Molly Ciecierski, Joey LaMare, Rob Libby, Brian Machesney, Steve Perkins, April Royan, Katherine Sims, David Stoner, John Zaber

Meeting Agenda

Jim called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM.

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

Move topic: Recreation Committee immediately after approval of minutes.

- **Action – Approve Select Board Regular Meeting Minutes of October 3, 2023 and Special Board Meeting of October 17**

Select Board member Susan Houston asked about FEMA and Old Mill Site area items noted in Regular Select Board Meeting Minutes. Requested the correction of her name.

Select Board Co-chair Bruce Urie motioned to approve the Regular Select Board Meeting Minutes of October 3 (as amended) and the Special Meeting Minutes of October 17; Susan Houston seconded. No further discussion. All aye. Motion passed.

- **Discussion – Bring Back the Ice Rink on The Common**

Representative Katherine Sims led a discussion seeking Select Board permission / input on the creation of an ice rink on The Common in front of the gazebo. Potential use of donations. Volunteers. Grants. Ideas for obtaining skates to make available for those without. Storage of materials. Discussion: very labor-intensive project. Fire Department unavailable based on work requirements and staff. Can the Fire Department do a one-time fill and then others maintain it? Can bring topic to Department for another consideration. Ideas: Recreation Committee previously used hoses – so long as hoses don't freeze. Ran them from the Academy. Has School Board approved the ice rink? Want to check with them. College? Outdoor program with students: for clearing, supervising? Lots of interest in doing it at the College. Must have a really dedicated, committed group: it's lots of work. Will add topic to next Select Board Regular Meeting Agenda for motion: to allow the ice rink on The Common.

- **Discussion – Ash Tree Inventory, Working Group Update | Brian Machesney & Rob Libby**

Craftsbury Ash Tree Inventory Working Group members Rob Libby and Brian Machesney presented [an update on the project](#): goal is to prepare the Town for the “looming expense” of maintaining safe right of ways as ash trees die from [Emerald Ash Borer](#) and the work to be done afterward. Review of timeline: preliminary plan started two years ago in October. Inventory of trees began in June 2022. Last month presented an update to the Craftsbury Conservation

Commission. Tonight presenting update to Select Board. Collectively more than 80 hours of work completed. Total of 6,546 ash trees counted (error rate less than 5%). Reviewed the [Vermont Invasives website](#) shows EAB webpages. Review of options; threats. Explanation of tree measurements, photos and use of technology in completing inventory. Identifying areas to help prepare where most dense and if predictions prevail. Challenges of bringing down the trees; die back at top. Higher concentrations in northern part of Town. Some areas remain to be counted. Focus: Town on trees that will fall onto roadways; homeowners will be responsible for those not leaning into roads and on property. Plan: next spring complete the inventory in remaining areas: anticipate fewer than 100 additional white ash.

- **Discussion – Housing Group Update | David Stoner (Jenny Stoner not in attendance) April Royan**

David Stoner introduced FYI items: housing issues affect the Town and schools. Church property; offered to Craftsbury Saplings to build a new facility on that land. If the Saplings don't want it, church wants to build potential affordable housing. What the church decided to do: start informal discussion groups last spring; meeting monthly with purpose to discuss affordable housing and how to get it and what to do. Two Housing Forums Planned: one held about a month ago; about 50 people attended. People from Craftsbury, Albany, Glover and Greensboro attended informal meetings (about 10-15 mtgs and 30 people on the mailing list). Options/alternatives: home-sharing; opportunities within the three Towns – village centers – state support; funding; community housing trust development. A short-term item: a “community housing group letter” for Select Board approval. Select Board input: should not be a letter from the Select Board; should be from the sponsors. The letter should not be under Town auspices. Select Board will approve letter based upon the following conditions: new email address and phone number not connected to Town Clerk; Town will print and mail letter. ([View Housing Forum leaflet and Community Housing Group letter by clicking the Attachments tab.](#))

- **Discussion / Action – Approval of Chess Club Checking Account | April Royan**

April Royan requested approval to set up Chess Club Checking Account through Town. **Bruce moved to approve the Town Clerk setting up the administrative checking account for the Chess Club; Jim seconded. No further discussion. All aye. Motion passed.**

- **Discussion – Post Office Location | Emily Maclure**

Emily Maclure was unavailable to attend; however, the Town Clerk stated that Ms. Maclure wants the Town to consider relocation of the US Post Office – wants to expand and use that space for kitchen purposes. Potential sites for the post office? Still looking. Will see where it is in six months.

- **Discussion / Action – Snowmobile Re-Route in East Craftsbury**

The club that maintains routes from Glover to Craftsbury recently came to discuss land that used to be marked as trail; was recently purchased, and new owner shut down the trail. Impossible to get to the destination by going up through woods, etc. Club proposal: jumping off from the field; come into the Y near Casa Mia and across the road to the Care Center (edge of that property along edge of barn) then connecting to trail. Group is willing to pick up the costs for signage. Need Select Board approval. Awaiting approval from the Craftsbury Community

Care Center board; just a short section. Affected landowners already have approved. **Bruce moved that the Select Board allow / approve the proposed trail: "we allow them to cross South Albany Road and Ketchum Hill Road near Casa Mia. (Just need to get signage and timing). Susan seconded. No further discussion. All aye. Motion passed.**

- **Discussion – Village Lines on the Road**

There is a Village Master Plan – may be able to accommodate. Hoping things will fall into place and can work on Village Master Plan; can do our own edging. Lines are expensive.

- **Discussion – Coburn Hill Road**

May require a chat; started work; gravel – cost of repair.

- **Discussion – Approve Online Concern Form and Breakdown**

Form for online reporting by community discussed and reviewed. Options.

- **Discussion – Municipal Technical Assistance Program – MTAP**

Postponed until November 21 Regular Select Board meeting; Allison will be available then to discuss.

- **Discussion – Volunteer Disclaimer**

Addressing a concern about volunteers engaged in potentially hazardous, dangerous activities, e.g., splitting wood with axes, working with chainsaws, driving heavy equipment, completing trail work. Discussions with the [Vermont League of Cities and Towns](#) emphasized importance of having a disclaimer; VLCT suggested a form that will protect Town; put under some sort of municipal context and stress that safety equipment is required if / when doing such hazardous activities on behalf of Town.

- **Committee Reports**

Susan will send emails to various commissions, committees, working groups: invite them to provide updates to the Select Board in person. Put on the agenda for upcoming meetings.

- *Freedom and Unity Group* | What's next? What were the five most popular dots? How to address recommendations? Town meetings? Cannot change but can put on the warning. Want to know what are the next steps? Bring the results and come in on the 21st to relate the outcomes of the meetings.
- *Conservation Commission* – What happened to grant writer project? Conservation Commission has a project that would require a grant writer. Select Board would like to see a synopsis of project before determining approval, etc.
- *Planning Commission* – Planning Commission Chair Farley Brown updated the Select Board about the Commission and its "very active members." Cited specific member contributions; applauded the alternate and explained why it's great to have in absence of quorum. Big news: the Town Plan rewrite has begun. Municipal planning grants help. Big thing about the rewrite: another public survey mailed. Grant allows public input. Town Plan rewrite will be different from past: striving for a Town Plan that is more readable, thematic – about community connection. More big news:

walk the town forest; another public meeting on the piece of land; people in town can see the land being discussed (Act 171): in addition to public survey are two planned public workshops. ([View Town Plan themes; click Attachments tab to view all available attachments.](#))

- *Energy Committee* – Finished window dresser project: submitted announcement by Kevin Gregoire. ([View original Announcement via the Attachments tab.](#))

[60 Volunteers Built 260 Window Inserts for 45 Homes!](#)

The Craftsbury Energy Committee would like to thank over 60 volunteers and window insert recipients for their assistance over a week's time recently in building 260 window inserts for 45 homes in the Craftsbury area!!!

We would also like to thank the Outdoor Center for providing their indoor space for building the inserts!!!

Through several grants, 120 of the 260 inserts went to households that may not have been able to afford to buy them. Plus, Efficiency VT offered a \$100 rebate if you buy three inserts, which essentially paid for two of the three inserts.

Besides keeping homes warmer, an average 3-foot-by-four-foot insert saves 10 gallons of fuel oil per heating season – a big savings!

You can see five inserts being used at the Town Clerk's office.

You can sign up now to get your inserts for next year!

This workshop is held annually [during] the last week of October at the Outdoor Center and is a great social affair.

If you are interested in being a part of one of the big community events of the year, let us know, and/or look for our posting next year at this time.

- **Clerk Report**

- P&L – reviewed
- Newsletter discussed
- Municipay options for delinquent taxes and A&U; set up now

- **Weight Permit**

Signed for Colburn's Village View Maples & Beef

- **Road Foreman Report**

Status of Bridge Near Garage: what's the timeline? Bridge is passable. What will be there for two-three years. A little more work to be done. Signage will be paid by FEMA. Posted for tonnage? Discussion. \$96/ton – salt contract – same as last year; state contract. FEMA report now down to each road; description. Addresses for projects. Meeting by phone each Thursday morning. VTrans [Municipal Grants in Aid](#) form completed. A little more than \$20K; possibly for this year. Three hidden drive signs are up.

- **Other Items – Grader Payment Options**

Must decide payment options for Grader by December (whether 4.5% or 5% loan); use 4.75% and add to next meeting agenda.

- **Upcoming Projects to Keep on Agenda**

- Municipal Technical Assistance Program – MTAP | Allison Lowe 11/21
- Town Dedication
- Community Development position
- Serin Decherd: “Hidden Driveway” sign - signs ordered
- Hidden Sign: Paul Pitt Town Line Road - signs ordered
- Aleta Akerlind request for “Hidden Driveway” sign: signs ordered
- Test Pits at Gravel Pit
- 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**
None.

- **Decide Next Meeting Date & Adjourn**

Next meeting will be Tuesday, November 21, at 7 pm at Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted,



Victoria Hudson
Select Board Clerk