

TALES OF TINMOUTH

February 2021
Vol. 35 Number 2

Tinmouth
Vermont

Editors' Notes: *The olde timers used to say, "On February 1st there should remain, half the hay and half the grain." (And hopefully half the wood pile!!)*

The deadline for submissions is the 20th of the preceding month. Please email your information to *Tales of Tinmouth* (tinmouthtales@vermontel.net) or drop it off at the Town Office.

Many, many thanks for the donations to keep *Tales* in print. They are very much appreciated!

Pat Psholka, Helen Mango & Gail Fallar

~ Town Meeting 2021 ~

There will be a virtual informational meeting – via *gotomeeting* on Saturday, February 27th. We then will elect officers and vote on budgets and public questions by Australian balloting at the Old Fire House on Tuesday, March 2nd.

You are encouraged to vote early/absentee. You can call the town office to request the ballots, 446-2498.

~ Officers to be Elected ~

The following have filed consent forms to run for office; there are 3 contested races – please see pages 3 and 4 for their statements for why they are willing to serve.

Select Board Member - Michael Fallar,
Nathaniel Miner, and Meadow Squier
MRUUSD Board Member – 1 year to fill Amy Martone's term- Asha Carroll and Arne Majorell
Road Commissioner – Eric Buffum and
Michael Fallar

Uncontested races ~

Moderator - Michael Fallar

Lister - Pat Psholka

Auditor – Vito Macaluso

Tax Collector (Delinquent) – Cat Yoder

~ Early/Absentee Ballots ~

Due to the continuing presence of the Corona Virus pandemic, **please vote early/absentee if you can**. This provides a bit of safety for voters and poll workers. Nearly 75% of votes cast in November were early/absentee!! The polls will be open at the Old Fire House on March 2nd.

To request an **Absentee Ballot**, you must do so before **5:00 pm on Monday, March 1st**. **Voted ballots must be returned by 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, March 2nd**. You can also vote **early** at the town office starting mid-February.

~ Registering to Vote ~

You do not have to register to vote before the election. Vermont has instituted **same-day voter registration**, meaning that if you have not previously registered to vote and want to do so on town meeting day, you can register then and there.

You do need to be a resident of the town in which you are registering to vote, and proof of that (like a utility bill).

~ Town Reports ~

The town reports will be mailed around the middle of the month. Please read them and use them for the virtual Town Meeting on **Saturday, February 27th**.

A HUGE thank you to Nancy Birdsall for doing such a great job putting it together once again!

**The Mill River Unified Union School District
Annual Meeting will be held virtually on
Thursday February 25, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.**

Video link and phone-in information were sent on an orange post card.

Voting for the school budget and other questions will be on Tuesday, March 2nd from 8:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m. at the Old Fire House.

Absentee balloting is encouraged due to the continued presence of the Corona Virus Pandemic.

~ TCF Annual Meeting ~

The **Tinmouth Community Fund** will hold its **Annual Meeting virtually at 11:30 am on Saturday, February 27th**. 2021 Grant awards will be announced as well as reports for the past year, and election of Directors and officers. All are welcome!

Please 'attend' to find out what the Tinmouth Community Fund is all about! How TCF is working to enhance the great sense of community that Tinmouth enjoys.

Contact Jan Krantz at 446-2919 for Zoom link/phone#.



~ February 2021 Calendar of Events ~



| | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------|------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Groundhog Day | Tuesday | 2nd | Winter is half over, hooray! | |
| Select Board- Special | Tuesday | 2nd | 6:00 | Virtual |
| Fire Department | Thursday | 3rd | 7:00 | Virtual |
| Select Board | Thursday | 11th | 7:00 | Virtual |
| Planning Commission | Thursday | 18th | Maybe! | Virtual |
| Tales of Tinmouth Deadline | Sunday | 20th | | Don't Miss It! |
| Select Board | Tuesday | 23rd | 7:00 | Virtual |
| Tinmouth Community Fund | Saturday | 27th | 11:30 | Virtual |
| Town Meeting Informational | Saturday | 27th | 1:00 | Virtual |



~ March 2021 Calendar of Events ~

| | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------|------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Town & School Voting | Tuesday | 2nd | 8:00 am – 7:00 | Old Fire House |
| Fire Department | Thursday | 4th | 7:00 | Virtual |
| Select Board | Thursday | 11th | 7:00 | Virtual |
| Planning Commission | Thursday | 18th | Maybe | Virtual |
| Tales of Tinmouth Deadline | Saturday | 20th | | Don't Miss It! |

Transfer Station hours are Wednesday 4:00 – 7:00 pm & Saturday 8:00 am – noon.

~ Sunday Church Service ~ Is now virtual, please see details in the Church News ~

~ Library Hours ~ Volleyball ~ Pickleball ~ Knit, Craft or Chat ~ and Bone Builders ~
Are All Suspended Until Further Notice Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic and
Governor Scott's Emergency Order.

~ Homestead Declaration ~

This a reminder that you need to file an **annual** Homestead Declaration with the Vermont Department of Taxes, form HS-122. You must file this to qualify for the homestead education tax rate and to request a property tax adjustment if you are eligible. You must also file form HI-144 (household income), **due April 15th**. This is required even if you do not have to file or pay state income taxes.

~ Community News ~

Get Well Wishes are sent to **Jo Reynolds and Jeri Harris**.

Heartfelt Sympathies are sent to family and friends of **Connie Gilmore**, and family and friends of **Fordyce Blanchard**, and to **Pastor Sue Hardman-Zimmerman** for the loss of her Mom.

~ Nature Notes ~

Days are getting longer, the sun is shining warmer, yeah!!!

Full moon on the 29th was bitterly cold, hope the next month does not follow suit!

Due to the cold weather, a bunch of folks have been able to spend time ice fishing!

~ Dog Licenses Due April 1st ~

A current rabies certificate is required. You can call the Town Office if you don't know if your dog needs a shot or not. Fees are \$9 for neutered/spayed dogs and \$13 for those that are not. 50% penalty is assessed after April 1st. Please register by mail if you can, thanks.

~ Dog & Cat Rabies Clinic ~

The Wallingford Dog & Cat Rabies Clinic is
Saturday, March 13th from 12:00 to 2:00 p.m.
All dogs must be on leashes. All cats must be in carriers.
Grace Ma-Steenbergen, DVM
\$15 per shot
Wallingford Town Hall 75 School Street
OPEN TO THE PUBLIC



Adopt the pace of Nature: her secret is patience.
~ Ralph Waldo Emerson

~ Candidates' Forum ~

All candidates were asked to provide a brief statement regarding their bid for office. Submissions are alphabetical. Not all candidates responded.

Mill River Unified Union School District – 1 year term to fill the vacancy created by Amy Martone's resignation as Tinmouth's representative to the MRUUSD Board.

~ Asha Carroll ~

Friends and Neighbors,

I am excited to announce that I am running to represent the Town of Tinmouth on the Mill River Unified Union School District School Board.

Tinmouth families deserve a community advocate who will stand up for policies that position our students for the best outcomes possible, regardless of circumstance. In a time full of division, I am dedicated to finding the strengths in our differences, working together to support the needs of our families, our teachers, and most of all, our young learners.

I currently serve our town on the Board of Directors of the Tinmouth Community Fund and as a member of the Advisory Council at Tinmouth Community Church. I am also a member of the Board of Directors at Girl Scouts Green and White Mountains, where I serve on the Advancement Committee. I'm a small business owner, a communications professional, and a former educator and curriculum writer myself, having worked closely with school administrators to develop STEAM programming for economically disadvantaged students in Yonkers, Brooklyn, The Bronx, and Queens prior to my and my husband's move to Tinmouth five years ago. I'm a first-generation college graduate, the daughter of a vocational instructor, and a proud product of K-12 public schools.

My campaign is values-centered and community-focused, and I am deeply committed to ensuring that Tinmouth remains a welcoming and thriving town for our families for years to come. I hope that you'll support me with your vote on Town Meeting Day.

Please reach out to me with your thoughts, concerns, and questions by email at asha.g.carroll@gmail.com or by phone at (802) 391-4035. I'd love to hear what's important to you.

Sincerely,
Asha Carroll

Mountain View Road
Tinmouth Candidate for Mill River Unified Union
District School Board

~ Arne Majorell ~

Hello Everyone!

My name is Arne Majorell and I am running for the Tinmouth School Board seat. Let me tell you a little about myself and why I am running.

I was born and raised in Vermont. Growing up I loved the outdoors, fishing, hunting, and sports, including ski racing and soccer. When not in school or engaging in my athletic endeavors, the majority of my time was spent working for my dad in his landscaping business. I would say that these were the seeds that formed my values around wildlife conservation, and my appreciation of the life lessons learned and earned through athletics and hard work.

My father was adamant I would not earn a living with a shovel. I agreed, so after high school I attended UVM and graduated with a degree in mechanical engineering. My work in the machine shop and small projects for professors led me to connections with General Electric in Rutland, VT. These jobs paid off and I was fortunate enough to be hired full time as an engineer for GE.

That was twenty-five years and five children ago. With my oldest now graduated from Mill River and pursuing a nursing degree, my wife and I are simply perplexed by what is currently happening in our school system. The focus on academic success has seemed to go by the wayside as increasing energy towards social activism and political stances is pushed to the forefront of our children's education.

My reason for running is really very simple. I want to ensure that your children and mine are provided with an education that allows them the best opportunity to be great at whatever they choose to do after graduation. Advancements in technology have made a strong educational foundation more important today than ever before. This is not only true for those pursuing higher education, but perhaps even more so in the trade fields.

As we endeavor to teach our youth in academic excellence, we cannot continue to be so easily sidetracked by the social and political movements of our times. I would like to see the values of integrity, hard work, discipline, and personal responsibility built back into the framework of our schools. Above all else I will advocate for an environment where Every Single student is valued as a unique individual who deserves the care and respect of other students, teachers, and administrators. Let's get Mill River Schools back on track together!

My contact information is 802-558-8841 or email 7majorells@gmail.com.

Thank you for your time,
Arne Majorell

Select Board ~ 3 year term

~ Michael Fallar ~

Over the last 3 years it has been my privilege to serve as a member of the Tinnmouth Select Board. In fact, it is fun and rewarding to be member of this Board. So, I am seeking a second term, having knowledge and experience relating to town governance, i.e.; workshops, seminars, memberships on other town boards, and of course the bimonthly Select Board meetings. I feel that these and my natural personality make a great combination when it comes to matters of town governance.

I would like to continue work on the proposed new town garage and sand/salt shed, to make sure they are what the Town needs and what the Town can afford.

Hopefully, I can count on your vote this March. I look forward to the opportunity to again serve on the Select Board. Thank you for your consideration.

Michael Fallar

~ Nathaniel Miner ~

I would like the opportunity to represent the town as a select board member, the ad said anyone who wants to run can sign up so I did. I don't have any agenda's, plans for great change or sweeping reform. I live here in town, joined the Fire Department, and I hope to reopen the Tinnmouth Snack Bar. Thank you for considering me.

Nate

~ Meadow Squier ~

My name is Meadow Squier and I am running for a select board seat. I have spent most of my life in this town, I love and cherish this community and would be honored to play a role in its leadership. I am an experienced small business owner and believe the same strategies for efficiency and smart spending that help a business thrive also apply to a town.

I would strive to be a transparent and accessible board member. I will compassionately listen to the concerns of our citizens. I want to encourage and inspire more community members to engage with the town, so we can continue to be the strong and vibrant community we have always been.

I look forward to hearing from you and how I can help represent you on the board. The best way to contact me is through email: meadowsquier@gmail.com.

Meadow

Auditor ~ 3 year term (unopposed)

I am running for the position of auditor to continue my service to the Town of Tinnmouth, this will be my third term as an auditor for Tinnmouth and is my small way of giving back to this wonderful community.

Vito Macaluso

Road Commissioner ~ 3 year term

Eric Buffum ~ No response

~ Michael Fallar ~

Over the past 3 years I have had the opportunity to see and understand the daily workings of our road crew. Now that it is time once again to elect a road commissioner, I hope you will vote for me. If/when elected I will bring the same enthusiastic energy that I have for town governance, to the road commissioner's position.

I look forward to working for the Town of Tinnmouth in this new and exciting opportunity.

Thank you,

Michael Fallar

~ Legislative Contact Info ~

The Vermont General Assembly is back in session, meeting virtually. If you wish to contact your State Senators or Representatives, here is the info:

You can call the Sergeant-at-Arms at 1-800-322-5616 and leave a message, or use email addresses below.

Rutland 2 District –

Rep. Art Peterson: apeterson@leg.state.vt.us.

Rep. Tom Burditt: tburditt@leg.state.vt.us

Rutland-Bennington District –

Rep. Sally Achey: sachey@leg.state.vt.us

Rutland County Senators-

Sen. Brian Collamore: bcollamore@leg.state.vt.us

Sen. Cheryl Hooker: chooker@leg.state.vt.us

Sen. Tom Terenzini: tterenzini@leg.state.vt.us

You can also access the Legislature's website at www.leg.state.vt.us. There you can find who is on which committee, what bills have been introduced, track each bill's progress, review committee agendas, etc. There is a wealth of information available.

Your input can be important in their decision-making. Let them know your concerns!

If you are high risk for COVID-19, the Tinnmouth Volunteer Fire Department needs to know so they can respond appropriately and minimize any additional risk if there is an emergency at your house.

Please let the Fire Department know by calling Sherry at 446- 3307 or email vtjohnson@icloud.cloud.

Your information will be kept confidential by TVFD.

Needing a friend to talk with during these COVID times? Pastor John (Tinnmouth Community Church) is a phone call away.

Any reason is a good reason to call: 802-417-1491.



To the Tinmouth Community,

Overall, students are thriving and grateful to be back to in-person learning. Classes started off in January remotely for the first week due to the rise in Covid cases. Since January 11th the school doors have been open. All enrolled students except one have returned to in-person learning.

In-person learning has proven to be more effective than remote. Since we have returned from remote learning, our STAR 360 proficiency test scores have risen 20 percentile points. This is due not only to the return to in-person learning but to the hard work of teachers.

We have initiated an afterschool/homework club from 2:00 to 3:00 PM. During this hour, three teachers work with students in kindergarten through sixth grade. The program is wildly successful. Children are turning in homework and missing assignments. This program also contributed to the rise in test scores.

We have received a grant for \$3,500 from the Vermont Principal's Association to purchase snowshoes. Students are participating in the Fish and Wildlife's *Track and Scat* program. This equipment will help get them outside to observe and record their findings.

The divisiveness apparent nationally and in local communities throughout Vermont provided schools with an opportunity to teach children to think critically. This will take a bit of time but the underlying tenets are as follows:

- Students are learning to discern fact from opinion.
- Students are learning that information presented through the media is influenced by the perceptions of those sharing this information.
- Students are learning to differentiate between personal attacks and respectful discussion.

Most importantly, we will focus on the limitations of social media. Particularly, how it differs from face to face discussion where respectful human relationship and personal accountability is developed.

Finally, I would like to remind voters that it's important to consider when voting for a Tinmouth board member that we need a representative who puts the children first and foremost.

Thank you as always for your support. Please stay healthy and safe!

Maureen Fitzgerald-Riker
Principal
Tinmouth Mountain School



~ Tinmouth Community Church ~

Dear Friends,

My daughter caught my laxity. "Dad, we don't say "I don't care" in our family." She was right. Even in regard to impersonal matters, we try to keep our hearts open and our speech and actions charitable.

"Be careful not to harden your hearts," the Psalmist says, for cold sets in when we no longer care. It is the chill of death - the waning of our vitality, the withering of our creativity, the excommunication of our joy. Friendships suffer. Our communities are deprived. It is an untenable, almost intolerable state of disunion from our deepest goodness, a goodness of soul that thrives when doing good for others.

Caring - it is another word for the disposition and expression of those who love. It shows itself in countless acts of thoughtfulness, kindness, assistance, nurture, companionship, professionalism, creativity and compassionate leadership. Caring is at the heart of selfless self-giving, often, if not always, with, an element of willing self-sacrifice. Caring is the humanizing dynamic of our persons and the civilizing component in our societies. When we "couldn't care less" about certain others, we end up with the likes of children heartlessly separated from their parents, with prejudicial animosities spilling blood in our streets, and the divisive extremism that has assaulted our Capital.

It can be easy to say, "I don't care," when we feel we have to protect our self-understanding or protect our heart. But our hearts are greater than our ego's needs and even greater than self-preservation. We express our true greatness when transcending our fears and self-concerns in caring service to others.

Caring - it is another word for the disposition of heart and tangible expression of those who love. Valentine's Day, like every day, is simply another day in which to live this love out loud.

Blessings,
Pastor John

Sunday Services online at www.tinmouthchurch.org
Evening Prayer, Tuesdays and Thursdays, on Tinmouth Community Church Facebook page

Rev. John Hardman-Zimmerman
(802) 282-7532 (cell, preferred)
(802) 884-8249 (parsonage)
hzfam@hotmail.com

~ Meeting Highlights ~

(Complete minutes are available at the town office.)

Select Board ~ 1/14/21

Present were members Michael Fallar, Frank Sears, and Cathy Reynolds, as well as Sherry Johnson, Kim Harbaugh, Stan Wilbur – Public Works Project Manager, Ronnie Crossman, Eric Buffum – Road Commissioner, Michael Fannin – Emergency Management Director, Meadow Squier, John Holler, Grant Reynolds, Doug Fontein - Conservation Commission (at 9:35) and Gail Fallar – Select Board Assistant (SBA).

Frank called the meeting to order at 7:03 and welcomed everyone. Board reviewed agenda, Meadow requested the Board make a public statement supporting the Legislature’s condemning of the attack in the capital, as follows: *“We the democratically elected officials of the town of Tinmouth stand with our state legislature in condemning the violent attacks on our nation’s capital and our democracy. We trust that our community will work together to resist this violence and uphold the democracy that makes our nation great.”* Michael suggested it should be considered at the next Board meeting, Cathy and Frank agreed to add it to New Business at this meeting. No other changes to the agenda.

Minutes of 12/10/20 were approved with these corrections: added ‘storm-water’ before permit in the Public Works Facilities section; clarified that Ronnie was ‘on vacation from the town’ in the Personnel Policy section (in reference to his being away fighting forest fires); and changed ‘tracts’ to ‘tracks’ in the section dealing with 605 Mountain View Road.

Highway ~

Eric reported winter conditions have arrived, expressed appreciation that Glenn Merrill was able to help during the big storm in December. Road crew has been busy cutting brush when not plowing snow.

Proposed FY22 Highway Budget – Board added \$750 to roadside mowing to allow for a second pass on the gravel roads later in the season to help with getting leaves out of the ditch; reduced chloride by \$1,000; after much discussion about the need for project estimates to comply with state storm-water rules, Board added \$2,500 for gravel/stone – also need separate line for those projects going forward, noting that the town’s Storm Water Management Plan agreed to address seven road segments in each of the next two years; and after much discussion regarding the impending Emerald Ash Borer invasion, added \$5,000 for ash tree removal. Board approved draft highway budget of \$548,250. The \$5,000 for EAB will come out of the extra state highway aide received this year.

Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) – Eric advised that he and Ron had done an ash tree inventory finding 3,858 ash trees along Tinmouth road sides. As the EAB has been found

in West Rutland, it will be in Tinmouth (if it’s not already) in a couple of years. It will take several years to cut this many trees. Eric estimated a cost of \$130,000 after discussion with Trees, Inc. This project needs to be thought about and a plan developed to remove them – deadliest need to be cut first. The road crew cannot do it – flaggers are needed, a chipper, etc.- with the addition of the work required for storm water control, the road crew will not have time. After much discussion, Board asked Eric to contact Trees, Inc. for an estimate so they can build a budget plan.

‘What If Plan’ – Eric advised he is working on it, still needs to map the plow routes. Board asked that it be presented at its February 10th meeting.

Extra State Highway Aide - \$21,936 extra state highway aide (in lieu of any grants) was received in FY21. Board voted to use \$5,000 for ash tree removal in FY22 and to move the balance \$16,936 into the Capital Building Fund for the garage/salt/sand/shed projects.

Salt Policy – As John Holler had posted a question regarding winter salt use on Front Porch Forum, Frank responded via FPF for John to attend a SB meeting to discuss it. John noted that the roads were fantastic, but that he had noticed salt residue on the mats in his garage and requested information regarding the salt product being used on the roads in winter. Was it a brine, what is the product, how corrosive is it? Eric responded that it is not brine, it is a product added to the winter salt that keeps the snow from sticking to the road, it is less corrosive, has a rust inhibitor, and has a higher sugar content to aide in melting. He offered to provide John with the manufacturer’s information sheet. John expressed appreciation for that and to the Board for its hard work. Michael Fannin questioned the use of brine in the summer on gravel roads – was it the same? Eric explained that the liquid spread on gravel roads in the summer is calcium chloride, that the winter salt product is not liquid and only applied to the paved roads. Cathy again advised that Eric is following all the state recommendations regarding winter salt.

Public Works Facilities ~

Stan advised that **design/build proposals** had been sent to nine contractors, six responded – Breadloaf, Giancola, Morton, Russell, VMS and Wright. He prepared a rating sheet for Select Board members, Eric and Ronnie, and Gail to review – he will be the moderator not a reviewer. Packets will be prepared on Friday morning; reviewers will pick them up and return rating sheets to Stan by Wednesday. Board agreed to meet on the 21st to discuss the proposals in executive session and determine who to interview at the SB meeting on the 26th.

Storm-Water Permit – Stan advised that Otter Creel Engineering was not able to keep the impervious area under an acre, so a storm-water permit will be needed for

the town garage. He has advised Craig Jewett to proceed with the storm water permitting process to include the town garage and salt/sand shed – the whole site. These plans are supposed to be ready by the 21st for Board review.

Covid19/Emergency Management - Michael Fannin, EMD, advised that the Covid19 situation is dreadful at the present time, but is hopeful, as more vaccines are on the way, and that he had not received any calls for assistance. He also advised that the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan Committee is winding up work on the plan, he and Eric recently met with staff from RRPC, and hopes to have a draft to the Select Board in February or March.

Financial ~

Financial Report – Board voted to accept.

Warrants Reviewed ~ Payroll Warrants #24 dated 12/14/20 for \$2,718.24, #25 dated 12/21/20 for \$2,738.75, and #26 dated 12/28/20 for \$3,025.11, #27 dated 12/31/20 for \$2,625.98 and #28 dated 1/11/21 for \$5,218.71; and Accounts Payable Warrants #11 dated 12/14/20 for \$420,373.35, #12 dated 12/21/20 for \$12,351.06 and #13 dated 12/31/20 for \$19,351.36 were reviewed and approved. *Board thanked the road crew for working on Christmas day.*

Draft FY22 General Budget – Gail inquired whether the Select Board wanted to ask the Auditors for a raise – since they have been meeting twice a month, etc. All said no thank you, and expressed hope that the number of meetings would go back to one, once the town garage project is under way. Michael stepped down from the SB temporarily to speak from the “other side” of the table. He said he was speaking as a citizen and had noticed the draft budget did not include a raise for the clerk/treasurer. Frank moved and Cathy 2nded to give the same 3% raise to the clerk/treasurer/select board assistant as the road crew and other town employees received. They both voted yes, Michael recused himself.

Board voted to approve the draft FY22 General Budget of \$232,915 (plus the raise just voted).

2020 Property Tax Waiver of Penalty and Interest – Board clarified that penalty and interest for unpaid 2020 property taxes will begin on May 17th.

Common Level of Appraisal (CLA) – Gail reported the 2021 CLA was determined to be 98.25%, the 2020 CLA was 98.14% (after a successful appeal).

Audit Update – Gail reported Sullivan and Powers sent word they would not be done by December 31st due in part to the pandemic and working remotely. They hope to wrap it up shortly.

Old Business ~

Trash at 605 Mountain View – Board is waiting for attorney Jim Carroll’s advice before proceeding.

New Business ~

Resolution - Meadow asked the Board to act on her proposal, noting that the Board is an extension of the Legislature, feeling the community needs to make a statement and has a responsibility to protect it, adding that it is not political – it’s about protecting everybody. Cathy moved to adopt it as a resolution, Frank 2nded after it was clarified that the request was for Select Board action, not Town Meeting.

Michael expressed concern that the Select Board would be making a political statement in a turbulent time and advised he would abstain, he needed more information and thought it was an unwise move for the Select Board.

Frank agreed that the Select Board is an extension of the Legislature and this would be a formal notice of condemnation.

Meadow noted it is not political, it’s purely supporting the legislation that condemned violence in the nation’s capital. It condemns attacks on democracy, that democracy is the heart of everything.

Michael noted it should condemn all the violence in protests during the past summer as well.

Members voted as follows: Cathy yes, Michael abstained, Frank voted no as he felt it was imperative that the Board all agree. Motion did not pass.

Cathy thanked Meadow for her effort.

Personnel Policy – Postponed until February meeting.

‘What If Plan’ – Gail advised the model being used envisions a committee to work on it. Cathy advised that the SB needs to have everything written down and again asked Gail to commit to preparing a written procedure for all functions (what’s in her head). Gail did not commit to a time frame, but will work on it as time allows.

Town Meeting 2021 – The virtual informational meeting will be held on Saturday, February 27th via *gotomeeting*, need to ensure that all who want to participate can ‘attend’. Board approved warning for Town Meeting – tax due dates, highway and general budgets, and officers to be elected

Select Board Report for the Town Report – Board reviewed Frank’s draft as edited by Cathy. Frank noted that he wanted to thank town employees and volunteers, highlight the positives in the community and its dealing with the pandemic. Michael suggested adding acknowledging the Building Committee and its efforts to help the Select Board with the proposed town garage and salt/sand shed. Board agreed. Cathy will finalize edits and submit it.

Executive Session – Board voted to enter executive session at 9:37 PM for the purpose of discussing a potential right of way. Invited into the session was Doug Fontein, Chair of the Conservation Commission and Gail Fallar, Town Clerk. Board exited at 9:45 PM. Board voted to give the Conservation Commission permission to

begin preliminary discussion of right of way opportunities with land owners. The CC was advised that they could not give a commitment from the town without further Select Board approval.

Next Meetings Schedule ~ January 21 (Executive Session); January 26th; and February 11th.

Select Board ~ Special Meeting ~ 1/21/21

Present were members Frank Sears, Cathy Reynolds, and Michael Fallar, as well as Stan Wilbur – Public Works Facilities Project Manager, Eric Buffum – Road Commissioner, Ronnie Crossman, and Gail Fallar – Select Board Assistant (SBA).

Public Works Facilities Design/Build Proposals ~

Stan advised that he had prepared a summary of the reviews of the proposals submitted by reviewers Frank, Cathy, Michael, Eric, Ron and Gail. Proposals were submitted by Breadloaf Construction, Giancola Construction, Morton Building, Russell Corp., VMS, and Wright Construction.

At 7:08 Board voted to enter executive session for the purpose of discussing potential contract negotiations, which premature general public knowledge would be detrimental to the interests of the Town, and to include Stan, Eric, Ron and Gail.

At 8:02 Board voted to exit executive session.

Board voted to authorize Stan, as P.W.F. Project Manager, to set up interviews with Morton Buildings, Giancola Construction and Wright Construction to further the discussion about the design/build and to set the budget for the town garage at \$500,000.

Board decided the interviews would be scheduled for the next scheduled SB meeting on February 26th, in executive session, all other agenda items would be moved to February 11th.

Select Board ~ Special Meeting ~ 1/26/21

Present were members Frank Sears, Cathy Reynolds, and Michael Fallar, as well as Stan Wilbur – Public Works Project Manager and Gail Fallar – Select Board Assistant. Road crew was unable to attend due to snow storm duties.

Stan apologized for the confusion – he understood this meeting was to finalize questions for the design/build contractors with the interviews to be held at a future meeting.

Public Works Facilities Design/Build Proposals ~

Stan asked for comments or changes to the proposed questions for the design/build contractor he had sent to the Board. They dealt with staffing, budgeting, permitting, construction schedule and warranties.

Board reviewed and suggested including a question about how they anticipate keeping the cost at \$500,000. Wondered if the contractors would have questions for the

Board, what they might be – what are the needs of the project?

Board discussed process, warranty, builder's insurance, bonding – whether to require the contractor to be bonded, review of a proposed contract (should have an attorney review), how to ensure cost does not get out of control, etc.

Board decided hold to a special meeting for the interviews on Tuesday, February 2, 2021, with ½ hour for each company, in executive session due to possible negotiations. Stan advised he will send the questions to the 3 contractors so they can submit written answers before the interviews.

Storm-Water Permit ~

Stan also advised that Craig Jewett, Otter Creek Engineering, was close to completing a new application for a storm water permit for just the town garage. Salt/sand shed storm-water permit would be addressed in the future. Stan noted that Craig was not charging for this permit application. Stan asked for this to be added to the agenda for the meeting on the 2nd.

Next Meetings Schedule ~ Special February 2 at 6:00 and regular February 11th 7:00.

Conservation Commission ~ 1/18/21

With thanks to Chuck Bronk, Sec.

Members online: Doug Fontein, Ed Hasenohr, Jeff Ams and Chuck Bronk: Public online: David Birdsall

New Business:

Doug Fontein introduced David Birdsall, Tinmouth Tree Warden, to discuss the impact on the Town of the spread of the Emerald Ash Borer, which was first noted in northern Orange County in 2018. David noted that we are currently on the outer ring of one center of infestation in West Rutland, which is spreading at the rate of about 2 miles per year. Green Mountain Power has budgeted \$1.2 million for mitigation in just two infested areas of their transmission power lines, based on a projected cost of \$245 per trunk removed.

Eric Buffum, Tinmouth Road Commissioner has estimated that there are about 3,000 ash trees in the right of way alongside Tinmouth's roads. Where there are power lines along the roads, GMP will likely handle the removals. It is estimated that it takes roughly two years from infestation to the death of an affected ash tree. Once dead, these trees could become a hazard. Eric has estimated that it might take between 15 and 30 minutes to remove each one, but as a roadside operation this would require flagging. To remove 3,000 trees could then require 187 man days or about ¾ year.

While the Town's plan would be to remove every ash along the roads, forest management plans call for leaving a percentage of trees to encourage the development of resistant varieties. For yard side specimens, that an owner wishes to save, there is a rather expensive inoculation

required every 1-2 years. Entomologists have found a wasp that will attack the borer, but it seems unlikely that a sufficient wasp population could be raised to halt the infestation spread. Currently all species of ash trees succumb to infestation.

Doug posed the question, how could the Conservation Commission help in making the residents of Tinmouth understand the magnitude of this problem? He suggested that the Commission might host a meeting with a state official to bring information to the Town but all agreed that this would be more difficult in the current remote/virtual climate. All agreed that the Town Meeting would be the best forum to spread information to the Town, but at this time it is probably too late to get an addition to the Town Report which is in the final stages of publication. David and Doug will continue to work on how to publicize the matter.

Doug described a possible spur on the Drachman trail which would have at its eastern terminus a view point to the center of Town. Doug asked David to give his opinion as to the whether the viewpoint is within the bounds of the property. Ruth Drachman has agreed to this addition to the trail but Doug still needs to clear it with her sons. All agreed that we should pursue this addition. The question remains how to publicize the trail to an audience of Tinmouth residents, as per our agreement with the Drachmans. Doug has written about the trail in his discussion in the Town Report, to be published prior to Town Meeting. Ed Hasenohr agreed to work on a document to be published at the same time in the Tales of Tinmouth, if he could be provided with the wording of the trailhead sign and a copy of the map. Doug will provide those documents to Ed.

Doug questioned whether the Purchase Loop Trail is on the Alltrails app? Since Robbie Leeds was not in attendance, Doug agreed to pose this question to him after the meeting.

The Commission discussed the possibility of putting a trail register at the kiosk for the Ridge Trail, but tabled the discussion for now.

Regarding the access to the Town Lot behind the Transfer Station from the parking lot of the Old Creamery, Doug reported that the Select Board gave their approval for the Commission to pursue the matter with the neighbors owning the adjoining property, to see if they were amenable to an easement for foot traffic, only, across their property. It was agreed that Nelson Jaquay and Rainbow Squier should approach them with a map and a number of talking points.

Chuck Bronk agreed to create four laminated signs for our Trail kiosks suggesting that hikers use their cell phones to photograph a map of the trail. Where we provide trail maps, this should conserve resources.

Ongoing Business:

Doug reported that the Switchbacks needed on the

steeper sections of the Ridge Trail leading up to the saddle, are still on our “to do” list, as he is having difficulty communicating with the land owner.

All agreed that we should add several loads of gravel to the parking area for the Drachman trail. Doug will handle this.

Green Up Day this year will most likely be Do It Yourself, like last year.

Next meeting set for March 12, 2021 at 7:30 PM

Planning Commission ~ No Meeting in January

~ Flower Brook Watershed ~

By Barbara Noyes Pulling RRPC

For the past few years, a group representing the Flower Brook Watershed - which encompasses portions of Tinmouth, Danby, and Pawlet and flows into Lake Champlain via the Mettowee River - has been working on flood resilience projects in the three towns.

Now we are broadening our work to include climate resilience. We've identified some of the current impacts of climate change in our three towns and now need to come up with a list of actions to address those impacts. For instance, one of the impacts identified is the damage to town roads from more intense storms. The next step for the group is to come up with ideas for addressing that problem, which is becoming increasingly expensive for local governments; solutions that may be applicable town wide and watershed wide.

Also on the list of climate change impacts is forest health and potential species shifts, water quality, drought, human health, and other new challenges.

Most of the participating group does NOT live in the watershed itself, but in other parts of Danby and Pawlet. We'd love to have representation from Tinmouth, as our whole project centers on cross-town cooperation for water quality between the three towns.

Interested? Please contact Hilary Solomon at 558-3515, or Barbara Noyes Pulling 747-7535.

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And it is open all the time! It’s quite full at the moment, a good time to stop for a visit and take a good book home!

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Emerald Ash Borer Alert

The Tinmouth Conservation Commission and Tinmouth Tree Warden Dave Birdsall share the following information with Tinmouth Residents. (It will be on the Select Board's agenda for 2/11/21.)

The Problem

- Emerald Ash Borer, (EAB, an invasive beetle that kills all species of Ash trees found in VT) has been identified in West Rutland and much of the rest of the State.
- It is only a matter of time before it shows up in Tinmouth. It may already be here, just undiscovered.
- Once a tree is infested, the beetles girdle the tree by severing the cambium. The process takes 2-3 years to kill a tree.
- Over 95% of ash trees will succumb to the EAB, while some small percentage will be resistant.
- Ash trees near roads, power lines, buildings and other infrastructure, once infested, pose a risk of traffic hazard, power outages and property damage.

What Can I Do?

- DO NOT transport firewood beyond your property. This is one of the fastest ways EAB spreads.
- If you have a stand of Ash with commercial value, think about harvesting it now, while the trees still have value. Please follow the state recommendations from the website below.
- Do not cut down all the Ash trees in your woodlot. Trees in the forest away from infrastructure will do no harm if they fall. And some will turn out to have immunity from EAB.
- Be prepared for the power company or Town-designated tree removal crew to cut any Ash that are within right-of-ways as a public safety measure.
- Stay tuned for more information. There may be an information session at the virtual Town Meeting. The Conservation Commission may also organize a virtual presentation by an expert from the State Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation.
- See recommendations to "slow the spread" on this website:

<https://www.google.com/url?q=https://vtinvasives.org/land/emerald-ash-borer-vermont/slow-spread-of-eab&sa=D&ust=1612018165125000&usg=AOvVaw13jwve-FACZLjvhPIhNPg3>

Stay Safe
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