

**Town of Tinmouth  
Select Board  
Thursday, February 11, 2021  
Virtual Meeting Due to COVID-19 Pandemic  
Regular Meeting Minutes**

**Members present:** Michael Fallar, Cathy Reynolds, and Frank Sears

**Others present:** Stan Wilbur – Public Works Project Manager, Eric Buffum – Road Commissioner, Ronnie Crossman, and Gail Fallar – Select Board Assistant (SBA). (Sherry Johnson, Kim Harbaugh, and Meadow Squier at 7:00)

**Frank** called the meeting to order at 6:30, Cathy moved that the Board enter Executive Session for the purpose of discussing potential contract negotiations, where premature general public knowledge would be detrimental to the interests of the town, and to include Stan, Eric, Ron and Gail. Michael 2nded, all voted in favor.

Board exited **Executive Session** at 7:46. Frank noted the Board considered proposals from Morton Buildings, Giancola Construction and Wright Construction. Frank moved to choose Morton Buildings as the contractor for the design/build of the town garage, Cathy 2<sup>nd</sup>, all voted in favor. Next step is for Stan to contact Morton to request a draft contract for be reviewed by the Board and legal folks. Frank volunteered to write a letter from the SB to the competitors thanking them for their participation.

Board reviewed agenda; postponed the Personnel Policy discussion to the 23<sup>rd</sup>, as it needs to be all in one document. Cathy volunteered to work on it. No other changes to the agenda.

**Minutes:** 1/14/21 were approved with minor typo corrections, Michael moved, Cathy 2nded, all voted in favor. 1/21/21 were also approved with minor typo corrections, Cathy moved, Michael 2nded, all voted in favor. 1/26/21 Michael moved to accept written, Cathy 2nded, all voted in favor. And 2/2/21 Cathy moved to accept as written, Michael 2nded, all voted in favor.

7:00 – Sherry, Kim and Meadow joined the meeting.

**Highway ~**

**Eric** reported lots of plowing, sanding and salting. Orange tandem truck was down due to an antifreeze leak, back on line now. Eric inquired about direct deposit for payroll. Gail reported it would cost in excess of \$600 per year, basically the town would not receive any interest on its general fund checking account due to bank fees for the service being netted against earnings credit (not interest) which would result in the bank charging the town if the fees were more than then earnings credit and keeping the earnings credit if those were in town's favor. She advised against it for just two employees. Board concurred and inquired if the employees could deposit their checks with their cell phones – they will look into that.

**'What If Plan'** – Eric advised he is still working on it. Board asked that it be presented at its February 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting.

**Emerald Ash Borer** – Eric noted he is still working on getting an estimate for ash tree removal. Board discussed recent education piece written by the Conservation Commission and the Tree Warden advising folks about the situation and what to do/not do. No action needed by the Select Board. Board noted receipt and expressed appreciation for their efforts.

Board discussed process to determine/prioritize which trees needed to be removed first – Eric suggested working on them in loops – such as McNamara Road, Gulf Road and Route 140 between those two. More efficient to keep work crews in one place to make one mess at a time. Board asked Eric to compile a list of the loops, prioritize by number of trees, traffic, importance of which to cut first, etc. Eric noted he will ask Tree Warden David Birdsall to assist.

**Road Commissioner Job Description-** Postponed to the 23rd, needs small adjustment to address a transition plan if there is a change in personnel.

**Community Concerns** – *Shirley Bucceri* emailed request regarding snow banks at the end of North End Road where one turns right onto Route 140. Eric noted there is no place to put the snow, that section of the intersection gets plowed after regular plowing is done, and that there is room to safely turn. After discussion, Board asked the road crew to use the loader to move or remove it. There is excess snow on other roads that have been addressed as well.

*Theresa Butts* emailed questions about cleaning roads edges on a Saturday (needed to be done before snow on Sunday), narrow roads (no place for the snow to go, same as they've always been), and the grader was winging snow away from the roads, (trucks can only push the snow so far).

*Cathy*, as a private citizen, expressed appreciation for the road crew getting up early so folks can make it to work; there is more work than two can do, and they are doing the best they can.

Board discussed the need for better communications regarding road conditions and limitations, Frank volunteered to write a posting for Front Porch Forum. Eric also noted that the road crew cannot plan any vacation time or get-aways during the winter as they need to be around in case of a snow storm. Cathy moved that the Select Board write a letter of support and appreciation for the road crew, Frank 2nded. Cathy and Frank voted in favor, Michael voted no.

**Covid19/EMD** - No update from the EMD.

#### **Financial ~**

**Financial Report** – After discussion about revenues and equipment rent, Cathy moved to accept, Michael 2nded, all voted in favor.

**Warrants Reviewed** ~ Payroll Warrants #29 dated 1/18/21 for \$1,915.05, #30 dated 1/25/21 for \$3,598.42, and #31 dated 1/31/21 for \$2,079.98, and #32 dated 2/8/21 for \$3,584.44; and Accounts Payable Warrants #14 dated 1/19/21 for \$113,529.87, and #15 dated 1/31/21 for \$16,085.936 were reviewed. Cathy moved, Michael 2<sup>nd</sup>, to approve, all voted in favor.

#### **Old Business ~**

*Trash at 605 Mountain View* – Board agreed to speak with attorney Jim Carroll on the 23<sup>rd</sup>.

*72 Snow Mountain Lane* – Frank, as Health Officer, advised that Howard and Deb Buffum had again asked the town for assistance with trash in one of their tenant properties. He asked the Board's permission to take a look and report back. Permission granted.

*Personnel Policy Review* – Moved to March 11<sup>th</sup> Board meeting, will ask road crew for input.

*'HWY What If Plan'* – Moved to meeting on the 23<sup>rd</sup>.

#### **New Business ~**

Frank advised that he wanted to revisit the proposal from Meadow Squier at the Board's January 14<sup>th</sup> meeting. He noted he had received remarks from the community that caused him to reconsider. He felt at the time that the Board should speak unanimously, but has changed his mind on that. He was also uncomfortable with reference to the Legislature's Resolution as he did not have it in hand – and having researched it was still uncomfortable with that part.

Michael noted he had also received community comments which were not comfortable with the proposed language, felt that it was a political position that the Town's Personnel Policy discouraged, and suggested voters should have a chance vote on it.

Meadow noted it was not a political statement, it dealt with a specific violent event trying to stop the transfer of power. She proposed it be re-worded to remove the reference to the state legislature; *"We the democratically elected officials of the town of Tinmouth condemn the violent attack of January 6<sup>th</sup> 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."* Cathy moved adopt amended resolution, Frank 2nded, both voted yes, Michael voted no.

Sherry noted that the violence on January 6<sup>th</sup> was a brutal and vicious attack on our democracy.

**Personnel Review** - Board moved it to March 11<sup>th</sup>, as the Personnel Policy calls for an annual review, but it has been difficult in the past, Board needs to think about how to conduct it.

**2019 and 2020 Grand Lists** - After brief discussion, Cathy moved and Michael 2nded to sign and seal the 2019 and 2020 Grand Lists as there are no appeals or suits pending. All voted in favor.

**RRPC – LHMP Contract** – After brief discussion, Cathy moved and Frank 2nded to approve amendment to the contract with Rutland Regional Planning Commission for updating the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan due to time constraints, and to authorize Michael to sign it. All voted in favor.

**Members Concerns** – Cathy expressed concern with the Select Board not receiving its mail. Amy Martone, MRUUSD representative, had sent a letter of resignation that the Select Board did not receive. Gail, as SBA, gets the SB's mail – need to have a discussion about the process.

**Mail/Correspondence** – Gail advised that the Vermont League of Cities and Towns had sent a report called "Community Leadership in Action" for the Board to review either at the town office or online. Other correspondence (Bucceri; Butts; Johnson/Harbaugh) was acted on earlier in the meeting.

**Executive Session** – None

**Next Meetings Schedule** ~ February 23<sup>rd</sup> and March 11<sup>th</sup>

**Meeting adjourned at 8:44 pm.**

Respectfully submitted,

Gail Fallar  
Select Board Assistant