

TALES OF TINMOUTH

February 2022
Vol. 36 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!

Gail Fallar & Pat Psholka

~ Town Meeting 2022 ~

There will be a virtual informational meeting – via Zoom on Saturday, February 26th. We then will elect officers and vote on budgets and public questions by Australian balloting at the Old Fire House on Tuesday, March 1st. You will receive a colored post card with the Zoom link, it will also be in the Town Report.

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 - Kevin Eaton and
Michael Fallar

MRUUSD Board Director – Ingrid Lepley and
Josh Squier

Moderator - Michael Fallar and Holly Ross

Uncontested races ~

Community Center Board Member – Martha
Lister - Rick Fallar Stanley

Auditor- 3 years – Sandy Goyette

Auditor – 1 year – Ann Czar

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. The polls will be open at the Old Fire House on March 1st.

To request an **Absentee Ballot**, you must do so before **5:00 pm on Monday, February 28th. Voted ballots must be returned by 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, March 1st.**

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 26th.**

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 in person at the Mill River Union High School Library on Thursday February 24, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.

Voting for the school budget and other questions will be on Tuesday, March 1st 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.

~ Flood Hazard Regulation Proposed Amendments ~

The Planning Commission is holding a Hearing on **Thursday, February 24th at 7:00** at the town office and virtually, to gather input on proposed amendments to the Town's Flood Hazard Regulations. These include deleting existing exempt activities and adding new ones, as well as tweaking non-conforming uses and variances, all to comply with state and FEMA requirements.

Copies are available at the town office.

Job Opening ~ Part time help needed at the Town Office. Bookkeeper, assistant to the clerk and treasurer, computer literate, Excel savvy, attention to detail a must.

Please contact the town office at 446-2498 or tinmouthtown@vermontel.net for the job description or questions. Flexible schedule ~ 8-12 hours per week.



~ **Town Meeting 2022** ~
From the Select Board

The following Articles are on the warning for Town Meeting. You will receive your full Town Report in mid-February. There will be a virtual information meeting on Saturday February 26 at 1 followed by Australian Ballot voting on Tuesday March 1 at the Old Firehouse from 8 am to 7 pm.

Article 5. *Shall the voters re-designate the purpose of the Special Designated Capital Building and Repair Fund created in 2001, to include the construction of a town garage?*

Article 6. *Shall the voters authorize the transfer of \$18,800 of the unencumbered General Fund FY21 Fund Balance for the town's share of the Potter's Brook Culvert Project?*

Article #5 requests voters to authorize adding "to include construction of a town garage", to the purpose of the Capital Building and Repair Fund. This Reserve Fund was created in 2001 in anticipation of having to re-roof the Community Center in 20 or 30 years. Its purpose was for repair and maintenance of town buildings. The State was beginning to request that Towns build salt sheds, so in 2002 voters added construction of a salt/sand shed to the purpose of the Fund. In preparing documents for the bond application, it was discovered that voters had not added construction of a town garage to the purpose. That's why there is an article asking voters to make that change. Reserve Funds can only be spent for the purposes authorized by voters. Only voters can change the purpose. The Town voted to Bond for the Town Garage and the Salt and Sand shed in 2020, and is planning on a spring construction start with Morton Buildings as our contractor.

The Selectboard also placed an Article on the Town Meeting Warning asking voter approval to transfer \$18,800 of the unencumbered General Fund balance from FY21 to the Highway Fund to cover the Town's share for the Potter's Brook Culvert Replacement project. The remainder of the Funding will come to the Town through a VTRANS structures grant. This measure takes money left over from last year's budget and applies it to the cost of this \$54,800 project planned for this summer so that no additional taxes will need to be collected.

The highway budget is increasing this year from \$548,250 to \$641,000. \$54,800 of this increase is the potentially tax-neutral Potter's Brook Culvert Project (if Article 6 is approved at Town Meeting). \$24,000 of this is the bond for the Town Garage. The remainder is cost of living increases in salaries, extra help, and other increases in individual expense line items.

Your support and cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Should you have any questions about these items or the business of the Town, please call or email a Selectboard member.

Frank Sears 802-325-3594 fsears@gci.net

Cathy Reynolds 802-446-2928
cathyreynolds802@gmail.com

Meadow Squier 302-332-6116
meadowsquier@gmail.com

~ **Annual Town Meeting** ~
By the Equity and Inclusion Committee

This is a brief introduction to Annual Tinmouth Town Meeting for recent residents, and a review for those who have lived here for a bit. A detailed, but dated explanation is available in the Tinmouth Operator's Manual given to each new resident. If you have misplaced your copy it is available on the town's website <https://www.tinmouthvt.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Tinmouth-Operators-Manual.pdf>

Tinmouth's Town Meeting is held on the Saturday before the first Tuesday in March, so this year it will be held on February 26th. Unfortunately, due to the ongoing pandemic, the meeting will be held virtually via Zoom. This meeting will be an informational meeting only, and all voting (budgets, positions, articles) will be held via Australian Ballot (voting via a paper ballot). This means any articles cannot be amended.

In non-pandemic times, the Town budget, and articles are voted on in person at town meeting.

The informational meeting (via Zoom) will provide a platform for citizens to ask questions of town officials.

Sherry Johnson has volunteered to be available via phone(802-446-3307) to help citizens who are having difficulty accessing the meeting. You do not need a computer, or smart phone. You can dial in and hear the discussion.

~ **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 12th from 12:00 to 2:00 p.m.
All dogs must be on leashes. All cats must be in carriers.
Grace Ma-Steenbergen, DVM
Wallingford Town Hall 75 School Street
OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

~ **Candidates' Forum** ~

All candidates in contested races were asked to provide a brief statement regarding their bid for office. Responses are alphabetical.

Mill River Unified Union School District – 3 year term

~ **Ingrid Lepley** ~

For those of you whom I've not had the pleasure of meeting yet, my name is Ingrid Lepley. I am running for a seat on the Mill River Unified Union School Board, and have lived and worked in Tinmouth for about 15 years, where my two young children attend the Tinmouth Mountain School.

You may have seen me volunteering from time to time at various local events and activities. Over the years I have worked at the Tinmouth Plant Sale, where the proceeds help support the further education of Tinmouth's graduates.

Maybe I refilled your coffee at the Tinmouth Game Supper, the primary annual fundraiser for our local firefighters.

Perhaps you saw me behind the counter passing out goodies at Trunk or Treat with other Parents' Club members. Money raised by the Parents' Club goes directly to our students for whatever they may need.

When I ran the Children's Play Group several years ago, maybe I read a story to your child and you.

When I volunteered to participate in the Four Winds Nature Program, I may have taught your child or grandchild about the life cycle of a frog or the journey of a seed.

Perhaps as I walked along the road on Green Up Day, you saw my children and me with gloves on and trash bags in hand.

Currently, I am one of the parents who volunteer their time at Tinmouth School's Winter Sports Program, where I work with students to further develop their skiing skills and confidence. Watching them progress by leaps and bounds is truly rewarding.

The point of all this is that I love Tinmouth! I love watching my own children grow up here, and I love our school. I'm thrilled to see the increase in enrollment of recent years, and want to see the school continue to grow and perform well. My hope is that as your representative on the school board I can be of further service to you and the entire community.

~ **Josh Squier** ~

Hello my name is Josh Squier I am running for the Tinmouth Board Member seat of the Mill River Unified Union School District. My wife and I have run our farm on Northrup Rd since 2010, growing it and our family along the way. Our daughter is in her third year at the Tinmouth Mountain School and our son will start PreK next year.

When I was a child it was instilled in me by my family and teachers to always ask questions and search for answers. It is one of the reasons I enjoy running our farm. There are constant challenges that need to be figured out and overcome or mitigated. Our business demands a diverse skill set from working on machines to using Quickbooks for accounting. The skills and drive that I developed during my education have been key to the success of our business and having an interesting and meaningful life.

As a school board member I will strive to put the students' needs first. Their success is how we should judge our community. In order to meet the students' needs we must provide our teachers with the opportunity and tools to succeed. We must also use data and expert knowledge to drive our decisions while bringing parents and other community members to the table.

As a lifelong learner, experienced business person and father of two I believe I have the skills that will make me an asset on the School Board.

I look forward to hearing more about your thoughts and concerns for the district. Please email me at JLSquierVT@gmail.com.

~ **Select Board ~ 3 year term** ~

~ **Kevin Eaton** ~

Hello Tinmouth folks, my name is Kevin Eaton and I'm running for the Tinmouth select board. I've been a resident my entire life and all of my family is and always has been residents of Tinmouth. I've owned and operated The Auto Salon in town for the past 22 years. I've been on the Fire department for 10 years and am now a captain on the department.

I very much enjoy listening to and working with people even if our ideas aren't the same, I'm a firm believer in keeping a positive attitude to achieve your goals! Over the years I've seen Tinmouth change and I would like to be part of that process going forward! Thank you.

~ **Michael Fallar** ~

Hello to the voters of Tinmouth. It is that time of year again when we begin to think about who should fill the seat of Selectman. Over the last year, I have attended and listened to the current Select Board work through or around the issues or needs of the town. As with most of the municipal meetings that I was present for, questions seem to arise as to the benefit to the town versus personal agendas of the Board members. If elected this March, I will work for the voters of Tinmouth first and foremost.

As a lifelong resident and community member, keeping political ideology out of town governance would be something I will strive to implement and maintain. Fiscal responsibility is something every one can agree is an asset in a board member as well. Being transparent and

giving good explanations of why a decision was made or not is also an ability I can bring to the Board.

Finally, the right of community members to be heard at meetings or concerns brought before the Board is an issue that needs addressing. If elected I will make sure the Board hears your questions and comments. This is your town; we have the ability for a good and fair government.

Thank you, hopefully I have said something that can turn out a vote in my favor.

Questions or concerns? Call me at 446-2780.

Michael Fallar

~ Moderator ~ 1 year term ~

~ Michael Fallar ~

To the voters of Tinmouth. I am running for Moderator again this year. This position needs to be filled every year, and I am again willing to take it on. Hopefully, we as a town will move to Australian ballot in the spring. Australian ballot is better for the voter in every circumstance and is why so many other towns have moved to this system of voting. In either instance, whether it's Australian ballot or the less efficient voting from the floor (a smaller group of people making decisions for the community), I will be honored to be your Moderator, letting voices of all voters who choose to speak a chance.

You have a right to speak and conduct our lawful business as a town.

Thank you for your vote, *Michael Fallar*

~ Holly Ross ~

My name is Holly Ross and I'm running for the position of Moderator.

I am a retired clergy member of the United Church of Christ and as such, I have had decades of experience moderating meetings - large and small - and have a working knowledge of Roberts' Rules of Order. When I was a Presbyterian, I moderated local church meetings as well as committee meetings. Several years ago I was President of the Tinmouth Pond Milfoil Project. I once filled in as Moderator for a special meeting of the town of Tinmouth. I was Moderator of the Southwest Association of the UCC within the Vermont Conference. In every case I strived to keep order while allowing everyone to voice their opinion (alternating positions when possible).

I welcome your vote as we all seek to serve this great town we call home.

Holly S. Ross

Letter to the Editors:

In the interest of equity and inclusion, I support Michael Fallar.

Pat Psholka



~ Library News ~

By Ruth Drachman

Important News: THE LIBRARY IS OPEN!

Happy New Year!!

May 2022 be a healthy year! May it be a reading year! We have many new books for adults and children.

State of Terror, by Louise Penny and Hillary Rodham Clinton, an exciting political thriller, a unique and compelling international thriller.

The Last Bookshop in London, by Madeline Martin, a story of love, friendship, survival, and BOOKS set against World War II in London.

Books about **Mrs. Pollifax**, a series of adventure books by Dorothy Gilman about Mrs. Emily Pollifax, who is a widow with grown married children. She is tired of attending her Garden Club meetings and wants to do something good for her country. So she becomes a CIA agent! There is a series of these delightful books in the library!

Miss Buncl's Book, by D. E. Stevenson, Miss Buncl lives in a small English village. Times are hard and she decides to write a novel for the income. It has a big effect on the village.

Something to Hide by Elizabeth George, The 21st Detective Inspector Thomas Lynley novel in her popular series just published in January, 2022.

~ Community News ~

Get Well Wishes are sent to **Dallas Carabeau, Benjamin Fallar, Tracy Byford**, and those with **Covid**.

Heartfelt Sympathies are sent to family and friends of **Donna Herrick**; to family and friends of **Ruth Easton**; to **Brenda Ryan** and family for the loss of her brother; and to **Keith Lorman** and family for the loss of his father.

~ Nature Notes ~

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

Lothar Schmelzenbach reported a bald eagle soaring above Tinmouth Center on January 5th.

Ronnie Crossman reported 6 or 8 bluebirds, snow buntings, and a snowy owl at the town garage on January 27th.

Hollis Squier called a couple of days later also to report seeing blue birds, on the north end of town!

*Never say a thing is so
Unless you absolutely know.
Just remember every day
To be quite sure of what you say.*

~ Happy Jack Squirrel

February 1, 2022

To the Tinmouth Community,

The month of January brought about many new beginnings. After a one-year hiatus, our Winter Sports Program returned. This program is the highlight of our lengthy winters and a remedy for the pandemic blues we've all experienced in some form or another.



Students have also been climbing the rock wall in the community center as well as snowshoeing.

In the final weeks of January, we assessed children's literacy progress. I am delighted to report that in spite of the seemingly endless quarantining, students are making strides. I attribute this to our teachers who tirelessly work with students based on their individual needs.

January has also brought about a change in district leadership. The Mill River District Board is currently accepting applications for a new superintendent. The Superintendent Hiring Committee truly wants your input and would like to communicate the following:

Mill River Community,

The Mill River Unified Union School District Board of Directors has launched its search for a new Superintendent, and has posted information and opportunities to provide feedback on the District website:

<https://sites.google.com/millriverschools.org/superintendentsearch2022/>

On January 31 and February 21, both at 6:00 pm, the Search Committee will host Community Forums to get input from the community on their future hopes and dreams for the next superintendent and what qualities they think are important for this person to possess. The Board also plans on seeking further stakeholder input after the finalists have been identified.

Community Feedback

For consistency we have been asking all stakeholders the same 3 questions that will help us drive our selection process for a new superintendent.

- **Thinking about your district, what are you most proud of?**
- **What do you believe is the biggest challenge for the district that needs priority attention?**
- **What are 3 characteristics that you believe are important in a superintendent?**

We welcome your feedback in any of the following ways:

- [Feedback Form](#)
- Leave a voicemail: coming soon
- Email: SuperintendentSearch2022@millriverschools.org
- US Postal: Superintendent Search Committee, c/o MRUUSD Central Office, 2321 Middle Road, Suite 1, N. Clarendon, VT 05759
- Community Forums
 - 1/31/22 at 6:00pm (hybrid via Google Meet and Central Office Conference Room)
 - 2/21/22 at 6:00pm (virtual via Google Meet)

Thank you as always for your patience and support!

Maureen Fitzgerald-Riker
Principal
Tinmouth Mountain School



TINMOUTH CHURCH

~ Tinmouth Community Church ~

Dear Friends,

This past month we suspended in-person worship services at the Tinmouth Community Church due to the rise in Covid cases in our area and state. I was among those who contracted the virus, even though I am fully vaccinated. But the vaccinations did their job and kept the virus at bay with relatively mild symptoms. My sister and her youngest son also got sick, very sick, from the coronavirus. It was scary. They were not vaccinated.

Like many families, there have been tensions in my family too, over the issue of vaccinations. And they threatened our heretofore close relationships. Doubling down on our ideological positions was not going to help. Trench warfare hardens hearts and ends up burying both sides. Silence here on the northern front, and patient endurance, obtained, preserved, what no volley of insistent arguing could have - our bond of love.

Truth has its own silent insistence, if not by way of thoughtful consideration, then sometimes by way of painful demonstration. Truth be told, life is not about winning, but about loving.

My sister and I have gotten past the tensions and reconciled our differences. The bond of love, in which we are all united in deepest truth and in spirit, prevailed. What could have been a war with no winners (true of all wars if you ask those who suffered), was defused by the peace-making choice to love and not fight. Such is something of the true nature of worship, which for love's sake, may need to continue online (www.tinmouthchurch.org) for a time.

*Blessings,
Pastor John*

Sunday Services online at www.tinmouthchurch.org
Check website for in-person start date.
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



~ Tinmouth Day ~

The Tinmouth Day Committee is working hard to start planning our event this summer in July. We are looking for help and ideas for the day. We have lots of ideas and want to hear yours too.

How do you feel about a parade, a dunking booth, kids concert, burgers on the grill, a potluck supper followed by an evening concert, games, contests, crafts, a bouncy house, a scavenger hunt, 5 k run/walk, water gun tag, softball, corn hole and horseshoe tournaments with prizes, pie baking contest, pies as prizes...oh so many ideas!

For more information and to share your ideas, reach out to Meadow Squier meadowsquier@gmail.com.

~ 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!

~ 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 18th**. This is required even if you do not have to file or pay state income taxes.

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

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

~ Meeting Highlights ~

(Complete minutes are available at the town office.)

Select Board Meeting ~ 1/13/22

Members present: Meadow Squier and Cathy Reynolds in person, with Frank Sears via Zoom

Others present:

Via Zoom Eric Buffum – Road Commissioner, Sherry Johnson, Kim Harbaugh, and Jenn Montoro

In-person- Stan Wilbur-Public Works Project Manager, Rick Smyrski-Morton Buildings, Hollis Squier, Eric Davenport-Wallingford Rescue, Michael Fallar, and Gail Fallar – Select Board Assistant (SBA)

Board reviewed agenda, moved Wallingford Rescue to the top, added question from the Bond Bank.

Wallingford Rescue Squad ~ Eric Davenport, President, was touching base to thank Tinmouth for its annual contribution of \$3,000 and see if there were any questions. He advised calls have increased in the past couple of years, that Rutland Regional Ambulance Service covers for them if they are busy or can't get a team to go, and that they are looking for staff/volunteers. There are currently no Tinmouth folks volunteering at WRS. Board thanked them for their efforts.

Public Works Facilities Update ~ Stan noted the Board had received the latest proposal for the town garage from Morton Buildings 1/12/22, and asked Rick to present it. Rick apologized for not making the December meeting, advised that the latest total was \$576,434, which does not include any site work. The new proposal includes line items discussed at the November 11th meeting. Timing was discussed, as Tinmouth does not have a signed contract, and Morton is booking projects into early summer at this point. July would be a target date if the Board signed now. Board expressed disappointment as they thought he had assured them the town would be among the first spring projects. They asked about a guaranteed start date, and expressed the need to review the proposed contract – having only received it a day ahead of the meeting. Rick advised that Morton was getting commitments every day, that there was no way to guarantee start or completion without additional cost, and that their part of the construction would only take about a month. Stan advised he had a few questions, but felt the Board could approve it and any changes needed could be done via a work change order – the big thing is to lock it in now. He inquired about a foundation design (Eric Buffum will need for site work), Rick handed it to Stan.

Michael expressed concern with the rush, urged the Board to take the time to review the proposal, as it is a big decision.

Stan advised that the Board has to accept it as Morton presents it. Frank inquired about a guaranteed start date. Rick advised the contract says target date is June 6th. Frank asked Eric B. for his thoughts, Eric advised to press the go button, July 1 would give him more time to get the

site work done. Cathy expressed concern about the details – some need fine tuning – but the project needs to get done this year. Meadow expressed trust and confidence in Morton Buildings. Board voted to sign the contract and authorized Cathy and Meadow to sign for the Select Board, as Frank was remote. Cathy would like the contract to include a statement that Morton Buildings certifies the building meets Vermont's energy code – not in there now, Rick noted it could be added later. Board voted to authorize the Treasurer to pay the \$172,930 down payment from the Capital Building Fund.

There was a discussion about total cost, whether that should include the amount spent over the last several years on engineering, audit, studies, etc., from the regular highway budget. And whether the highway budget should be reimbursed from the Capital Building Fund. No action taken.

Well Quotes ~ Stan advised that none of the well drillers contacted had submitted a quote to drill a well at the town garage, he will check into it and report back at the SB meeting on the 25th.

Highway ~ Eric reported they are working on the roller for the grader, plowing lots of snow, cutting some brush, and has found someone to rebuild the pistons on the grader.

Michael inquired about recently watching the road commissioner plowing a bare paved road. Frank interjected personnel feedback is not appropriate in open meeting, and noted that the road commissioner uses the proper techniques. Frank ruled him out of order upon strong argument from Michael, and threatened to make him leave the meeting.

ARPA Funding ~ Regulations concerning the use of this funding have recently been relaxed. Board needs to think about possibilities/best use – parse it out in small projects or keep it all for the salt/sand shed?

Bond Application Question – The Bond Bank inquired about re-payment schedule, does the town want to pay interest only, for a year or two, or begin making principle payments now? Board requested more information.

FY23 Draft Highway Budget ~ Board discussed various line items, decided to change highway improvement projects to crack sealing (Eric is considering doing it in-house – suggested a couple of towns could purchase equipment necessary and share), extra help line - is \$7,500 enough, roadside mowing – town rent equipment or sub-contract? Excel spreadsheet for budget appears to have a couple of errors, SBA will review for the 25th.

Board reviewed end of year Capital Building Fund and Special Accounts summaries.

Roadside Mowing RFP ~ Board reviewed draft, Frank noted that if the amount is less than \$10,000 it doesn't have to go out to bid. After discussion, Board decided that an announcement at least needed to be made advising

subcontractors about the opportunity. The RFP and map need a bit more editing before it is released via Front Porch Forum and *Tales of Tinmouth*.

New Loader RPF ~ Still being worked on, hope to be ready by the meeting on the 25th. Hollis advised the Board to consider purchasing a used one from the State's Surplus Property Agency – they often get used military equipment, towns get it as a discount – town has purchased a back hoe and loader before that way.

Eric suggested leasing one, Cathy explained the Equipment Fund was created so that the town could buy equipment when it needed it, leasing is the opposite of that and costs more.

Potter's Culvert Arch Culvert Bid ~ Board reviewed and approved revised RFP – due on 1/25/22.

Financial ~

FY23 Draft General Budget ~ Cathy questioned why the new roof over the library section of the town office came out of the general budget and not the Capital Building Fund – Gail advised because the general budget could cover it. Board discussed the unencumbered balance in the general checking account - \$38,146 on June 30, 2021. Should it be left for cash flow purposes, used for a special expenditure, or returned to voters. No action taken. Board will discuss on the 25th.

Board briefly discussed budgeting or not for delinquent taxes, Barry Cohen was unable to attend. Decided to not budget for it. It will just be reported as additional income. Treasurer will try to report current year taxes paid late and prior year taxes paid, as separate lines.

Financial Report FY22– Board reviewed monthly reports, Board voted to accept.

Payroll Warrants

#23 dated 12/13/21 for \$3,111.08

#24 dated 12/20/21 for \$4,383.09

#25 dated 12/27/21 for \$2,171.82

#26 dated 12/31/21 for \$5,722.17

Accounts Payable Warrants

#12 dated 12/16/21 for \$ 13,171.42

#13 dated 12/23/21 for \$ 8,655.90

#14 dated 12/30/21 for \$ 453,452.33

#15 dated 1/6/22 for \$15,168.17

Board voted to accept and approve warrants as presented.

Old Business ~

Mill River Unified Union School District Proposed Amendment of Agreement – No update

New Business ~

2022 Town Meeting ~ Due to the continuing corona viruses, the Vermont Legislature again gave Select Boards options regarding annual town meetings held from the floor. They could hold it in person, move it to a later date, or switch to Australian balloting for this year only. After brief discussion, Board voted to hold a virtual Informational Meeting on Saturday, February 26th this year, with Australian balloting for budgets and public

questions on Tuesday, March 1st. (Officers are already voted using Australian balloting.)

Petitions From Voters ~ The Town Clerk advised the Board that two petitions had been received with proposed articles for Town Meeting. These petitions requested changing the method of voting from voting from the floor for public questions and budgets, to voting those by Australian ballot. The recent legislation enabling the Select Board to switch to Australian ballot for this town meeting only, also states that these questions (switching the method of voting) cannot be voted on by Australian ballot, which means there will need to be a special floor Town Meeting held at a later date.

Warning for Town Meeting ~ Board reviewed draft, still need to finalize budgets numbers, will do at its meeting on the 25th.

Select Board Report for the Town Report ~ Board reviewed draft, edited a bit.

Common Level of Appraisal (CLA) ~ The Vermont Department of Taxes sent notice that Tinmouth's CLA had decreased from 98.25 to 91.38 for 2022. This potentially means that the school tax rate will increase nearly 7% even if the school budget stayed the same. Board voted to appeal this determination.

Members Concerns – Need to consider the unencumbered year-end balance, perhaps using some of it for the Town's share of the culvert replacement project on North End Road.

Select Board Meeting ~ 1/25/22

Members present in person: Cathy Reynolds, Meadow Squier and Frank Sears

Others present:

Via Zoom: Eric Buffum – Road Commissioner, Sherry Johnson, Kim Harbaugh, and David Birdsall -Tree Warden

In-person: Stan Wilbur-Public Works Project Manager, Michael Fallar, and Gail Fallar – Select Board Assistant (SBA)

Board reviewed agenda, added town clerk's request to make an announcement, and Frank's request to discuss a re-consideration of the motion regarding town meeting at the 1/13/22 meeting.

Minutes: Minutes of 1/13/2022 – Cathy presented multiple corrections - the third sentence in the *Public Works Facilities Update* was replaced with '*The new proposal includes line items discussed at the November 11th meeting.*' In the next sentence replaced 'a firm' with '*signed*', added '*early*' before summer and deleted 'it will not be a spring ground breaking.' In the *Highway* section removed 'that no questions are allowed' and 'no one is allowed to question any employees' and inserted '*personnel feedback is not appropriate in open meeting.*' Also inserted '*upon strong argument from Michael*' after 'Frank ruled him out of order,'.

Michael raised objections to the proposed minute changes in the *Highway* section. Frank instructed Michael to cease comment, advised that he is not allowed to speak unless recognized by the Chair, is again out of order and that he would only be allowed to speak in the **Others** section of the agenda.

Board voted to approve the minutes with changes proposed by Cathy.

Public Works Facilities Update ~ Stan advised that only one well driller submitted a proposal, would like to drill the well in March, will come back to hook it up once the building is constructed. As it is a commercial building, the state requires 60' of casing and grouting which increases the cost. Road crew will dig the trench, Parker will run the pipe, install the pump, etc.

Well Quotes ~ Parker Water Wells submitted a proposal for \$9,880. Board voted to accept the proposal from Parker Water Wells. All signed the contract. Stan advised the town already has its state water and waste water permit.

Stan reported he had updated the proposed cost sheet, has talked with Eric about what the town crew can do, is waiting for estimated time. He would like to include charges to the Project for using the Town's equipment and employees. Board questioned why the Town would charge itself, discussion – charges for equipment could be sent to the Equipment Fund, no action taken. Eric will keep log of equipment used and road crew time. Stan advised he will submit the application for a Fire and Safety permit for the town garage, Morton will provide the data. Stan also noted that Morton's contract says they own the building until it is completed, so the Town may not need to purchase Builder's Risk insurance. Cathy asked Stan to email his Excel spreadsheet for project cost. Board thanked Stan many times for his service as the Project Manager. (*Stan is selling his house soon.*)

Highway ~ Eric reported they are working on the same old stuff. Cathy passed along a compliment from her mother Jo, who noted she saw Eric going by all the time and was doing a good job. Thank you.

Potter's Brook Arch Culvert Project- Board opened the only bid sent by mail from Lane. Another vendor has sent an email with information for the Town to purchase the culvert using the State's contract and pricing. After brief discussion, Board voted to reject all bids, and get quotes from vendors using the State contract. Board asked Eric to get this information for the Board's meeting on February 10th.

FY23 Draft Highway Budget ~ Cathy noted that the highway budget was increasing \$104,000. And that there is a general fund year-end balance that could be used to reduce taxes or the Board could ask voters to use some of it for the Town's share of the culvert project. Some towns retain a cash flow balance that is 5 to 10% of the budget. After brief discussion, Board voted to add an Article to

the Town Meeting Warning asking voters to allocate \$18,800 of the unencumbered General Fund year end balance to be used for the town's match of the Potter's Brook Culvert Project. Replacing the culvert is estimated to cost \$54,800, a state grant has been approved to cover \$36,000 of the cost. The other big increase is the \$24,000 bond payment. The FY21 highway fund balance of \$3,274 will be used for highway expenses in the current year – FY22.

The **Highway Paving and Construction Reserve Fund** was discussed. SBA explained the purpose of the fund was to save for a major re-construction project, started a few years ago.

FY23 Draft General Budget ~ Board removed the \$4,000 proposed for cyber security, will think about using ARPA money once an assessment of needs has been made. Cathy again noted the cost of replacing the roof over the library should have come out of the Capital Building Fund. Gail again advised that the general budget was able to cover it, and wanted to save the Capital Fund for a bigger project if needed. Current balance in the

Capital Building Repair/Construction Fund balance on June 30, 2021 was \$544,306.85; of that \$33,769 is for town buildings; \$510,537.85 is for highway buildings.

Frank inquired, on behalf of someone, about why the town supported the **Milfoil Project** when there was no public access. Gail responded that Bob Noble does a study every couple of years that shows how much the tax base is supported by properties on the lake (20% or so), so helping keep those values intact, supports the tax base. Pond folks don't receive much in return, the roads around the lake are private and not maintained by the Town, with the small exception of the south end (a bit of Tinmouth Pond Road). The Town donates \$2,500 per year, lake/pond owners last year donated nearly \$12,000 to continue the work to control milfoil.

Board voted to approve a proposed FY23 Highway Budget of \$640,000 and a FY23 General Budget of \$239,735.

New Loader RFP ~ Board reviewed draft, edited a bit, decided to have bids due on February 22, 2022. Discussed how much the loader is used, current repairs needed, etc. Board voted to approve the RFP as edited.

Road Crew Vacation Schedule – Eric advised he was thinking his time would be near the end of June. Ronnie uses his during the summer when he goes out west to fight forest fires. Eric will check with Glenn Merrill to make sure he will be available to cover vacation times and site work required for the town garage.

Others – Gail advised that Cate Stone has resigned as town office assistant and thanked her for her service.

Frank recognized **Michael**. Cathy advised that he had five minutes to speak. Meadow set a timer.

Michael expressed concern with the Board's treatment of a citizen attending a meeting, trying to ask the road

commissioner a question and being denied the right to ask it. He noted he felt he was being disrespected by the Board, that he cares enough about the town to show up to meetings, that he has a right to ask questions, that the Board does not have to like him or agree with his views – but needs to respect his right to express them, as well as his right to attend meetings and participate. The timer chimed; Michael stopped talking. No Board comment.

Old Business ~

Bond Application Question – SBA reported that the Vermont Bond Bank had advised the cost of delaying principal payments would add about \$10,000 to the total cost. Board voted to begin repayments in year one, no delay.

Reconsideration – Frank asked the Board to reconsider the motion made on January 13, 2022 to hold Town Meeting as a virtual meeting, using Australian balloting for public question and budgets. Board agreed to discuss. Frank expressed concern that the virtual meeting would not be sufficient to explain the Board’s request to authorize spending from the Capital Building Fund for the town garage. The Board needs to explain why they spent money already. Attendance would be less, he suggested waiting until a warmer time to hold an outside meeting. Meadow and Cathy both agreed that voters needed to be informed, spoke about ways to do that, Front Porch Forum, *Tales of Tinnmouth*, a possible letter to all voters, also agreed that Covid was a valid reason to not have an in-person meeting now. After more discussion, including noting that voters had authorized the bond, and had voted to add monies to the Capital Building Fund for a town garage, Board decided to not reconsider the motion.

New Business ~

2022 Town Meeting Warning ~ Board approved and signed warning, contains 7 Articles.

David Birdsall ~ David encouraged Board to watch the recent Emerald Ash Borer webinar he had attended. EAB is still coming.

Petitions From Voters ~ Board formally accepted the two petitions regarding switching town meeting from voting from the floor to using Australian balloting for budgets and public questions. Officers are already elected using Australian balloting. Per State statute, these questions have to be discussed and voted on at a floor meeting, and the Board has to act within 60 days to warn such a meeting. Warning has to be not less than 30 nor more than 40 days from the date the Board acts to set the meeting. Board is looking to hold it outdoors in warmer weather – late April or early May perhaps.

Process for Citizens Concerns ~ Board reviewed draft provided by the SBA (who borrowed it with permission from another town), discussed the need for a way for concerns to be addressed. After discussion, Board decided to try it for a year. There is a form that is filled out, action taken or resolution arrived at, filed and kept at

the town office – public document. If not resolved, then the Select Board can/will address.

Members Concerns – Cathy noted the Legislature is still working on redistricting, had sent a note regarding their latest proposal asking for local input and offering time to testify before the House Gov Ops Committee on February 1st. She asked that the BCA meet to consider. BCA meeting was set for Monday, January 31st at 5:00.

Planning Commission ~ 1/20/22

Members present in-person: Michael Fallar, Judy Gilmore, and Andy Gilmore

Members present via Zoom: Larry Carabeau, Vito Macaluso, Bob Lloyd, Pat Psholka, Rainbow Squier, and Kim Harbaugh

Others present: via Zoom - Steffanie Bourque – Rutland Regional Planning Commission (RRPC); Kyle Medash – Department of Environmental Conservation Flood Plain Manager; and Sherry Johnson

In-person Gail Fallar, Secretary

Kyle addressed the need for the Flood Hazard Regulations to be amended in order for the Town’s application to participate in the National Flood Insurance Plan (NFIP) to be approved. Although there are not too many properties affected by the Flood Hazard maps, in order for those owners to be able to obtain federal flood insurance, the town has to be enrolled in the NFIP. NFIP approval would also increase the amount of emergency aide the town would receive in the event of a major storm event. The state’s share would increase to 12.5 %. FEMA would pay 75% and the town’s share would be 12.5 %. FEMA has concerns with the current regulations in a couple of places. Steffanie prepared amendments to address those concerns, using the state’s model. Members reviewed – exempt activities were deleted and new ones added, non-conforming uses, variances were tweaked. Bob noted Tinnmouth does not have a DRB (Development Review Board), Steffanie will change to the existing Board of Adjustment and Planning Commission. Members had no other concerns with the proposed changes. After brief discussion, members voted to approve and accept the proposed amendments with the edit for the DRB, and move them to a public hearing.

Bob, as Tinnmouth’s representative to the RRPC, reported that at the RRPC’s monthly meeting towns report what they are working on, lots of stuff – including Wallingford which is working on an 85 page Energy Plan.

Next meeting will be February 24th – to accommodate time to prep for hearing for proposed Flood Hazard Regulation Amendments.

Conservation Commission ~ 1/17/22

Minutes not available as Tales goes to print.

Equity and Inclusion Committee ~ 1/18/22

With thanks to Logan Birdsall, Sec.

Meeting was held at the Tinmouth Town Office and virtually through Zoom. **Members present in-person:** Meadow Squier, Todd Dennis, Michael Fallar, Lothar Schmelzenbach - **Members present via Zoom:** Sherry Johnson, Kim Harbaugh, Rainbow Squier, Melody Squier, Emma Weatherhogg, Logan Birdsall

Guest in-person: Gail Fallar

Working Group Reports

Events Working Group Report

Meadow reported on the January 11th Events Working Group meeting:

1. The working group discussed their role will be to support community members who want to put on events, such as helping with plan development, publicity, and connecting them with others who can help and/or attend. Working group will also take on Tinmouth Day.

2. Tinmouth Day date was set for July 9th, with a rain date on July 10th. The group is energetic and full of ideas for the day and how to encourage more community engagement for the event, which will be ironed out and reported as meetings continue.

3. Other potential events suggested by community members include: Easter egg hunts, Fall Festival, Halloween party, Sunday night softball.

4. The working group will write two grants to the Community Fund. One, written by Sherry, will be to provide food, paper products, etc. for any town events. The other, written by Logan, will be specifically requesting funds for Tinmouth Day.

Todd suggested reaching out to the Sheriff's Department to help with traffic control for Tinmouth Day, since events will have children crossing the street throughout the event.

Mutual Aid Working Group

Todd reported on the December 16th Mutual Aid Working Group meeting:

1. Discussed reaching out to people in town who have experience and ideas the working group can help actualize.

2. One project the group hopes to help with is revising and producing an updated town operator's manual and the phone directory.

3. The group has reached out to Michael Fannin, Emergency Management Director, and offered support if he needs extra hands for projects.

Meadow suggested the group work on a list of community members willing to provide emergency resources, such as generators, sump pumps, skill sets, volunteers. Not to replace the similar services the fire department already provides, but as an additional resource.

Meadow pointed out we should be posting announcements of working group meetings with zoom

links on Front Porch Forum and at the Town Office so that anyone in the community who is interested can participate.

Research and Development Working Group

This group has not met yet. Since the actions of this working group have yet to be defined fully, Meadow asked the committee to discuss what we want the group to focus on.

1. Look into current information regarding affordable/worker/community housing.
2. Create a survey that would help the committee identify needs within our community.
3. Understand zoning, particularly around alternative housing.

Other Business

1. Set dates for next working group meetings.

Events Working Group: February 8th, 7 pm via zoom

Mutual Aid Working Group: February 1st, 7 pm via zoom

Research and Development Working Group: February 1st, 7 pm via zoom

2. Concerning grant money being requested by the Events Working Group, the committee is in uncharted territory on how to handle those funds. Meadow will bring the question to the Select Board, and Gail will ask Wallingford how they handle funds within their Rural Development Committee.

3. Emma will share information about free at-home covid tests on Front Porch Forum.

Next E & I Committee Meeting

Next committee meeting date was set for March 15, 2022.



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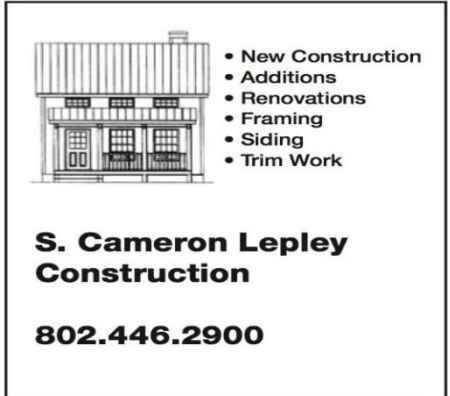
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Massage therapy also available on Sundays in Fair Haven at Goldenberry's Apothecary (across the street from Carl Durfee's): \$85 for 60 minutes and \$125 for 90 minutes. Booking times are the same as listed above. Parking is free.

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~ February 2022 Calendar of Events ~



Groundhog Day	Wednesday	2 nd	Winter is half over, hooray!
Fire Department	Thursday	3 rd	7:00 In-Person/Virtual
Select Board	Thursday	10 th	7:00 In-Person/Virtual
Planning Commission	Thursday	24 th	7:00 In-Person/Virtual
PC Hearing Flood Haz. Reg	Thursday	24 th	7:00 In-Person/Virtual
<i>Tales of Tinmouth</i> Deadline	Sunday	20 th	Don't Miss It!
Select Board	Tuesday	22 nd	7:00 In-Person/Virtual
Town Meeting Informational Meeting	Saturday	26 th	1:00 In-Person/Virtual

The Planning Commission moved its February meeting to the 24th, to allow for a Hearing on proposed amendments to the Zoning Regulation's Flood Hazard Attachment.

~ March 2022 Calendar of Events ~

Town & School Voting	Tuesday	1 st	8:00 am – 7:00	Old Fire House
Fire Department	Thursday	3 rd	7:00	In-Person/Virtual
Select Board	Thursday	10 th	7:00	In-Person /Virtual
Planning Commission	Thursday	17 th	Maybe	In-Person/Virtual
<i>Tales of Tinmouth</i> Deadline	Sunday	20 th		Don't Miss It!

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

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

~ The Library is open Thursdays 2:00-5:00 ~



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