

TOWN OF TUNBRIDGE SELECTBOARD MEETING

Tuesday, March 22, 2022 6:00pm, Town Offices and Via Zoom

Meeting called to order at 6:04pm

Present: Mike McPhetres, Gary Mullen, John O'Brien, Mariah Cilley, Susan Dollenmaier, Lynne Hadley, Amy Frost, Rodney Hoyt, Adam Zemel, Susan, Henry Swayze, George White, Liz York, Fred Pond, Fern's iPad, John Echieverria, Sarah Heminway, Nate Stearns, Bryan, Johnathan Bicknell, Kathi Terami, John Houston, Nan Frost, Cal Heminway, Rosemary Distil, Adam Nichols, Todd Tyson, Billie Smith, Mick Maguire, Patricia Beavers, Mikael's iPhone, Anita's iPad, Tyler's iPhone, SB, Brenda Field, Laura Ginsburg, Ben Gross, Rudi Ruddell, Matt Frost

Road Report- Rodney Hoyt

There are no roads left. Very busy. Mechanically everything is going well. Black River Engineering looked at the Town Garage to add on to the existing building. They determined we would have to make our building up to code. It might be just as easy to build a new garage and use the old one as a cold storage building. Rita from TRORC said we could possibly use ARPA funds to help pay for this. Paving from Strafford Road to the Town Garage would fall under ARPA funds. Pike will give an estimate for the cost. We are looking at a new 10-wheeler (1 year wait time, plus 6-8 months for a body/plow from Freightliner and/or Lucky's). Right now we have 3 hired on 10-wheelers to help with the muddy roads.

They will be working over in Kelsey Mountain and Clay White on Wednesday. Clay White has two really bad spots. Roads are so bad that the trucks can't get the ruts scraped out. They have been using the grader, but there is only one so it takes a while. Bicknell Hill is a total disaster. The crew has taken 60 loads of gravel to Bicknell so far. By tomorrow Hoyt will have driven most of the roads so he will let Brenda Field, EMD know where the fire trucks and ambulance services would not be able to get to in the case of an emergency.

O'Brien states that Tory Paquin, Royalton Town Manager, has extra gravel if we need some. Cilley will touch base with Paquin.

Tunbridge Store Update- John Houston

Trying to figure out what and how to run the store and focusing on making it of and for the community while not competing with North Tunbridge. Plans on utilizing the Deli Counter and making it a stop for beer and eggs on the way home. Houston is working with the Historical Society to help pay homage to history and the store. He plans on sending out a questionnaire to the townpeople to see what they most want in a store.

Todd Tyson- Tells Houston he has plenty of information regarding renewable energy and EV Charging stations etc. if Houston is looking to go a more modern route.

Houston states he will be in and out of the store all week and all are welcome to stop by and say hi.

Legal Trails Update

Nate Stearns- Legal Trail #4 (Falls Hill Trail) follow up. Heminway is proposing to have the Town discontinue the trail and give the town an easement for walking only. This gives Heminway more control over his property. Looking to continue the conversation.

Cal Heminway- Instead of 3/10th of a mile legal trail, he would give access to the whole trail through his property. Tim Angell owns abutting property and there could be a potential of continuing a trail there.

Gary Mullen- The Town needs to look into process of discontinuance and include trail committee to talk with landowners.

John O'Brien- Would the easement be a 99 year or would it go with all those who inherit the property? Heminway assumes it would be long term. The VAST trail would stay.

Todd Tyson- The road used to go all the way through the property. Asks Cilley what we would need to do to discontinue the trail. Cilley reads an excerpt of what Paul Gillies had sent regarding trail discontinuance. Gillies will be invited to the next Selectboard Meeting.

Trails Committee: Cilley reads Johnathan Bicknell's request regarding the charge of the Trails Committee and what it will be moving forward. Tyson asks if the Trails Committee would want to be the decision maker for posting/opening trails? This power is up to the Selectboard to vote on. O'Brien moves to adopt the Trails Committee recommendations and charge. McPhetres seconds. All aye. So moved.

Laura Ginsburg- In January the Planning Commission requested permission for a resource assessment for Orchard Road for a new trail reroute. The resource assessment will help determine if the reroute is feasible etc. (stream crossing, bridges, trail maintenance).

John Echeverria will cover the cost of the assessment. We can use the assessment to apply for funding. This is contracted to a provider and not done by the state.

Does a trail need to be a town right of way or private? Is there a difference on trail maintenance private vs. public?

Todd Tyson- Suggests that the Selectboard or the Planning Commission hire the expert for the resource assessment.

George White- What mechanism would be employed to make sure the trail reroute would be reasonable for use of bikers, hikers, etc.? After assessment is done it would go back to the Trails Committee to decide on reroute acceptance.

Laura Ginsburg- We have a lot of questions on many trails. We will not know if a reroute is feasible until an expert comes to look at it.

Ruddell has a sense of people that do this job. Echeverria has already used prominent companies to do wetland research.

Matt Frost- Would this be a permanent easement? Where does the money for rerouting and updating come from? Is it too expensive? We should take someone else along, potentially George White who is a biker to look at the trail reroute.

John Echeverria- He envisioned a reroute of legal right of way. Get rid of the old one. Three steps for this. 1.) Natural resource constraint assessment. Wetlands etc. Need a tentative route flagged for this. 2.) Send to a trail designer. 3.) Approval process from the Trails Committee and Selectboard.

Todd Tyson- The existing legal trail maintenance would be up to Echeverria, but the new trail would be up to negotiation of the cost and who incurs it.

George White- Potential new legal right of way have any restrictions? Echeverria states that it would be open to pedestrians, bicycles, e-bikes. Motorized vehicles are barred under the Dodge Farm Easement. He doesn't like the idea of horses on this trail. This would be a public easement.

Todd Tyson- There is already a trail established and this does not seem like an even swap.

Laura Ginsburg- The Planning Commission has no opinion on swapping trails. The Planning Commission and Trails Committee hasn't discussed legal/town obligations.

John Echeverria- If the legal trail no longer existed all of Orchard Trail would be under the conservation easement. It would be maintained for pedestrian use but have no legal public right of way. The right of way would be moved to the new trail.

We are waiting on wetlands reports. We have a preliminary report but nothing formal. Encouraged to have it done again in the spring/summer for plants in leaf. The state may have to come do a delineation. Ruddell highly doubts it would be free. There would be permitting involved. It would help establish a firmer boundary, hydrology and soil samples.

Collaborative Energy Group: Emergency Power & Audit of the Town Buildings

Collaborative Energy Group is made up of Lynne Hadley, Brenda Field, Todd Tyson and Henry Swayze. This is a historic area and we will have to discuss if we can do solar. George White has looked at the Town Hall. There will need to be an engineer to discuss the structural integrity of the town hall to hold solar panels. Alex Reisterier who works on historic buildings will come and do an energy audit. Tyson also has a contact for historic structural engineer.

Jim Merriam stated that an emergency backup power supply between the Town Hall and the Town Offices is feasible would be expensive. Steve Strong will be lending his consulting free of charge.

ARPA funds can cover what they are discussing. The Municipal Resilience Energy Act, if passed grants/funds may be available.

Big picture? Back up batteries for emergency. It would go back into the system and then in the batteries. It would be Bimodal. Keep the town garage building in mind for solar when we decide to do it.

Draft Town Meeting Warning

McPhetres motions to approve the draft Town Meeting Warning. O'Brien seconds. All aye. So moved.

Transfer Station Final Discussion

Kathi Terami is our Unofficial Recycling Fairy Godmother.

McPhetres motions to adopt the price list and transfer station policy. O'Brien seconds. All aye. So moved.

Town Forest Committee: Brenda Field

They have been Harvesting on Drew Lot. Can't go back up there now until next winter. Estimate for logs at the garage lot. It is white pine that will be milled at the garage and used for the pavilion. It will be a simple building with a fire pit. Asking for some ARPA funding to finish this project. We will have about \$20,000 from this harvest, but this is the only time that we will log for about 20 years, which only leaves about \$1,000 per year for culverts and any other maintenance the trail/forest requires. This building will be constructed in the summer/fall of 2022.

ECVTD Board Member Appointment

The members being reappointed to the EC Fiber Board are Richard Dybvig and Henry Swayze. McPhetres makes a motion to approve the reappointment. O'Brien seconds. All aye. So moved.

Other Business:

McPhetres makes a motion to forge ahead with the lights at the Town Hall. O'Brien seconds. All aye. So moved.

McPhetres makes a motion to have Mullen sign the Town Meeting contract with the Fair Grounds. O'Brien seconds. All aye. So moved.

Warrants

McPhetres makes a motion to allow Mullen to sign and approve the warrants. O'Brien seconds. So moved. All warrants signed and approved.

Minutes

McPhetres makes a motion to approve the minutes of the December 14th, December 28th, January 11th, January 25th, February 8th and February 22nd. O'Brien seconds. All aye. So moved.

McPhetres motions to adjourn. O'Brien seconds. All aye. Meeting adjourned at 8:44 pm.

Gary Mullen, Chair

Mike McPhetres, Vice Chair

John O'Brien, Clerk