

Town of Fairfield Selectboard Minutes

August 22, 2022

Selectboard in Attendance: Gavin Ryan, Ronald Bocash, Brian Dubie, David Persons

Town Clerk: Linda Hodet

Town Administrator: Cathy Ainsworth

Visitors: Laura Stone and Rob Young (VTrans), Peter Burns, NWATV

1. Laura Stone, VTrans Scoping Engineer, provided an Alternatives Presentation of Paradee Road Bridge over Black Creek and took questions from the Selectboard with Project Engineer Rob Young. This included history, current concerns/conditions, and three alternatives to consider. The estimated timeline is for the project to take place in 2025, with funding for construction 100% paid for through federal funds. VTrans would provide admin. services, including bidding out the project, and construction inspection. Fairfield would pay for 10% of the total engineering costs. The Town share estimate is \$18,000. The recommended alternative is a new, 55-foot span, steel bridge constructed on alignment.

Brian made a motion to approve the recommended alternative and have the Town Administrator sign approval documents on their behalf. David seconded. All in favor.

2. Peter Burns provided an update from the BNML Library. He said at a special meeting of the Library Trustees, on May 10, 2022, the following motion passed: *“It is the intent of the Bent Northrop Memorial Library Board of Trustees that beginning in 2027, following the library mortgage retirement, we will contribute from the endowment an amount equal to the trailing 3 year average of earned income (dividends) minus investment fees, as revenue to the library budget.”* Peter said they estimate, based on previous years’ earnings, this will be close to \$50,000 annually. Brian wondered about portfolio mix. Peter said the financial policies of the library are being updated in alignment with the Town’s policies, and Cathy has been involved with this process. David hoped the Trustees would have come to the Selectboard for them to be involved. Peter requested clarification about what should happen to the budgeted amount of \$2500 for a grant writer through the Town, considering the grant writer vacancy. Where should this surplus be carried over? Selectboard suggested they make the transfer of money to the Town in CY22, then assume a \$0 expense in the CY2023 budget but know the Grant writer is available to the library that year, due to unexpended grant writing in CY22. Peter spoke about upcoming repairs to the library and the Friends- hosted fundraiser for the library. Peter reported that the librarians are excellent.
3. Linda reports a person has expressed interest in mowing Bradley cemetery. Historically the cemetery has been mowed by the property caretakers. Unclear about their financing. Have Winding Roads look at the cemetery to estimate the mowing cost. Town cannot add a cemetery without considering all factors.

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4. Cathy presented the tax rate needed to raise money required to for the voter approved budget and local agreements. At 0.7155, it is a 6.8% increase from CY21, which was 0.67.

Ron made a motion to approve the tax rate of 0.7155. David seconded. All in favor.

5. Discussion of Fairfield's trails/roads. Confirmed Menard/Castle Road Trail and Duffy Hill Road Trail are still on public maps, not thrown up by the Town. No decision yet regarding Duffy Hill Rd trail. Find out what Sheldon is doing.
6. Cathy reported next steps on the Juairé Road. Grants in Aid reporting, Juairé Road bridge construction and FEMA status. She said the North Road, Lapland Road, and Juairé Road VTrans grants are now fully executed.
7. Discussion regarding upcoming North Road. culvert construction. Signs should be put up a week in advance on each end of the zone (Chester A. Arthur rd. and Pumpkin Village rd.) and announced on web, social media, locally and with emergency responders.
8. Cathy reported no grant writer applicants. Asked to be considered as a grant writer for two upcoming grants, to be written outside of her Town Administrator hours, based on successful grant writing during her career. Selectboard prefers to run ads in the Messenger and County Courier, along with vacancies for lister and auditor.
9. Budget discussion: Cathy reported that revenue is down this year, compared to last year but spending is about the same as year-to-date of last year. She confirmed that highway expenses are being applied the same as last year. She provided an update on the paving fund: matures 11/3, YTD interest \$163, Balance \$65,585. Be sure to get bids for line painting of parking lots.
10. Review of Lamoille Valley Rail Trail progress and upcoming Grant opportunity could be considered. Bring information about the grant for discussion at next meeting.
11. Cathy shared takeaways from the 2022 Vermont Community Leadership Summit.
12. Gavin requested we find out where on the list of regional planning priorities the Chester A. Arthur bridge is and get bids for painting the parking lots.

Ron made a motion to accept the 9/11/2022 minutes. David Seconded. All in favor.

Ron made a motion to approve the warrants. Brian seconded. All in favor.

David made a motion to adjourn. Gavin seconded. All in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,
Cathy Ainsworth

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