

Town of Fairfield Selectboard Minutes

May 13, 2024

In Attendance: Gavin Ryan, David Persons, Brian Dubie and Ron Bocash

Roads: Maurice Jettie

Town Clerk: Linda Hodet

Town Administrator: Cathy Ainsworth

Secretary: Melissa Manson

Visitors: Albert Menard, Dawn Menard, Liesl Ulrich Verderber, Lynda Ulrich, Chuck Verderber, Emily Biron, Clement Roger, Tim Putnam, Greta Brunswick and CCVTV.

1. Greta Brunswick reviewed the planned scope of work and contract for NRPC bylaw review. She said NRPC Planner Emily Kloft is leading this project, and Americorps VISTA Community Resilience Specialist Luke Slomba is also assigned to it. Gavin asks where the funding for this is coming from. Cathy says the Selectboard included it in the 2023 budget. Gavin asks whether ARPA funds should be used. Cathy to follow up. Brian asked questions regarding the contract, including: What happens if the contract amount is exceeded; Is the project non-village or ag-district focused; How do we ensure this project does not exceed Fairfield staff and volunteer capacity? Greta says the project will engage community participation but will probably be more agricultural district focused. There was a brief discussion about how previous projects like this were handled by Fairfield staff. Greta said that it is unlikely the contract amount would be exceeded. Brian requests that the Selectboard be included for input on the zoning regs not just reporting. Greta explains that SB are ex-officio members (non-voting) of the Zoning Board and could participate in that capacity, or as community members. Brian requested a mechanism that shows project progress and a brainstorm of ideas for progress updates took place. Lynda Ulrich presented a copy of a petition (attached) that was circulated in town by a group of concerned residents.

Brian made a motion to approve the contract as presented. David seconds. All in favor.

2. Overweight permits signed.
3. Maurice reports that 2/3 of the town roads are scraped and have had chloride applied.
4. There was one bid for the F550 from Rick Egrie, E&S Earth for \$41,500

Brian made a motion to authorize the Town Administrator to execute the paperwork and sale of the 2017 F550 to Rick Egrie, E&S Earthworks for \$41,500. Ron seconded. All in favor.

5. Invoice received from Viking for equipment installation. Cathy suggests this be paid from the Equipment fund.

Ron made a motion to authorize the Town Administrator to transfer \$64,430 from the Equipment fund CD, in the maturity window, to the Operating fund to pay for the Viking Installation of equipment on the New F600. Brian seconded. All in favor.

6. Next meeting date to be Tuesday, May 28.

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7. Next SB meeting will begin at 6:30pm with a Q&A with VTRANS about the closure of Rt. 36 for bridge repair. The bridge is located in the Village by the post office/store. Gavin, and others, are still very concerned about the Chester Arthur Bridge during this closure. In the fall, NRPC conducted a traffic study of the bridge to show baseline traffic. Another will be done during the closure. Pre and post pictures were also planned to ensure documentation. \$19K was awarded from the State to the town to help with expected dust mitigation, traffic control and/or road wear from drivers who decide to take a local bypass instead of staying on the state's detour. The official detour is via 108 and 105 and does not include any TOF roads. There is concern of traffic increase on Ryan Rd/Chester Arthur. Discussion about how to utilize the State money and where to get the rest. Gavin would like signage or lights next to Chester Arthur bridge, because it is one lane. Selectboard wants clear weight signs at the end of roads. District 8 donated two, and dropped them off at the Garage, to use at the end of Ryan and Chester Arthur Roads. SB requests Mo identify if other possible bypass roads do not have weights marked. If what signs/ lighting is needed can be given to Cathy, she may pursue VT Local Rds. Sign package/ Temporary Lighting award program- time sensitive. Anticipate \$20K for gravel (\$10K State, \$10K ARPA) \$19K for chloride (\$10K ARPA, \$9K State).
8. Cathy presents guidelines for contractor work agreements to cover the worker's comp issue. Moe says he can work with it. Cathy says it's contractor and project specific so road crew will need to give project description and dates, then secure Certificates of Insurance prior to projects beginning. Project can be called, for example, Summer Excavation as long as it has cost. May only need to be signed once a year that way.

Brian made a motion to enter Executive Session to discuss a contract issue. Ron seconded. All in favor.

Brian made a motion to exit executive session. Ron seconded. All in favor. Discussion only. No decisions.

9. Linda reports that, with SB approval, the Town Clerk's office is switching to Fidium Fiber for the internet. Much faster speeds at \$90/month. She needs this speed increase to interact with the State programs. Selectboard has no issue with this.
10. Linda reports that delinquent taxes are down to \$39,142.
11. Linda's computer was replaced. It cost \$2082.50.

Ron made a motion to authorize the Town Administrator to transfer \$2082.50 from the CD to the Operating Account for the Purchase and installation of a new computer for the Town Clerk. David seconded. All in favor.

12. Clement Roger, came to discuss AMCARE contract renewal. This will be another 10-year contract. Previous 10-yr. contract had a 2% increase each year. The new contract will be 4%, due to inflation. Discussion about benefits of having local services. Selectboard requests Clement to send Fairfield specific annual statistics, and correct discrepancy that says 5% in the contract but demonstrates the 4% increase in the payments chart.

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Brian made a motion to accept the AMCARE contract for 10 years with a 4% year over year increase. Ron seconded. All in favor. Chair to sign the revised contract.

13. Tim Putnam from “Detoor”, came to discuss a bike ride proposed for East Fairfield as a cooperative fund raiser with the Fairfield Community Center. They would like to close School St., to the end of Mill St. for 2 hours (noon-2pm) on August 10th. Selectboard requests that no part of Mill St. be closed, due to emergency services access.

Ron made a motion to approve the closure of School St. only for the requested time. Brian seconded. All in favor.

Brian made a motion to approve the minutes of 4/22/24. Ron seconded. All in favor.

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

14. David talked to Bernard & Gervais about the septic for the Common School. Provided estimate of \$350, to research land and tell us what would be needed for septic. The design will be use dependent. Selectboard has no issues with moving forward with this.
15. Cathy says two contractors have indicated interest in the old town clerk office windows and doors project. Estimates are due at the next SB meeting.
16. Cathy updated the Community Center roof insurance issue. Our insurance company denied the claim due to poor workmanship. They will contact the contractor’s insurance.

Brian made a motion to approve the Local Emergency Plan. David seconded. All in favor.

17. Cathy said the financial controls document has been updated to include the new file clerk’s duties and better reflect actual functions. Signed by Town Treasurer. Discussion tabled for next meeting.
18. Invoice received from Historical Society. Town is the fiscal agent of their account.

Brian made a motion to authorize the transfer of \$1800.63 from the Historical Society Fund to the Operating Account for their first-quarter expenses. Ron seconded. All in favor.

19. Selectboard discussed the potential purchase of a 2 acre plot, give or take, of land owned by the Village of Swanton since the 1900’s. Originally used for their water supply access. Location is Fairfield Pond. Swanton no longer needs access to pond water and would like to sell the land to Fairfield for \$1.00. Deeds have been reviewed, and the Village and Town have had lengthy conversations. Selectboard feels good about the purchase.

Public Comment: Lynda asks what risk is assumed with this. Selectboard clarifies that the Town gains control of the dam on the property and has no responsibility for the pipe that was originally installed. The Dam controls Pond level, so if another party were to assume ownership it could change the level of the pond. Previously the Village was handling any beaver situations with the dam and now Fairfield will be responsible for this.

No other questions- discussions closed.

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David made a motion that the Selectboard give the Town Administrator the authority to sign all documents necessary to effectuate the purchase of the property from the Village of Swanton, described in the deed as follows: Being all of the same land, premises, water and water rights and privileges described in a certain administrator's deed from F.S. Lapelle, administrator of Patrick Rooney's estate to H.M. Stone, his heirs and assigns, dated January 31, 1903 and recorded in Book 25, Page 433 of the land records of the Town of Fairfield. Including all of the same land premises, water and water rights and privileges described in a certain warranty deed of F.S. Lapelle, attorney for the Rooney heirs, to Henry M. Stone, dated January 31, 1903 and recorded in Book 25, page 472 of the land records of the Town of Fairfield. The purpose of the Quitclaim Deed is to convey whatever rights the Grantor has at the time of this conveyance to a waterline and the lands associated therewith. Reference is further made to the above-mentioned instruments, deeds, and plans, the records thereof and the references therein contained, all in further aid of this description. Brian seconded. All in favor.

David made a motion to enter Executive Session for an employee discussion. Ron seconded. All in favor. On exit, no decisions. Discussion only.

Brian made a motion to adjourn. Ron seconded. All in favor.