TOWN OF CRAFTSBURY
REGULAR SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY, JANUARY 22, 2025
7PM | CRAFTSBURY TOWN HALL

Present: Alison Blaney, Jim Jones, Bruce Urie | Town Clerk Michelle Warren | Maria Amador (Barton Chronicle), Farley Brown, Gina Campoli, James LaRock (Online), Sarah Mutrux, Steve Perkins (Highway Dept), Mark Royan, Craig Taylor

Meeting Agenda

Jim called the meeting to order at 7 PM.

- **Action – Adjustments / Changes to Agenda**

  Add: Town Garage Bridge Discussion

- **Action – Approve Select Board Regular Meeting Minutes of January 6, 2025**

  Alison motioned to approve the meeting minutes of: a) January 8, 2025. Bruce seconded. No further discussion. All ayed. Motion passed; b) January 16 Special Meeting for Budget and Warnings. Bruce seconded. All ayed. Motion passed.

- **Discussion – Baseball Umpire Workman's Comp | Mark Royan**

  Season is upcoming; signups opened. Issue has surfaced regarding need to hire umpire and insurance coverage for workman's comp. Efforts with umpire recruitment show may need to start paying. Little League does not insure those who are paid behind the plate. To prevent Town liability, want to know whether Town insurance (certificate of insurance) covers / indemnifies paid umpires? Discussion: Little League Insurance indemnifies coaches, volunteers. Why is Baseball / Little League under Town umbrella? In Craftsbury, operates under Town auspices. Other towns, e.g, Hardwick, have it under its own nonprofit and tax ID; typically separate. Hardwick is set up as a corporation; Hyde Park is not. Craftsbury Baseball does not pay anyone and has no tax ID. Town Clerk will research and check certificate of insurance. Topic surfaced during discussions about team practices; no mention of workman's comp noticed. Baseball and Booster Club are separate, have own accounts (both operate under Town auspices). Some Towns have a recreation department; typically run these programs, but, for small towns, done by lots of volunteer efforts. Not run/managed by the Craftsbury Recreation Committee.

- **Discussion – Land Use Planning Tools | Farley Brown**

  Shared copies of info related to Regional Planning Act 181 and the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission Community Engagement Plan (under PDF Attachments tab). Craftsbury Planning Commission work on draft Town Plan continues with public meeting planned for sending to Select Board in March. NVDA will have its public hearing; anticipate having official Town Plan by June. Currently have an expired plan. Working on full understanding of 181; how the Act focuses on planning for growth: i.e., the infrastructure required for wastewater, water, etc. Provides a bit more leeway on zoning for municipalities. Planning Commission using community input (public survey and values mapping workshop) in developing draft language for Craftsbury Town Plan 2025; shared

excerpts showing priority action items: maintaining rural character and proposals (items in yellow highlight) Not yet approved. Proposed priority action no. 1: establish ad hoc committee to explore local development oversight options for presentation to the Select Board (reviewing specifically due to Act 181; having local control provides stronger standing in the Act 250 process). As part of efforts to always educate residents, will be exploring land use planning tools (encouraging the Select Board and others to attend) at upcoming event. January 28, 7 pm, at Town Hall: Land Use Tools for Planning the Future. Alison from NVDA will lead, discussing tools available to municipalities to assist with land use planning. Strongly encourage the Select Board to attend. Will be recorded. Tools that Craftsbury already has are listed: current use program, village designation program, etc. Certain state incentives for Town-designated villages (tax benefits to private business owners; financial incentives from state if located within designated village areas, flood plain for allowing for flood insurance, telecommunications). Lots of environmental work will be done through the process. Discussions also about wastewater ad hoc group.

- **Discussion – MERP Policies | Craig Taylor**

  Brief update and two questions. Five-member working group implementing the grant (subcommittee of Craftsbury Energy Committee). Public welcome to attend meetings; schedule on Town website. Funding will be reviewed by Historical Preservation. Will be submitting a preliminary application soon. Usually have a 30-day response but they're trying to respond within 15 days. Two steps: buildings must be ADA compliant (history of Town assessments of building); need an official ADA assessment. Need clear understanding of Town Purchasing Policy (everything must adhere to Town procedures and obtain Select Board approval). Can Select Board appoint the Energy Committee/Working Group Subcommittee the designee for issuing requests for bidding? Getting near time to issue RFPs. Following structural engineer review of roof and building and statement that North wall must be addressed: some can be done with volunteer labor and other will require contract work. Select Board can prepare the RFPs or appoint a designee. Only the Select Board is allowed to open bids. Grant money also funds a project manager: working group has an individual with strong PM background and is interested. Can the working group member be hired as the project manager (is the position one that triggers bidding process: stipend is $8K over two years)? Minimal level of expense required before triggering the bidding process. The Purchasing Policy contains some details. Select Board must review – based on audits, etc., and tweak accordingly. Will compare with neighboring Towns, check with the VLCT also. Timeline for answer? Within two weeks re: project manager. Project Manager would be excused from deciding on any bids involving his/her business - potential conflicts of interest. Town will get back to Committee.

- **Discussion – Green Space Project Update: Craftsbury Trails | Gina Campoli**

  Craftsbury Trails is now an official Town Committee: had three members and now a total of six. Had official meeting at Outdoor Center. Discussed a project for this year. Last year: two trails – almost completed. Some requests for an accessible trail; elderly, wheelchairs, children tricyclists, etc. Engaging with Rural Arts and making it almost ADA accessible (use of existing trails). Rural Arts loves idea and supports (two acres): costs discussed - for upgrade - includes bringing gravel in. Relatively flat – two miles (about $20K for estimate, includes all labor – most of which will be volunteer). Two-phase process: preliminary application (was accepted); deadline end of this month. Have an estimate and now finalizing application. FYI - being submitted under Town of Craftsbury (match of grant: 20% and volunteer labor – removing boards - and the bid for a trail builder to construct).

Have a draft budget and work plan. Archeological review required as part of federal grant; money available in grant. An unprecedented demand and only $450K to distribute; super competitive.

- **Action – Appoint Craftsbury Liaison to the State Ethics Commission | Nominate Alison Blaney**

  Must nominate someone. **Bruce motioned to appoint Alison; Jim seconded. No more discussion. Two ayes; one abstention - Alison. Motion passed.**

- **Action – Sign / Approve State Certificate of Mileage**

  Funds come through state: reviewed miles for Craftsbury Class 2, 3 roads – state highway. Certificate signed annually; payment by State to Town is based on the miles as noted. **Alison motioned to sign the state certificate as submitted; Jim seconded. All ayed. Motion passed.**

- **FEMA Update**

  Nothing new.

- **Clerk Report**

  Town Meeting Planning & Budget – Cheryl and Michelle continue to work on it; copy of warning provided with changes. Have not been double-checked for funds: operating budget to be decided. Deadline for people to submit consent form: Monday – Town Clerk there for half day. Next week: meeting Thursday – January 30. 9:30 am (sign and review Town Clerk items).

- **Road Foreman Report**

  Truck Quote: any official quotes – still awaiting International. Form for contractors? To be added to the list. Add equipment and hourly rates; they want to be sure they're added to list.

- **Weight Permits | Signed**
  - Dead River
  - Carroll Concrete

- **Town Garage Bridge**

  Spencer Howard contacted Alison re: bridge. Another notification to be sent that it's not fully closed. Supposed to close in 2023. Town agreed to close it. Now being checked: skidoos are using and moving signage. It's being used. No recreational use allowed; any vibration dangerous. Must be fully closed. If Town does not close: will be reported to Federal Highway Commission as out of compliance. If remains not closed, district will be notified (can close or destroy at its discretion). Highway Department will install barricade on both sides. Alison will share proof with Mr. Howard.

- **Upcoming Projects to Keep on the Agenda**
  - Unclaimed Parcels
  - Triggers for Opening the Emergency Shelter, Providing Assistance, Activating N2N
  - VT Route 14 - Slow Down Sign Request - Karen Lapoint

- **Other Business & Walk-ins With Business to Come Before the Board**

  None.

- **Public Comment**

  James LaRock asked about the Solid Waste District representative, whether needed. Has background suited for position; if Penelope not available will run.

- **Decide Next Meeting and Adjourn**

  January 30 (next Thursday) at 9:30 am for Town Meeting Report items; February 5 for regular meeting; February 1 for Town Meeting informational meeting. A**lison motioned to adjourn meeting at 8:06 pm; Jim seconded. All ayed. Meeting adjourned.**

Respectfully submitted,



Victoria Hudson
Select Board Clerk