

SANDGATE VERMONT SELECTBOARD MINUTES - JULY 15, 2024

CALL TO ORDER: 6:00 p.m.

ATTENDANCE: Board members: Joe Nolan, John Phelps, Charlie Pike, Linda Schmidt, Karen Tendrup. Also present: Jack Blandford, Jeanne Blandford, Andrew Brehm, Elizabeth Daut, Valerie dePeyster, Shelley Finn, Jim Henderson, Sheila Kearns, Dara Zink, Richard Zoppel. Minute taker: Sandy Reidy.

CITIZEN CONCERNS: Andrew Brehm, who recently bought the former Sheres' property on Woodcock Road, says he is interested in keeping the pond on his land healthy and would like to offer it as a location for a new dry fire hydrant.

DRY FIRE HYDRANTS: Linda Schmidt says she now has contact information for the new Arlington Fire Chief, Brian Hawley, and will call him this week to plan for backflushing and initial inspection of all dry hydrants in Town. That is the first step in working with Troy Dare, of the Rural Fire Protection Task Force, to assess and update hydrants as needed.

HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN: Dara Zink (Bennington County Regional Commission) says she has been working for the past year with members of the Selectboard and Road Crew plus Jim Henderson and others on the draft HMP, which contains 18 actions the Town will take to mitigate various hazards (floods, wildfires, high wind, invasive species, etc.). On or about August 1 the plan will be posted on the BCRC and Town websites for public review lasting one month, after which it will be reviewed by Vermont Emergency Management and FEMA. An approved and adopted plan makes the Town eligible for a higher level of FEMA and state relief in the event of an emergency. Final deadline for the adopted plan is the end of 2024.

Jim Henderson says a new **hazard-mitigation grant** is available and could be used for road improvements. Jim offers to fill out the application, which is due August 16. Jay and Skipper Wilson will be invited to the next Selectboard meeting (August 5) to help choose a project for this grant.

GRAND LIST REVIEW: Sandy Reidy presents the draft Grand List to the Board. She says there might be a few changes coming, and the tax rate will not be set tonight because there are grievance-related concerns to be settled.

ROAD REPORT: Jim says the Road Crew is working on grant-related projects and will soon start work on Rupert Road. Jim has suggested that this year's Grant-in-Aid project be used to extend work on West Road. Valerie dePeyster says the poison parsnip is springing up again and asks for mowing.

TREASURER'S REPORT: The report is presented to the Board. It reflects the final month of the fiscal-year budget.

OTHER BUSINESS: Linda says that on August 12th Advanced Water Works of Sunderland will **test the water at Town Hall**, as part of the Municipal Technical Assistance Program to update Town Hall as an emergency shelter. Sheila Kearns says an **energy assessment of Town Hall and the Town Garage** has been completed. She will work with Callie Fishburn of the BCRC to find upgrades that would pay for themselves in savings to the Town in the short term. Valerie asks about the road noise in Beartown around 3:00 Monday morning. Sandy and Joe Nolan attended the related **accident**, later on Southeast Corners Road. Joe says he was unable to call 911 from the scene. He says the **lack of reliable cell connection, along with the failure of Vermont State Police radios** within Sandgate, are fundamental problems that must be addressed. This issue will be added to the Hazard Mitigation Plan discussed earlier.

SIGN ORDERS.

REVIEW OF JULY 1 MINUTES: The minutes are approved.

ADJOURN: Karen motions to adjourn; Linda seconds; all in favor. Meeting adjourned at 6:45.

THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE ON MONDAY AUGUST 5 AT 6:00 IN SANDGATE TOWN HALL.

Respectfully submitted by Sandra Reidy and Linda Schmidt.

A complete recording is available by request at Sandgate Town Hall.

July 15, 2024