

Select Board - August 12 2021, 8am

Attendance Steve Hall, Michael Jeffery, John Ogden (phone), Chrystal Cleary, Andrea Ogden, Will Goodwin

Call to order 8:02AM

With the resignation of Treasurer Lori Langevin, the SelectBoard appointed Andrea Ogden to serve as Treasurer at the same salary, John Ogden abstained from the vote. Lori's last Office Hours day was Thursday August 5th, but as she expected to come in to finish more work with Andrea another non-open office hours day, her final pay period extended into the next week. L Lori also expressed willingness to continue to serve as Delinquent Tax collector, an elected position, and may continue to do so a long as she remains a resident and voter.

The Board and officers reviewed service so far of Silloway Networks as our IT and Technology provider, and with that satisfaction approves continuity and refilling our retainer with the company.

\$8000 has been received by the Town in American Rescue Plan funding, There are parameters as to what this funding may be spent on, and a reporting system for receipts, unused ARPA money must be returned to the Fed.

John spoke with Jim Henderson of Bennington County Regional Commission about the Zoning violations of the use of 35 Breed Hill, and about the progress and prognosis for broadband extending to Landgrove. Jim told John that with county allocations being released to Towns, more money will become available, and broadband extension is an allowable expense.

Clerk Chrystal presented her proposal to use ARPA funding to digitize (scan and index) the Town's public Land Records and make them accessible via an online portal to searchers. This would allow searchers to search, view and (for a fee) print from the land records without having come into the office to do so. During the shutdown restrictions, records access was limited to appointments and one searcher at a time often necessitating extra hours on other days to accommodate searchers. Since our office is only open 4 hours a week, this greater accessibility would benefit our constituents during another shutdown situation as well as just in general operations.

After speaking to several Clerks and a few vendors, the system this Clerks recommends for our Town's size and budget is to purchase the Land Records software module from NEMRC, and to add it's online portal functionality, which stores scanned records securely in the cloud for access via the portal. This portal process also allows the Town to set the price per page fee for print-able copies and handles the payment and deposit function to the bank account designated by the Town. Cost for those is \$2000 for the portal, and \$695 for the Land Records software module. There would also be a monthly fee of \$100 to maintain storage and access of the system. The Town would retain ownership of the scanned files and data, which is not true of all vendors, and in the event of a need to switch providers, the data could be exported and ported to a new provider.

In addition, a company called RecordsForce has provided a quote for scanning/indexing/data entry of the Land Records at \$300/book. Best Practices recommend digitizing back to 1980 to capture the most-accessed records for your buck. We could work within the budget to scan fewer or more if practical and affordable.

Chrystal is going to gather some further specific info.

Roads- Steve heard from Penelope at the State that Vermont's share of the expenses from the 2019 flooding damage has been released to the Town. Yay!

A proposal for winter sand purchase has been received from Hunter Excavating. In accordance with the Town Purchasing Policy, Steve will source proposals from Merrills and Chaves as well.

Steve and John will walk through the next sites for stone lined ditching etc associated with the State's Clean Water road mitigation directives this week.

SandBox: the surveyor completed a draft of a possible site, the SB reviewed the draft and proposed some adjustments, which Steve will send back to the surveyor for change.

Zoning- Will has spoken to the Bennetts of 35 Breeds Hill about the commercial use of the property in violation of its zoning, and is following up to send a certified letter. John notes that this is not a SelectBoard matter, it is a Zoning Board matter. The ZBA/Planning Commission meets again on August 19th, next Thursday.

Meeting Adjourned at 9:45 AM