

SelectBoard – AUGUST 27 2020 8 am

Attendance: John Ogden (by zoom), Andrea Odgen, Steve Hall, Michael Jeffery, Chrystal Cleary,
Public: Susan Collins (by zoom), Cathy Smith, Denise Schlener, Sally Ogden

Item #1- Sally Ogden, representing the Green Mountain Garden club, asks the SB to approve a plan by the Garden Club to remove the diseased crabapple trees, and to remove abandoned plants from the dripline.

Discussion: The trees were planted in memory of Freddie Harris, so while the SB is in favor of the replacement trees, it asks that the garden club speak with Tom, Claudia and Dick about the work and that the replacement trees also be dedicated to Freddie. The dripline on the front of Town Hall will be just daffodils and the stones.

Outcome: Sal will speak with the Harrises, Steve will follow up.

Item #2- Susan Collins (via zoom) on opening the Town Hall as a study center for the public, where wifi is insufficient at most homes for schooling children or college students.

Discussion: There is some high speed internet being laid in town, being paid for by individual early adopters and not a coordinated effort, the next trick is to find ways for others to join those lines. Susan Lenox is spearheading internet effort on the Town's behalf (via the CUD and through her personal connections) and inquiries should be made to her about connection possibilities. It does cost a LOT though. In Terms of using Town Hall, Michael Jeffery stated that under pandemic conditions he was concerned about the Town taking on liability, monitoring, and protocols for the participants was uncomfortable.

Outcome: The Town Hall will not be opened up for indoor internet use. Outdoor use is still available, and the So Londonderry library is open Weds – Sat 10-5 and staffed, equipped and cleaned for this type of use.

Item # 3- Speed Limits –continuing Nancie Heinemann's previous speed limits discussion from a few meetings ago. Nancie could not appear today, but sent in her place Cathy Smith and Denise Schlener, who own shares of Inn Hoch on Landgrove Road. Cathy recapped Nancie's earlier points about people who are passing through or vacationing driving too fast on Landgrove road, and the increased pedestrian, cyclist, dog walkers, children and horseback riders using Landgrove Road. The usual suggestions were recapped as well: hiring a policeman, cameras, refreshing signage, renting a digital radar speed sign.

Discussion: The speed limit, unless otherwise posted, in Landgrove is 35mph. Last meeting, when Nancie was here, the SB discussed extending the 25 mph limit in the village out to Little Michigan Road, however this is not simply done by an act of the Selectboard and requires coordination with Vtrans and possibly a traffic study. Road Commissioner Steve Hall points out that speed limits are set and adjusted by documenting speeds vehicles tend to travel at on the subject roads, as well as vehicle safety /accidents on those roads, and that the required process may not yield any reduction in speed limits (note the similar process on rte 11 when the Flood Brook School hoped to get speeds reduced or a school zone established- study complete, no reduction). Other debate surrounded the lack of enforce-ability of any speed limits in town, the rural character of Town/Utley Flats Scenic District and effectiveness of putting up more signs around, and the perception of speeding vs actual violation. The encouragement of using the field paths for walking/riding was also raised.

Conclusion: Steve will find out the cost of renting the radar/digital signs for a while. He cited that the signs are effective for about 85% of drivers, who are just not aware, but the other 15% who defy the signs simply don't care.

Item # 4 – Old business, revisited: Brook Road – Casey Rowley had inquired earlier this summer about the Town repairing a wooden bridge on Brook Road, that leads to his camp.

Discussion: This has taken some time and measuring to find out to what degree the Town is responsible for maintaining this road and what sections of it are Class 3 (minimal maintenance) and Class 4 (no maintenance). Possibly a sign closing the road from (date) to (date) may be useful for people trying to go down there. If the bridge does wash out (due to failure of the beaver dam, for example), Mr Rowley can access his camp from the Peru end of the road. Brook Road is also a part of Section 7 of the Catamount Trail (XC ski trail).

Conclusion: Steve is going to measure the distance to the bridge exactly to see if it falls within Class 3 section of the Road.

Item 5: A letter from Greg Eckhardt, dated Aug 2) was received, requesting a donation for \$500 to the Veteran's Memorial behind the old cemetery.

Conclusion: The SB voted to approve this donation.

Item #6: Sand shed- Michael has been in touch with the property owners of the current desired spot, requesting pricing, but the owners are discussing among themselves, so no offer has been worked on.

Item #7: Covid 19 relief funds from the fed CARES Act to the states are available by grant application to Towns for digitizing land records, but the window for application of these funds is very small. The intention of this money is that with pandemic restrictions, digitization (vs the paper index card drawers) makes access easier for title searchers and land owners, and limits touching of books and people in the physical vault. After the primary election was in the books, Chrystal researched the grant, a few of the products available, and what is being used by the surrounding Towns (Peru, Weston, Londonderry, and Manchester too). What she found was that there is no uniformity, and that the products and companies available ranged in quality and function widely, and security is also a concern. In short there is too little time (grants require Towns to have a contract signed with a supplier by Sept 1, and work completed on at least 5 years of land records digitized and indexed by November to qualify) to contract with a supplier of scanning/indexing services that I can feel confident is suitable and affordable for Landgrove by Sept 1st, with all the other work needing attention. Further, Chrystal notes that with NEMRC program for Municipal land/tax management being replaced by State software coming in the next year or two, that it could be prudent to wait and see what that is and what integrations are wise.

Conclusion: Don't rush this decision, but expect it and plan for it in the next year or two. Chrystal will continue to research modernization of the land records in the meantime, and requests that the budget for Records preservation be increased in anticipation of this. Treasurer Andrea reports that the fee for recording increased from \$10/page to \$15/page last July of which \$1/page has gone into the Records Preservation Fund- this could be increased to \$6/page. Which the SB approved.

Steve recognized that the Clerk and treasurer have put in a lot of extra hours this year, accommodating pandemic issues such as appointments for vault access, timely election work around issuing and accepting absentee ballots, proposing a bonus, but that this matter should be discussed by the SB in a future meeting where the Clerk and Treasurer are recused.

Meeting adjourned at 9:42am