

# Minutes- SelectBoard June 11, 2020

Town Hall

Present: Chrystal Cleary, Andrea Ogden, Steve Hall, Michael Jeffery, Mary English, Harry Lux and John Ogden (by phone)

Meeting called to order 8:02 am

- Pay orders were signed
- Mary English brought forth a letter addressed to the Selectboard (attached) asking the SB to proclaim a unifying resolution condemning the murder of George Floyd and racism, and in support of peace and equal justice. Mary said she hoped that this could be a first step toward people taking personal and political action.

Discussion began with Michael Jeffery saying this was typical “thoughts and prayers” and didn’t actually DO anything, and he is not in favor, but would support a Town action such as making a donation in response to a productive charity such as Dismas House in Rutland that helps former prisoners re-enter society. Michael did not feel it was the role of the SelectBoard to approve such a resolution.

John O. responded that this was not outside the role of a SelectBoard, but that it could be rewritten to both express condemnation of systemic racism and encourage action. “We strongly believe that the usual platitudes are not enough. The only meaningful response is political and personal action from our citizens through their voting, donations and changing people’s minds.”

Steve spoke that there is no harm in approving it as written, but neither would it have any meaningful affect. The SB should not sign it if all are not on board, but that a better action may be for Mary to go around to the people directly to sign on as individuals, or to regroup with Mary and come back to craft a new document as a group.

Harry Lux said that he is not of the same mind as the resolution and feels more inflamed by the destruction of history in response to current events. “We cannot judge the people of the past for memorializing what was important to them at the time.” Harry would like to remain in the loop for this discussion and statement-crafting.

Action: John is going to write something and discuss with Mary and the others.

- Taxes: due to coronavirus the IRS extended the Fed tax filing dealing to July 15, therefore the State doesn’t have all the homestead declarations from those filings at this time and won’t have set the Education Tax rate in early July as it usually does. This means we cannot send tax bills out in July, or until that rate is set, so we need to look at possibly changing our tax due date from October 1st to later, and the questions that would bring up in regard to cash flow (payments need to be made to the school district in fall, but the District deadline has not been moved up for that- the Town may not have received taxes due yet to do so), and penalties for late payments should be discussed by the town SB and Tax team.

Action: Michael will invite DTC Kimberly Eckhardt to join the June 25th SB meeting.

- Phone system we have has proven inadequate for conference calls. All agree the sound is bad.  
Action: Michael will research and recommend a conference call speaker/mic system for the Town to purchase.
- Roads: Jay graded the road in the village, and after today's rain settles the surface the speed hump will be installed somewhere in front of the tennis courts, before Nichols Rd.
- Brook Road bridge: property owner Casey Rowley came into the office two weeks ago to ask that the wooden bridge and culvert be repaired. Road Chief Steve researched this and found that Brook Rd is a mostly a class 3 road, which means the Town is responsible for grading, ditching and keeping it passable, which it has not really been doing. The end of Brook Road is Class 4, which mandates less responsibility. There is an impressive beaver dam arcing around the actual bridge, but diverting water flow across the Class 4 end of the road. Steve does not advocate for throwing up this road, but neither to maintain it to the class 3 levels going forward.

Action: Steve is waiting to hear back from Greg Krizan clarifying road class and Town responsibilities.

- Steve has also been working to finish off the very comprehensive FEMA grant process for repairs to town roads from the spring flooding two years ago. The final follow up document was signed and all that remains is a "Closure call" which he is awaiting. FEMA will reimburse the Town for 75% of the cost of repairs, and the remaining 25% is split evenly between the State of Vermont and the Town.
- Michael Jeffery asks if the Town has a "Dilapidated House Ordinance", which it does not. Steve states that this is a matter for the Planning Commission, not the SelectBoard. Some discussion about the Utley Flats Overlay District being excessively burdensome and arbitrary and perhaps its relevance as a planning tool is past.  
Action Item: Michael will ask Zoning Administrator Will Goodwin to find out what other Towns have for such ordinances and if any of those could be suitably adapted for Landgrove. Michael requested of Harry Lux (who is chair of the Planning and Zoning Board) that the subject of dilapidated houses be discussed in a future ZBA meeting.
- Sand Shed Committee- is still deciding what factors to include in comparing the potential sites.
- Clerk Chrystal Cleary yielded time to speak about election changes and Board of Civil Authority activity upcoming, as time is short and there is nothing actionable needed. She will update the Selectboard via email
- Auditors: Liza Dee and Tove Stigum have stepped up into the role, but Anne McClaran maintains her resignation. Liza and Tove are meeting next week. Andrea met with Karen Utiger, head lay auditor for Peru to consult and finds we are not too far off from Peru's practices. Andrea will reach out to the VLCT consultant, and all of this will be featured in the next meetings agenda (June 25th)
- The Board voted to adjourn the meeting at 9:10 am and move to executive session