

Town of New Haven Selectboard Meeting
7:00 pm
Tuesday, April 4, 2023
Town Offices

Selectboard: Chair, John Roleau, Vice Chair, Bruce Many, Mike Audy, Kathy Barrett and Marie Jewett

Selectboard Assistant: Pam Kingman

Visitors: Sheriff, Michael Elmore, Robert Wesley, Dean Gilmore, Beth Ekroos, Eric Smith and Eric Boise

ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA: Harpur Crewe Lot / Road Access Permit / Road Grants / Lee update

VISITORS BUSINESS:

1. **Sheriff Michael Elmore** has been going to each town they have contracts with asking if there is anything different they can do, or make improvements. Elmore has been on with the Sheriffs Dept. for 6 years; he was elected in November 2022 as Addison County Sheriff. John Roleau said they have been easy to work with and appreciates what they do. Bruce Many thanked them for stopping a log truck on River Road last week. The Dept. called the town office for contact information for the road crew. It turns out the log truck had gotten permission to be on the road. John Roleau added the town is looking into solar digital speed signs for certain roads. Kathy Barrett asked if fewer tickets are being written, she has noticed a decline in revenue from the Dept. Sheriff Elmore explained they have had a staff shortage for a while and they are now up to full staff. Also, covid played a part in some of the decline in revenue as well, not wanting to make contact with motorists during the pandemic. Sheriff Elmore said they are not focusing on Route 7, they will be on the back roads patrolling more. He added revenue should continue to climb. The Sheriff was also made aware of construction happening at the intersection of Route 17 (Main St.) East St. and Sawyer Rd. starting this month and will more than likely continue through into the fall. Alternate routes on some of the town roads to avoid that construction will see higher traffic and possible speeding. The Board thanked Sheriff Elmore for coming.

2. **Beth Ekroos** continues to talk with her friends the Madden's in regard to helping the Fire Dept. build a new fire station. Voters approved the purchase of a 5 acre lot on Main Street at Town Meeting (March 7, 2023) for the purpose of building a new fire station. Lynn Madden asked if the town had a professional fund raiser, which we do not. Beth said she had never heard of this but would look into it. Beth added the Madden's want to give back to the town in which her parents, George and Phyllis Marsceill spent many years. The Board thanked Beth for the update.
3. **Dean Gilmore** asked if 2 Selectboard members would be willing to help search for grants with the fire dept. Marie Jewett and Bruce Many volunteered to help. The Town would be applying for grants because the Town owns the property.
4. **Steve Dupoise** continues to work with **VELCO** as a liaison to Selectboard to secure the purchase of the 5-acre lot on Main Street from VELCO. He has forwarded the Purchase and Sale Agreement from VELCO to Town Attorney, Cindy Hill. Cindy did not see any issues with it. VELCO must get permission from the Public Service Board to amend the subdivision. Steve said they are hoping to conduct test pits for septic on Lot 3; if it doesn't perk, it looks like there is room for additional septic on lot 5. Cindy will do a title search on the property and write up a Deed for the Public Service Dept. to sign off on.
5. **Steve Dupoise Depot Update:** Grant writer, Jim Northrup has been doing an amazing job finding grants for the Depot through Senator Sanders office and Vermont Historic Preservation. Jim and Steve recently heard back from them asking for more information, so they are extremely hopeful that we will be awarded the grants. John Roleau suggested to the Board the possibility of retaining Jim Northrup to pursue grants for the Fire Department. The Board agreed, Steve Dupoise will mention this to Jim Northrup.

ADJUSTEMENTS TO AGENDA:

1. **Harpur Crewe Lot:** Surveyor, Don Johnston has written a statement to present to the Selectboard and mail a copy to the Choquette's. Kathy Barrett made a motion to accept Don Johnston's report on the Harpur Crewe Lot, and have it removed from the Choquette's property on the tax map. Motion seconded by Mike Audy. 5 yes / 0 no
2. **Road Access Permit:** Kathy Barrett made a motion to approve Four Hills Gen III Road Access Permit on North Street; with the condition that the Hills are responsible for the undersized culvert they installed, and any repairs to the road if damage occurs to the road due to the undersized culvert. Motion seconded by Bruce Many. 5 yes / 0 no
3. **Certification of Compliance for Town Road and Bridge Standards and Network inventory:** Kathy Barrett made a motion to approve the Certification of

Compliance for Town Road and Bridge Standards and Network inventory. Motion seconded by John Roleau. 5 yes / 0 no

4. **Annual Financial Plan – Town Highways:** Kathy Barrett made a motion to approve the Annual Financial Plan for Town Highways. Motion seconded by John Roleau. 5 yes / 0 no
5. **Lee Update:** Kathy Barrett said the Court has set another Hearing date for June 9, 2023. She added it could be another 6 months before anything happens or we receive payments from Lee.
6. **Bike Loop** – Kathy Barrett removed this from the agenda. After last week’s presentation, Madison Shropshire from ACRPC realized none of the ideas Fuss & O’Neill came up with were supported. They are going back to the drawing board and we will meet on April 12th with Vtrans.

UPDATES ON:

1. Roads:

- The Road Crew will be working in the parking lot next to Memorial Park.
- Road Foreman, Eric Boise has made a pusher to move sand and salt in the shed, he’s done a nice job.
- They are getting the grader ready to use starting next week.
- Road Foreman, Eric Boise said he was surprised at how dry the gravel roads are in town. He added he is working on changing hoses on the grader to prep it for next week.
- Bruce Many added the south end of Pearson Road by the Rattlin’ Bridge will need major repair soon. The ledge is slipping and it has pulled the culvert apart.

2. Town Buildings and Land:

- At the town garage, heavy snow falling from the roof has bent the natural gas lines that lead into the garage. The lines are very close to the ground and need to be relocated up under the eaves of the roof. Bruce asked if it was ok if he contacted Champlain Valley Plumbing & Heating to come and move them. The Board agreed it needs to be moved.

AUTHORIZATIONS:

1. Kathy Barrett made a motion to approve payroll for the week ending 3/29/23, in the amount of \$4,487.01, seconded by Marie Jewett. 5 yes / 0 no
2. Mike Audy made a motion to approve pay orders for the week ending 4/4/23, in the amount of \$5,897.25, seconded by Bruce Many. 5 yes / 0 no
3. Declaration of Inclusion: John Roleau made a motion to accept the Declaration of Inclusion. Motion failed for lack of a second.

4. John Roleau made a motion to approve the minutes from 3/28/23, seconded by Marie Jewett. 4 yes / 1 abstention (Audy)

OTHER BUSINESS:

1. **Discuss Bev Landon's concerns about Article 3 from Town Meeting:** At the last meeting on March 28, 2023, Bev Landon handed out a sheet of concerns she had about Article 3 on the Town Meeting warning. Bev did not want the process of how we vote on them to change and asked the Selectboard to consider, "Warning a Special Meeting to rectify the situation about Article 3." John Roleau said he doesn't care how we vote on them; voters have a right to express their opinion and go against it. Pam Kingman said Article 3 was properly warned in this year's Town Meeting Warning, and discussed and voted on at town meeting, and if Bev had concerns, she should have come to Town Meeting. Pam added the same Article was properly warned in the 2022 Town Meeting for discussion only and was tabled. She also noted it was mentioned in the Selectboard minutes of March 23, 2021 as well as on the front page of the town newsletter in November of 2021. In the newsletter article there was a link to a survey for which we only received one response. Pam has spoken with Town Attorney, Cindy Hill and they agreed Bev's only recourse is to get a petition signed by 5% of the registered voters in order to reconsider or rescind the article; and have it to the town clerk by 4:00 pm Thursday, April 6, 2023. The general consensus of the Board is to leave it as it was voted on at Town Meeting unless a timely petition is received.

2. **Discuss Road Commissioners Appointment:** John Roleau has been approached about Bruce Many being appointed as Road Commissioner. John and Bruce have discussed it and thought it best to have an open discussion about it with the whole Board. John has been the Road Commissioner off and on for several years, he is perfectly fine with Bruce being appointed to the position. However, from the outside it appears to a few that it's not right. Bruce is on the Selectboard, works with the road crew as a seasonal worker, Road Commissioner as well as sub-contractor for jobs in Town. John thought there are two solutions: 1) Bruce is not Road Commissioner or 2) Bruce is Road Commissioner but does not do sub-contract work for the town. Bruce Many said why not just put all projects out to bid, this way there is no impropriety. Bruce has lived and worked in town for many years, and he cares about the town. He added in Bristol, "Peeker" Heffernan is on the Selectboard, sometimes works with the road crew and the town purchases product from Heffernan's. Pam Kingman said in Cornwall, Stu Johnson (now retired) was on the Selectboard, was Road Foreman and Road Commissioner and his wife is the Town Clerk. Things like

this happen in small towns all the time. Road Foreman, Eric Boise said since we've been down a man and have an ad in the paper, we've had no applications. He added the Crew is in a really good place right now, they all work well together, and he and Bruce can bounce ideas off of each other. He added no one has stepped forward offering to help. Kathy Barrett said she made the motion to appoint Bruce because he knows what work needs to get done, and he's already there with the road crew. In the past the town has equally divided the projects between the two subcontractors who do work for the town. Pam Kingman suggested making Eric Boise the Road Commissioner and Bruce as a liaison. Eric Boise said he is tired of complaints from one person. John Roleau asked if the road crew was in a better place than it was 10 years ago, the answer was yes! Mike Audy said it sounds more common than we knew, he suggested to just leave it alone and put jobs out to bid. Kathy Barrett made a motion to put any sub-contracted road work that is expected to cost \$10,000 or more out to bid. Motion seconded by Mike Audy. 5 yes / 0 no

Adjourn: 8:20 pm

Respectfully submitted:

Pam Kingman

Approved on 4-18-23



Chair, John Roleau



Vice Chair, Bruce Many



Mike Audy



Kathy Barrett



Marie Jewett

