

Town of Plainfield Select Board Meeting
May 13, 2024
149 Main St. 2nd floor and Via Zoom
Minutes - Approved

Agenda:

- Changes to Agenda
- Announcements
- Public Comment
- Town Clerk's Report (Bram Towbin)
- Review FY25 Budget for inclusion of previously approved budget items
- Discuss appeals process for FEMA Buyout program
- Review and sign documents for Vermont Emergency Management subgrant under the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program for the Plainfield Infrastructure Bridge Upsizing (Alice Merrill)
- Approve 2024 Local Emergency Management Plan (LEMP)
- Approve receipt of the Community Foundation funds into the existing earmarked Shelter account
- Appoint Lori Stratton as Emergency Management Coordinator
- Approve Vermont Bicycle Shop to host Take a Kid Adventure Biking Day at the Plainfield Park and Ride on May 19, 2024
- Approve Plainfield Area Community Trust (PACT) to set up an information table at the May 16, 2024 Select Board Special Meeting
- Approval of Warrants and Fleet Permits:
 - Accounts Payable - two on April 23, 2024; two on April 29, 2024; and May 2, 2024
 - Payroll - April 24, 2024 and May 1 and 8, 2024
 - Fleet Permits - Black Rock Coal, Inc. and Haskins & Associates Concrete LLC
- Approval of Draft Minutes: April 4 and 11, 2024
- Adjourn

Present: Select Board members Jim Volz (Chair) and Tim Davis. Also present were Emergency Management Director Michael Billingsley, Town Grant Administrator Alice Merrill, Jenni Belotserkovsky, Jim Gerstman, Charles Scott, and Eric Blaisdell of the Times Argus.

Chair Volz called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm. He announced that Select Board member Patti Jamele is unable to attend this meeting. He stated that Town Clerk/Treasurer Bram Towbin is currently hospitalized and will also be unable to attend this meeting.

Changes to Agenda:

Volz stated that agenda item “Discuss appeals process for FEMA Buyout program” would be addressed following “Approve receipt of the Community Foundation funds into the existing earmarked Shelter account”.

Volz recognized Emergency Management Director Michael Billingsley who requested the removal from the agenda of “Appoint Lori Stratton as Emergency Management Coordinator” and the addition of signature of FEMA Buyout Program documents. Volz agreed to this addition.

Announcements:

Volz announced he is moving out of state and will be resigning from the Select Board in a month or two. He encouraged residents to consider serving on the Select Board.

Public Comment:

Volz opened the floor to public comment and recognized Billingsley. Billingsley shared that there had been a severe solar storm the previous weekend which did momentary damage to internet and communications. He noted that Plainfield Emergency Management was in contact with the state regarding the event and had been prepared to open the Emergency Operations Center if needed.

Town Clerk's Report (Bram Towbin):

Volz stated this agenda item would not be discussed at Town Clerk/Treasurer Towbin was not in attendance.

Review FY25 Budget for inclusion of previously approved budget items:

Volz stated this agenda item would not be discussed at Town Clerk/Treasurer Towbin was not in attendance.

Review and sign documents for Vermont Emergency Management subgrant under the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program for the Plainfield Infrastructure Bridge Upsizing (Alice Merrill):

Volz recognized Town Grant Administrator Alice Merrill who informed the Select Board that the documents requiring signature were the Advance Notice to Proceed form and the Standard Sub-recipient Agreement. **Davis moved to approve Jim Volz to sign the documents for the Vermont Emergency Management subgrant under the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program for the Plainfield Infrastructure Bridge Upsizing. Volz added, in particular the Advanced Notice to Proceed form. The motion carried with Volz and Davis voting in favor.** Merrill provided an overview of the content of the documents and instructions for where and how to sign and initial the documents. **Volz moved that he be authorized to sign the State of Vermont**

Standard Sub-recipient Agreement and to select all the items of the attachments that were presented on page 4. The motion carried with Volz and Davis voting in favor.

Approve 2024 Local Emergency Management Plan (LEMP):

Volz recognized Billingsley. Billingsley stated that, before the discussion of the 2024 Local Emergency Management Plan (LEMP), he would first like Volz to sign a document that was previously approved by the Select Board but not signed in all the needed places. Volz signed the documents. Billingsley described the LEMP, stating that it is a document which provides emergency contact information for local officials in the event of a disaster. Volz clarified that the 2024 LEMP is identical to the 2023 LEMP but with updated contact information. **Davis moved to approve the signing of the 2024 Local Emergency Management Plan. The motion carried with Volz and Davis voting in favor.** Davis and Volz each signed two copies of the document which Billingsley will submit.

Approve receipt of the Community Foundation funds into the existing earmarked Shelter account:

Billingsley stated that the Town will likely be receiving approximately \$40,000 from the Vermont Community Foundation, \$20,000 of which is guaranteed. He explained that funding for the generator at the Town Hall Opera House would be covered. He shared that there are other projects for which he has requested further funding from the Vermont Community Foundation, one of which is to pave an accessible parking space at the front of the Town Hall Opera House at an approximate cost of \$5,500. He shared that he has met with the Preservation Trust, who funded the recent renovation of that building, regarding the need to remove one of the low stone walls for the project; he awaits their decision on the issue. He shared that he has also requested funding for the Town Hall Opera House for a defibrillator, installation of a floor under the stage for storage of shelter supplies, and installation of air conditioning for the first floor at a cost of approximately \$10,000. He requested that the Select Board approve receipt of the funds into the Emergency Shelter Reserve account. **Davis moved to approve the receipt of the grant funds and their placement into the Emergency Shelter Reserve Fund. The motion carried with Volz and Davis voting in favor.**

Discuss appeals process for FEMA Buyout Program:

Billingsley shared that the Town has completed the needed documents for the first two properties participating in the FEMA Buyout Program, which took five months. He shared that it will now move to the State and then Federal levels for approval with expected completion in about seven months.

Volz recognized Jenni Belotserkovsky and Jim Gerstman. Gerstman explained that Belotserkovsky had applied for the FEMA Buyout Program awhile back and had emailed the Select Board seeking to understand the process. He stated that he and Belotserkovsky were

seeking clarity about their participation in the program. Davis explained that the applications are being dealt with in the order that they were received by Billingsley. Billingsley expressed his willingness to work with Belotserkovsky and Gerstman, first to complete the qualifying documents. Billingsley stated that the program is ongoing with no deadline. Gerstman asked for clarification about their next steps. Davis clarified that Billingsley will reach out to Belotserkovsky and Gerstman to outline the steps needed to determine participation in the program. Billingsley stated he will reach out to Belotserkovsky by the end of the week. Gerstman asked at what stage of the process the property will be appraised. Billingsley explained that an appraiser would be hired to estimate the pre-flood value of the property and assured Belotserkovsky and Gerstman that they can choose to leave the program at any time in the process. Belotserkovsky stated that the State website gives an application deadline for the program of July 22, 2024. Billingsley explained that he was told there is no deadline.

Billingsley requested that a Select Board member be available at the upcoming May 16, 2024 Select Board Special Meeting to address questions regarding the Articles included on the Town Meeting Warning as petitioned by Towbin, should Towbin be unable to attend that meeting. Davis stated his discomfort with speaking on Towbin's behalf and Volz shared that he would not be able to attend the meeting. Volz stated that informative handouts have been provided by the Vermont League of Cities and Towns regarding the Articles, which propose a change from elected to appointed for the Clerk/Treasurer positions as well as an increase in size of the Select Board from three to five members, and will be available at the meeting. Volz further explained that a Town Charter change was not required for either of these Articles to be approved. Billingsley added that there will be a BBQ provided by PACT and the Community Foundation at 5 PM at the May 16, 2024 meeting at the Town Hall Opera House.

Appoint Lori Stratton as Emergency Management Coordinator:

This item was removed from the agenda under "Changes to Agenda".

Approve Vermont Bicycle Shop to host Take a Kid Adventure Biking Day at the Plainfield Park and Ride on May 19, 2024:

Davis moved to approve Vermont Bicycle Shop to host Take a Kid Adventure Biking Day at the Plainfield Park and Ride on May 19, 2024. The motion carried with Volz and Davis voting in favor.

Approve Plainfield Area Community Trust (PACT) to set up an information table at the May 16, 2024 Select Board Special Meeting:

Davis moved to approve Plainfield Area Community Trust (PACT) to set up an information table at the May 16, 2024 Select Board Special Meeting. The motion carried with Volz and Davis voting in favor.

Approval of Warrants and Fleet Permits:

Accounts Payable - two on April 23, 2024; two on April 29, 2024; and May 2, 2024

Davis moved to approve accounts payable warrants dated two on April 23, 2024; two on April 29, 2024; and May 2, 2024. The motion carried with Volz and Davis voting in favor.

Payroll - April 24, 2024 and May 1 and 8, 2024

Davis moved to approve payroll warrants dated April 24, 2024 and May 1 and 8, 2024. The motion carried with Volz and Davis voting in favor.

Fleet Permits –

Davis moved to approve fleet permits for Black Rock Coal, Inc. and Haskins & Associates Concrete LLC. The motion carried with Volz and Davis voting in favor.

Approval of Draft Minutes – April 4 and 11, 2024:

Davis moved to approve draft minutes dated April 4 and 11, 2024. The motion carried with Volz and Davis voting in favor.

Volz recognized Charles Scott who requested to make a public comment. Scott thanked the Select Board for their discussion on April 22, 2024 of the closure of Goddard College and asked for any updates the Town may have received regarding the sale of the campus. Volz stated that the Select Board has no new information and encouraged Scott to call the Clerk's Office. Scott stated he will reach out to the Clerk's Office.

Adjourn:

Davis moved to adjourn at 6:45 pm. The motion carried unanimously.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Kristin Brosky, Plainfield Town Administrative Assistant.