

Granville Selectboard Meeting Minutes

January 13, 2025

APPROVED

In attendance: Bruce Hyde, Chair, Kenneth Beattie and Michael Eramo, Selectboard; Kelli Eckroth, Robin Hagerman, Roger Stauss, Auditors; Nancy Needham, Town Treasurer; Marilyn Dougherty, Website Administrator and Cheryl L. Sargeant, Town Clerk

Public: Shawn Dougherty; Richard Poole; Kyle Katz and Bryan Kovalick, Two Rivers Ottauquechee Regional Commission (TRORC) and Gunnar Nurme, VT Dept. of Forest Parks & Recreation

Call to Order: 5:32 p.m. (Recorded)

Public Communication:

- Shawn inquired about the Highway Surplus Account 602 and instead of increasing the Proposed Budget for 2025/2026 that the Town use the surplus funds. Bruce indicated that it was his intention to use the \$130,000 plus dollars and not ask the taxpayers for more money.
- Roger and Richard commented on how well maintained the winter roads are and wanted to thank Shane Elwell.

Amend/Approve Agenda:

- Nothing presented.

Financial Reports:

- Orders – Ken moved to pay the Highway and Town Orders as presented and Mike seconded. All in favor.
- Financial Reports – Robin and Kelli will work with Nancy to clean them up going forward with some outside assistance.
- Grants – Discussion regarding how payments were taken out of the current budget and reimbursed once the State agency pays the town which skews the reports. Bruce indicated that the Town is awaiting reimbursement for the Hazardous Tree Grant.
- CD Rollover – Nancy indicated that the 2 CDs are up for renewal and Bar Harbor needs to know what the Town wants done. Ken made the motion to roll them over and Mike seconded. All in favor.
- National Opioid Settlement Funds – Cheryl indicated that the \$257.15 in funds must be spent on opioid programs and that Kelli and Robin were interested in hosting speakers/discussions around the topic at the Town Hall.
- Town Auditors – Kelli indicated that they have completed their audit for fiscal year ending June 30, 2024, and just have to wrap up with the Granville Volunteer Fire Department, Inc. (GVFD) later this week. Items for both the Town Treasurer and GVFD a list of things to be more organized and eliminate handwritten additions. Kelli also indicated that she would seek outside assistance to sit with Nancy to review current processes and make needed suggestions for change. The Selectboard needs to make sure back-up is there when signing for approval to pay each month and if holding something, make that notation. Roger inquired about outside audits and when those are done. Bruce indicated that they are so expensive and done when a treasurer leaves office and thanked the Auditors for their hard work and continued support.

Financial Reports (continued):

- Bruce asked Nancy how the Delinquent Taxes were handled compared to years ago. Nancy indicated that she processes them through NEMRC as it calculates the interest and penalty which was an issue between her and the previous Treasurer being out of balance. She also reminded them that the Tax Sale laws have changed and make it difficult for the Towns to collect their money, but she would look into further.
- Granville Manufacturing Gravel Debt – Cheryl mailed another invoice with interest and ignored the request for reimbursement of bank run gravel from the company as instructed by the Selectboard.
- Budget Development – After a lengthy discussion regarding the Highway Budget it was determined to approve the Proposed Budget for 2025/2026. Ken made the motion to approve the Proposed Budget of \$420,820.00 and Mike seconded. All in favor.

Minutes:

- December 9, 2024 – Ken made the motion to accept the minutes as written and Mike seconded. All in favor.

New Business:

- Town Report – Cheryl will be sending reminders to various Commissions & Boards to submit Annual Reports no later than a drop-dead date of January 23, 2025, so she will have time to pull it all together for the printer. Ken asked if she had a photograph in mind; she does of the sunset over the Municipal Complex.
- Dog Bite Incident – Cheryl indicated a resident was bitten while walking on Post Office Hill Road no injuries, but the pant leg was torn. Cheryl instructed to notify the State.
- Warned Articles – Ken made the motion to accept the Warning as edited and Mike seconded. All in favor.
- Vermont Ethics Liaison – Bruce made the motion to appoint Kelli Eckroth and Mike seconded. All in favor.
- Kyle Katz: TRORC Flood Plain Regulations & Local Hazard Mitigation Plan – The next steps for the LHMP is to be sent to Vermont Emergency Management for review and if no changes the next Selectboard meeting it can be adopted. It is reviewed and updated every 5 years, and it helps with FEMA funding if there is a disaster. Worked with a great group of volunteers and received 9 survey responses. No public hearing is required and then it will be sent to FEMA for approval.
- Flood Plain Regulations a meeting was held in June, mostly just updating with current language, changes are to the base flood level which is now 2 feet above flood stage and mobile homes are considered structures and qualify for damage reimbursement. Bruce inquired about the flood maps and Kyle indicated that the State has taken that over and are in the process of field surveys and should have a better map in a few years. This will require a public hearing and TRORC can assist with that. Kyle to send an e-mail outlining the process.

New Business (continued):

- Bryan Kovalick of TRORC Thriving Communities Questionnaire – it is hoped that the survey will glean interest from the Town for projects to improve transportation and accessibility and TRORC can find grants to fund those projects. The survey will be mailed to all property owners in Town, posted on the website and bulletin boards in Town. Cheryl will provide the mailing list and logo. Ken made the motion to approve the TRORC mailing expense using grant money and Mike seconded. All in favor.
- Municipal Energy Resiliency Program Grant is overseen by Harry Falconer and Bruce indicated that discussion will be at a later date.
- Shared Positions – Bryan will take this program over and will contact the Hancock and Granville Selectboard about the possibility of hiring a Town Manager to serve both towns.
- Gunnar Nurme; VT Dept. of Forest, Parks & Recreation – FPR is interested in purchasing the Jed Richardson “Richardson Parcel” which is a 21.5 acre parcel with a camp and shed and as seeking the Town’s support for the project. Cheryl inquired if it would be possible for the former owner to have the structures rather than demolition; yes, they were in touch, and it would happen prior to closing. Bruce indicated that he had read it further and the Town really has no say and what about adjoining property; yes, that is true, and we have not looked at other property. Mike asked about the beavers and their issues with causing flooding; they have not really looked into. The closing would happen in about a year from now and the adjoining property would be a separate project. Mike made the motion to approve the support from the Town and Ken seconded. All in favor.

Old Business:

- Constable – Nothing to report.
- CDBG Grant – Nothing to report.
- Town Reappraisal – Bruce reports that Rick Favor has begun visits on VT Route 100.
- GVFD – Mike attended a meeting and indicated that a Ford F550 with a small 500 gallon water tank and hose would be a good choice to get into some Class 4 areas. Suggest GVFD reach out to the US Forest Service.
- Buildings & Grounds – Nothing to report.
- Cell Tower – Mike indicated to update maybe this year. Bruce indicated Verizon working on existing tower.
- Website – Marilyn issues uploading video and a reminder that the Domain name is up for renewal.

Roads:

- Road Commissioner/Road Foreman – Nothing to report.
- Highway Mileage Certification – No changes; everyone signed.
- Grading Contract – Shane has signed and will be here when needed, doing a good job. Ken made the motion to sign the contract as written and Mike seconded. All in favor.

Roads (continued):

- Butz Road and North Hollow Road – After a brief discussion Bruce instructed Cheryl to advertise in the newspaper this week and next with a bid opening date of February 10, 2025. Cheryl will use the spread sheet estimate provided by Rita to develop the bid form used by the contractors.

Public Communication:

- Marilyn inquired if the Town could be the Delinquent Tax Collector. Bruce indicated yes, but Nancy has been performing the duties for 35 years and may not want to give that up and she has a working relationship with the taxpayers.
- Marilyn inquired if there was a new Conflict of Interest Law in place. Bruce is not aware of any.

Items for next meeting:

- Town Meeting Preparation
- Bid Openings – Butz Road and North Hollow Road

Ken made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 p.m. And Mike seconded. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted,
Cheryl L. Sargeant
Town Clerk