

Town of *New Salem* Selectboard

Meeting Minutes

April 3, 2023

Held Virtually Via Zoom

Convened: 6:30 pm

Present: Susan Cloutier, Zara Dowling, Selectboard, Kathy Neal, Town Coordinator, MaryEllen Kennedy, Bill Lafley, Lisa Finestone, Marney Ashburne, Nancy Slator, Wayne Hatchey, Kim Noyes, Joe Cuneo, Historical Commission: Randy Gordon, Brian Casey, Polly Johnson, Michael Dupont, Michael Klein.

Selectboard Reviewed & Signed the Following:

- Payroll & Vendor Warrants
- Minutes of 3-20-23

Discussion Items:

Public Forum

Lisa Finestone suggested that the Town give out a yearly Volunteer of the Year award. Sue said that would be a Town Meeting vote.

Appointment of Bill Lafley to Tree Committee

Bill stated he was a long-time nature enthusiast with an interest in birds and trees. Lisa Stated that there was a vacancy on the Tree Committee they were looking to fill.

Vote: Sue made a motion to appoint Bill Lafley to the Tree Committee, Zara second. **Approved.**

Historical Commission

Randy shared some pictures of the Old Academy Building (OAB). Brian described the pictures-damage to joints near front and back doors, three joints are split and there is give to the floor in those areas. The front door area also had pools of water after recent rains, which had never happened before. Historical Commission is concerned about the damage although there is no immediate threat. He stated there is \$15,658 in the fund. Historical Commission wants to limit the foot traffic in the building and recommends that the 1794 MeetingHouse not use the OAB this summer for access to the bathrooms during their concerts.

Michael Dupont stated that repairs need to be in line with MA Historical guidelines as it was a condition of the grant received 10-15 years ago. We need to investigate the process. The water in the front area may be from the handicap ramp. We need to fix the water problem as the floor gets repaired. Sue requested a detailed description of the damage. Brian said we want the Old Academy to also be part of the solution. They will be seeking a solution with them that they will share with the Old Academy. An architect looked at the dampness in the basement which is when they found these other issues. We need to address both the damage and the underlying problem. Brian said there are dedicated funds for the Old Academy building repair. We have to keep up the repairs to be in compliance with the Historical Commission grant. Randy said there was vote in 2020 annual report, p. 131, Article 30.

Lisa: perhaps the 1794 Meetinghouse could use the library bathrooms. We would need a volunteer and ask the library. Kathy will draft a letter to the Meetinghouse regarding the use of the Academy, stating that it may only be for a part of the summer.

Highway Department barn

Wayne had left the meeting. The Board discussed the floor. Wayne had appeared at the Energy Committee to discuss. He was getting a quote for concrete and laying it out. It has not been decided what heating system will be used. There may be one for the open area, kept at a lower temperature, and another, perhaps a mini-split, for the office and bathroom. Funding sources were discussed but not decided.

Action: Have Wayne keep the Selectboard up-to-date on quotes for materials and work. Sue will meet with Wayne to make sure things are on track.

Pouring License for New Salem Cider

Kathy explained she had received the application, the fee and proof of insurance. She put the license in the box, along with a form on the number of seasonal licenses. Bill asked if there was a limit on number of drinks a person could be served and also whether they could serve at events, such as weddings. Kathy explained that the area in the license is defined as to where they can serve. A wedding would be beyond the licensed area and a caterer for the wedding could have their own liquor license. Sue asked if the Board of Health would have to give a permit for the caterer. Bill asked if there was a limit on number of drinks that can be served to the same person. Kathy noted that they are not supposed to serve anyone obviously inebriated and if anyone is stopped for driving under the influence, they are asked where they had their last drink so the license holder has to be careful with number of drinks served to the same person.

Kim had a question on speeding on S. Main St as well parking in the field. She thought it helped that there was additional signage for parking in the field but the amount of traffic and speeding is concerning. She wondered if there could be a limit on the number of large events with the effect on traffic and noise. Sue commented that perhaps we could bring this up to the Planning Board. Kim noted that some people had designed and brought a special event application form to the Planning Board for their approval but they said it was not their Board's purview. Sue said it is a problem that should be looked at with input from the police chief. Lisa said the special events are periodic and a separate issue from the pour license. Sue thought the parking along South Main Street near the access to the field parking should be looked at for all times New Salem Cider is open. Zara said we should look into who has jurisdiction over special events.

Vote: Zara moved to approve the pouring license for New Salem Cider, second by Sue. **All in favor.**

Building Issues

Sue stated many buildings have dampness and water issues. We should reactivate the building and grounds planning group and have some cost estimates on what needs to be done so that they don't go into further disrepair. We need to look at roofs, foundations and water issues. Zara said the new grant we just received may assist. Sue said we also have money voted in last town meeting. Zara wants to look at what we're funded for in the META grant. We need to have a working group to manage the information. Zara suggested we have some of those former committee members come forward.

Any groups that use the town buildings should give input. Zara said we should include in the All Board meeting, a portion dedicated to the town buildings and grounds. Lisa said she has some records from an architect to renovate the Town Hall (possibly 2010). Sue is concerned about saving the town buildings. We also need to talk to boards about the website to make sure everything is up to date. We need to set an agenda for the meeting and suggested May 12 or April 28. It was decided that the All Board meeting would be April 28. It is usually held at town hall but with its issues, Lisa suggested the Library Community room. Kathy will contact Tracie about using the room. Meeting would start at 6:30 with pizza.

Action: Zara will send out what the META grant encompasses and look for documents on fixing up town buildings. We have plans for police station. The drain in back of the Stowell building may be the source of the water issues in the police stations.

Joe Cuneo, Fire Chief

Joe has a quote for the Jaws of Life which is part of his capital request. The quote is \$45,364.00. The FinCom suggested he ask for ARPA funds for funding. It is a one-time items and generally lasts about 15 years.

Kathy reported on where we are on ARPA funds, and gave a recap on what is spent and/or allocated.

She is unsure if we have received all the money from ARPA and will check with the accountant. We also have other projects approved but not spent totaling approximately \$114,000.00. Zara wonders why Joe's request wouldn't go on the town meeting warrant. We have the building fund from last year's town meeting article and we have about \$40,000 left of that money. The new fire truck will also be on the agenda but would have to be funded with a debt exclusion. Joe also asked for a monitored fire alarm system which would cost about \$14,000.00 which Fincom recommended that it come from the building fund.

We should meet with Fincom before the end of the month before the warrant is finalized. A number of things need to be discussed such as the MOU with Wendell, salaries, the way electricity is paid. We should limit the meeting agenda to be able to have a longer discussion with the Fincom.

Action: Joe will send the requests and estimates to Kathy.

Open Space & Recreation Committee

Zara said we need to form the Open Space and Recreation Committee for this grant. We should have someone from tree committee, Planning Board, conservation, and recreation committees. There was some discussion on how Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds would have helped with funding for open space and recreation but the adoption of CPA did not occur when it was brought up previously.

Action items: To form the committee, Zara will ask someone from conservation. Kathy will check with Planning Bd and Lisa will ask someone from the tree committee. Kathy will put on next agenda for appointments.

Set date for Annual Town Meeting

There was discussion on where and when to have the meeting. Town hall has water issues that need to be repaired whether or not it's available. We should get another quote on the cost of those repairs. Kathy will contact a plumber. Kathy stated that Swift River School could also host but the preference was for

the Town Hall. Tentative dates were discussed: June 6 or 13 in the Town Hall. Kathy will check with Cam and Stacy. (I thought the Library mentioned for the Town Meeting).

Selectboard Annual Report

Kathy had distributed a draft of the Selectboard's annual report. There was discussion that it was based on the calendar year and not the fiscal year, with the exception of the financials. Sue and Zara will look at the draft report again.

Kathy's report

We need to appoint someone on the Veteran's advisory committee to replace Wayne Hachey who wants to step down. Kathy will put in New Salem News.

Opioid settlement: the town will receive approximately \$9,200 over the course of years. We should meet with police, health and fire department on how to spend. We will discuss at the May 1 meeting. We will meet in –person as its election day and do a hybrid meeting so townspeople can join remotely. We will resume the start of meetings at 7 pm.

Update on PFAS, 24 contractors have shown interest in the bid. Electrical issues resolved in the Annex.

No applicants on scribe. If we continue having zoom meetings, that the scribe should be technologically astute and the control of the meeting setup. Have May 1 meeting be a hybrid. We would need an OWL. Zara will look into it. Library has some technology. Kathy will ask Lisa or Tracie on what they have.

Kathy reported the Stowell building generator is working though failed in the last outage. A new part is being ordered. Kathy to talk to chief about the drainage and hiring someone to get a camera down in the drainage pipe.

Minutes: Sue had revised. MOU on hold but most important is the home rule petition. There was discussion on Joe's pay and benefits but Fincom said one town would have to take the lead as benefits in each town can differ. The other town would reimburse. Kathy should talk to Glenn about benefits.

Zara made some changes. Kathy will send minutes of executive session to Planning Bd.

Vote: Sue made a motion to approve minutes as amended. Zara second. All in favor.

Adjourn

Zara made a motion to adjourn at 8:38 pm. Sue second. Vote: All in favor.