

Selectmen's Meeting Minutes July 26, 2021

7:00 PM Meeting called to order by Selectboard Chairman, John Esposito. Also in attendance was Selectman Howard Brown and minute taker, Laurie Brown. Selectman Tim Berry was absent. Esposito led the meeting in the pledge of allegiance.

Residents Joseph Beachy and Ryan Bailey came before the Board to see if they could get the Board to change the status of Blood Road Extension. The road is 390' long and gets high volumes of traffic at certain times of the day. People use it as a shortcut, and also use it to try and circumvent the traffic that builds up at the stop sign on Frankestown Turnpike. They would like the Town to close this portion of the road and barricade it. Alternatively, they would like the speed limit reduced to 10 mph.

Esposito said that there have been no accidents reported, or previous complaints.

Bailey said it is an accident ready to happen. As to complaints, there used to be a 98-year-old woman who didn't drive and a recluse with driveways on this road; it isn't surprising that there were no complaints.

Esposito said that the Board could lower the speed limit, but to close the road it would need to be done with a petition warrant article at the next Town Meeting. He asked them if they had spoken with Chief Furlong.

Beachy said that he did speak with an officer that came out to verify a VIN number who said that there is a good case for 30 mph being unreasonable. We have all kinds of pedestrian traffic too.

Resident Mike Fimbel said that he has seen some towns that post "No Through Traffic between the hours of XX and XX".

H. Brown said that he would like to see the speed limit lowered. He also suggested taking note of the times most people are abusing the speed limit and asking the PD to take a look.

Esposito said that the Board will discuss this and get back to you.

Residents Kirk and Linda Pomeroy came before the Board to ask that the drainage on Beech Hill Road at their driveway be corrected so that their drive doesn't keep washing out. K. Pomeroy said that the drain cover is inadequate, and L. Pomeroy said that the water decimates their driveway and then goes down and washes out the Fimbel's driveway. She said that Crosby said, last year, that it needs paving and a new drain cover. K. Pomeroy said that they are looking for a timeframe when this will be fixed.

Esposito said that Crosby has it on his agenda for the pavers next week. He knows what needs to be done, and I will reconfirm with him tomorrow.

L. Pomeroy said that the work was supposed to be done last fall.

Esposito said that the paving company had to get to another scheduled job last year and pulled out of Town.

Cindy Raspiller, Library Trustee, came before the Board to update them on the library project. She said that the Trustees have voted to cap the project at \$4.6 Million. We realize that this will require economies. We believe that there is enough in the cost in terms of contingencies, and that some of the items, like landscaping can be done after the project is complete. The fundraising will also continue throughout the project. They want the Town's contribution to be no more than 20% of the project, or \$800K, which will be in 2022 or 2023. If we can make that dollar amount smaller, we will do so. We will continue fundraising to minimize the Town's contribution.

Raspiller, also on the Mont Vernon Library Charitable Foundation, told the Board that they have hired a new fundraiser out of Peterborough who seems to know about small town fundraising. They will soon be in a new public phase of fundraising. The Foundation Board has committed to raise \$2.5 Million. Spencer Lovette is working on the National Endowment for Humanities Infrastructure grant that could bring up to \$750K. The formal due date is in September, but there is a soft due date in August where they will take a look at our application and tell us where we need to improve it. They are expecting the pool of applicants to be slim because of the pandemic. These Federal dollars would be great to get. We would like a letter of support for the project from the Board.

Jane King said that she could get some examples for the Board to review.

H. Brown said that, even once they start work on the new library, the fundraising will continue.

Raspiller said that contractors may not want to contribute money, but may give us a break on their work.

Esposito asked Raspiller if she expects the Town's portion to be \$800K plus the road and was told "yes".

He asked what size the building is and was told 7000' if you don't include the porch. He then asked how much the fundraiser is costing and was told \$2500/month for 3 months – they will reevaluate at the end of September.

Esposito asked about the grant writing.

Raspiller said that the entire board has divvied up the job and Amy White is collecting all the sections and making it a cohesive document.

Esposito asked when the grant money will have to be spent, if you get it.

Raspiller said it needs to be spent 6 months before and 4 years after the award date. Our permits expire in 2025.

H. Brown nominated Anna Szok as an alternate to the Heritage Commission. Esposito seconded the nomination. All in favor.

H. Brown motioned, seconded by Esposito to nominate Jack Esposito as the Selectmen's rep to the Police Chief Search Committee. All in favor.

8:05 PM H. Brown motioned, seconded by Esposito to go into non-public session to discuss a personnel matter.

All in favor.

8:20 PM H. Brown motioned, seconded by Esposito to come out of non-public session. All in favor.

H. Brown motioned, seconded by Esposito to offer DPW Director, Ben Crosby more money to stay with the Town. All in favor.

L. Brown brought up the calls from Grand Hill resident Jeff Johnson wanting the Town to fix the road. Board committed to fix Grand Hill in 2022.

Esposito said that he sent an email to the Planning Board asking them to make the recommendation that the Selectmen approve Riley and Crosby Roads so that we can alert the bus company to add them to their routes for the new school year.

Board discussed the request for Blood Road Extension and decided to lower the speed limit to 15mph. Office to send an email to the PD to let them know, and find out if they have a reason not to do so.

8:45 PM As there was no further business before the Board, H. Brown motioned, seconded by Esposito to adjourn. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Laurie Brown