

MONKTON SELECTBOARD MEETING
Monday, November 23, 2020 7:00PM
Remote meeting via ZOOM
(Approved 12/14/20)

S. Pilcher called the meeting to order at 7:02pm.

Members Present: Stephen Pilcher, Bill Martin, Paul Low, John McNerney, Marikate Kelley (arrived late)

Members Absent: none

Others Present: Betsy Brown (Recording Secretary), Kathleen Bushey, Nate Palmer, Jane Palmer, Jaime Schulte

ANNOUNCEMENTS

S. Pilcher announced that the Dog Park is complete. Access is currently limited to 2 people from different residences at a time in the dog park due to COVID.

REGULAR BUSINESS:

APPROVE MINUTES

P. Low made a motion to approve the minutes of 11/9/2020. B. Martin seconded. All voted in favor, motion passed 4-0-0. (M. Kelley not present)

M. Kelley arrived.

J. McNerney moved to approve the minutes of the special hearing on 11/16/2020 as amended. B. Martin seconded. Motion passed by a vote of 4-0-1. P. Low abstained.

REVIEW AND APPROVE CHECK WARRANTS

The first check warrant to review was A/P #01110 in the amount of \$193,226.04. S. Pilcher noted that the bulk of the money is paying Parker Excavation for the culvert. Now the Town can go out and get the grant money from the State for reimbursement. **J. McNerney moved to approve check warrant #01110 in the amount of \$193,226.04. B. Martin seconded.** Discussion ensued. B. Martin asked about the bill for Short Surveying and whether this is the total amount due or will there be more. J. McNerney noted that there were 2 installments, a down payment and a balance due upon completion. He is not sure which this is. P. Low stated that he thinks this is the 2nd installment. **All voted in favor 5-0-0.**

M. Kelley made a motion to approve check warrant A/P #01122 in the amount of \$27,563.74 B. Martin seconded. All voted in favor. Motion passed by a vote of 5-0-0.

A/P #01123 was introduced. The bulk of this is for the new town hall construction costs per S. Pilcher. **J. McNerney moved to approve check warrant A/P #01124 in the amount of \$257,040.18. P. Low seconded. All voted in favor.**

Motion passed by a vote of 5-0-0.

B. Martin moved to approve check warrant P/R #01123 in the amount of \$8,841.35. M. Kelley seconded. All voted in favor. Motion passed 5-0-0.

REVIEW AND APPROVE OVERWEIGHT PERMITS, ETC.

none

PUBLIC COMMENT

K. Bushey brought up 2 issues with wetlands near her home - safety and conservation.. She asked if the Selectboard has authority over wetlands that are dangerous to people. S. Pilcher noted that he wasn't sure....it is usually deferred to the State DEC. P. Low noted that in his experience it has always been the State that stands up and dictates resolutions to these types of situations. K. Bushey stated that the State is involved but there has been no resolution yet. She is worried about a bad storm coming through and causing damage if the beaver dam lets go. She is also interested in the possibility of putting this wetland into conservation. S. Pilcher suggested talking to the ANAC committee re: conservation. S. Pilcher noted he can speak with the Town Attorney and/or VLCT to find out what, if anything the Town can do.

J. Palmer came to follow up on an email she wrote regarding parking on Rotax Road at the Raven Ridge Natural Area. People are parking along the road when the parking lot is full and the Palmer's feel it is a safety hazard. J. Palmer suggested no parking signs between the small parking lot and the curve (to the east). She is afraid that someone is going to get hurt. P. Low feels that there should be no parking on the road but doesn't feel it's a huge safety issue. S. Pilcher proposes that the Board look up the agreement w/Nature Conservancy. He also stated that he will talk to them about the possibility of restricting the # of people from going up on the land during COVID times. The Board can also ask the road foreman to put some no parking signs, but they won't be enforceable because they would have to change the stop sign ordinance. S. Pilcher said he will reach out to the Nature Conservancy. J. McNerney also suggested that S. Pilcher ask the Nature Conservancy to request that the mention of the area on various hiking websites (AllTrails, etc) be pulled down.

NEW BUSINESS:

ROAD CREW INTERVIEW

This should happen in the next 2 weeks. P. Low asked why the applicants need to interview with the Selectboard. S. Pilcher noted that among other things because the person is becoming a town employee and needs to go over personnel policies, etc. B. Martin noted that the last few hires the background and reference checks have been done by a Selectboard member.

NORTH POND ROAD RECLASSIFICATION

M. Kelley feels that the process is go into executive session for a deliberative session and then the vote is made when you come back out of executive session. S. Pilcher and M. Kelley looked up statutes to see what the process should be. It was decided to deliberate in the open. J. McNerney noted that since there is a cost to getting the engineering design, rather than paying for both, we should pursue an estimate or quote for the less expensive option. Once we have that, we can decide whether pursuing a design for a bridge which meets class 3 standards is appropriate. B. Martin asked about the Town continuing to honor the decision to continue to plow to Ken Wheeling's as long as he occupies the house. M. Kelley noted her only concern is setting a precedent and wants to create a standard to be consistent. P. Low does not feel this is a reasonable road to concern ourselves with. J. McNerney noted that if they decide to reclassify it, he can see honoring the commitments made to the current property owner, but he doesn't feel it needs to be done in perpetuity. He noted that because it is to the towns advantage to reclassify, he could see continuing to do some of the maintenance. M. Kelley agreed...this road is unique due to the bridge issue and the prior agreement. P. Low would like to see the documentation for this agreement. S. Pilcher stated that he feels that the town jumped the gun considering the reclassification prior to having data on the bridge designs. and that we really need to go back to ANR and discuss options for the bridge design. J. McNerney stated that he agrees. P. Low stated that he also agrees. **J. McNerney moved to reject the reclassification at this time. P. Low seconded. All voted to reject the reclassification.** Motion not to reclassify passed 5-0-0.

REVIEW UNIFIED PLANNING DOCUMENT AND SCHEDULE HEARING

P. Low noted that he would like to see a clear and concise summary/introductory page of the changes so that lay people can easily understand them. The Board will discuss this at the next scheduled meeting and then schedule a hearing.

BUDGET REVIEW

S. Pilcher noted that there will be a lot more information at the next meeting. \$4 million in property tax has been brought in. Delinquent taxes have not shot way up this year. Agency requests have started to come in. P. Low asked that based on COVID and looking at our own community's needs, he proposes that we review the Bristol Rec Committee's request because the Monkton Rec Committee was not able to make their budget this year due to COVID. S. Pilcher noted that the Board will go through all the requests at the next meeting.

NEW TOWN OFFICES AND LIBRARY STATUS

S. Pilcher noted that they are close to being "dried in". He noted that the Monkton Museum & Historical Society is interested in purchasing the old Town Hall if they can afford it.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DIRECTOR STATUS RE: COVID-19
Numbers are up, especially in Washington County per S. Pilcher.

OLD BUSINESS:

OLD STAGE ROAD

J. McNerney noted that the Board needs to decide what, if anything the Town is going to do there. Horse signs have been put up. Should “narrow road” signage be put up? Should the speed limit be changed? An engineering study would have to be done to change the speed limit legally, or signs could be put up and the first 5 years it would be unenforceable. J. McNerney stated that he doesn’t feel that changing the speed limit will fix the problem. J. McNerney feels that some cautionary signs should be put up - “narrow road” or “single lane bridge” should be put up at the very least. **B. Martin moved that the town authorize John McNerney to work with Ben Hollwedel on language for cautionary signs for Old Stage Road and proceed with installing them at a cost not to exceed \$750. P. Low seconded. All voted in favor.**

INFRINGEMENT OF ROW ON JOCKEY LANE

J. McNerney will ask for a mylar in order to have something to file in the town records.

SALVAGE YARDS IN MONKTON

No action taken

TH 36 ROAD RECLASSIFICATION

No action taken

TOWN CREDIT CARD AND POLICY

No action taken

CLOUD STORAGE AND POLICY

No action taken

OTHER BUSINESS:

M. Kelley wants to give a shout out to Mark Boltz-Robinson for his participation in a piece on VPR about shade trees and the new Tree Warden statutes.

DETERMINE TIME/DATE OF NEXT MEETING

December 14, 2020 at 7:00pm.

**J. McNerney moved to adjourn. M. Kelley seconded. All voted in favor.
Meeting adjourned at 9:10pm.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Betsy Brown
Clerk