

MONKTON SELECTBOARD MEETING  
MINUTES

Tuesday, June 13, 2023  
(Approved 6/27/23)

The meeting was called to order by Stephen Pilcher at 7:00 pm.

Members in attendance: Stephen Pilcher (chair), John McNerney, Paul Low, Walter Crandall, Marikate Kelley

Members absent: none

Others in attendance: Jessica Demeritt (recording secretary), Stan Wilbur (town administrator), Chels (screen name on Zoom), Molly Parren, CJ Buzzy, Kevin Lambert, Joan Holloway, Diana Butler, Jane and Nate Palmer, John Kuhns, Julie Kenyon, Emily and Tom McManamy, Bill Pelland, Chad Wright, Amy and Mark Driscoll, Kielee and Cale Pelland, Anthony DelGreco, Amy Savage, Peter Close, Debbie Houghton, Joe Szarejko, Anne Layn, Jamie Schulte, Alan Gebo, Tom Brennan

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

S. Pilcher announced that Kris Perlee, the Zoning Administrator, has given notice. He has been hired full time by Bristol. Monkton is seeking a part-time zoning administrator. The Planning Commission reviews applications and refers candidates to the Selectboard.

**REGULAR BUSINESS:**

APPROVE MINUTES

**J. McNerney moved to approve the minutes of May 23, 2023 as written. P. Low seconded. The vote passed 3-0-2. M. Kelley and W. Crandall abstained.**

REVIEW AND APPROVE CHECK WARRANTS

**J. McNerney moved to approve AP 30612 in the amount of \$25,401.56. M. Kelley seconded. All voted in favor.**

**J. McNerney moved to approve PR 30605 in the amount of \$11,235.45. M. Kelley seconded. All voted in favor.**

**J. McNerney moved to approve AP 30613 in the amount of \$47,623.65. W. Crandall seconded. All voted in favor.**

REVIEW AND APPROVE OVERWEIGHT PERMITS, ETC.

The following overweight permit was reviewed and approved:  
AL ST. ONGE CONTRACTOR, INC

FACILITY USE REQUEST

P. Low said there were two.

## PUBLIC COMMENT

S. Pilcher requested that those in attendance keep their comments to one minute and please state their names. The minutes reflect that not all speakers gave their names before commenting.

J. Holloway said she is in favor of the Selectboard purchasing the town forest. It is in the town plan, and it will not have a big tax impact. It is a good use of ARPA funds. She asked how many comments on the town forest have been received by the Selectboard. P. Low said he has received 15 emails.

J. Palmer wanted to speak on the safety of the pipeline. The Public Utility Commission recently decided they would amend the Certificate of Public Good. She said it means that everyone who has the pipeline on their land will be forced to agree to this. There were significant safety issues with the installation of the pipeline. It was not bedded in sand, it was not compacted under road crossings and streams, it was not deep enough. She is asking the Selectboard to write a letter to the PUC saying that there are safety concerns and we trusted you to enforce the safety. J. McNerney asked about the time sensitivity.

A. Gebo came to voice concerns about the roads and potholes. P. Low has noted some areas of concern. He said the road foreman is aware of the issues on Covered Bridge Road. A. Gebo asked about paving. P. Low said paving will happen on State Prison Hollow Road, but the road crew will need to repair other areas. M. Kelley asked the cost of paving per mile. P. Low said it was \$900,000 per mile for new paving.

T. Brennan wanted to know how Junior Lewis training the Monkton road crew was going. P. Low said a collaboration is coming soon. He said the road foreman inherited roads that were in terrible condition. The town's current road crew has been together for about a year and a half and it takes time to work as a team.

One resident said that proper ditching would save the town money and improve the roads. Another said he would like to see more money spent on the town roads. He said the road is lower than the shoulders. P. Low asked for patience.

J. Szarejko was interested to learn about the maintenance on Old Airport Road if the Town Forest goes through. S. Pilcher said the people on Old Airport Road have a shared agreement for maintenance. He said an agreement needs to be reached to determine how much the town will be responsible for. P. Low said A. Johnson used to lay a bed of gravel on the road as their contribution. K. Pelland asked how much money will be necessary from the taxpayers to maintain Airport Road. J. Schulte explained the town may pay an eighth of the cost, maybe more. J. McNerney said the town's existing insurance will cover the town forest at no increased cost. A resident stated that there will be increased risk if the town forest becomes a reality.

A person asked if the town doesn't buy the A. Johnson land, will it go up for sale. The conversation became lively. J. McNerney and S. Pilcher clarified that this was not a debate time, but a comment time.

C. Brynn suggested it would be good to have a public meeting focused on the Town Forest.

M. Driscoll asked if the town was trying to stop development. He said selling the land for development would bring in more revenue than the town forest. J. Mcnerney replied it was a myth that bringing in more development reduces the tax burden based on extensive research he has done. New residents require services such as school enrollment and wear on the roads. K. Pelland said she is opposed to the A. Johnson land purchase for a town forest. She doesn't think it is the right parcel for a forest, and doesn't believe development of that land is a concern. She is pleased that there is a postcard response card going to voters. She is concerned that ATV use will be prohibited because of requirements by some major sources of funding. She has started a petition for those to sign who are against the town forest. She repeated concerns about a possible conflict of interest regarding a tree survey by Vermont Family Forest. S. Pilcher said the policy was followed regarding the conflict of interest. The discussion was lively. S. Pilcher took some time to clarify the policy. K. Pelland repeated that the conflict of interest should have been recorded in the minutes. She submitted a copy of her petition to the Select board. K. Pelland told the Selectboard that they needed to act like trusting people and leaders and look into concerns raised. S. Pilcher thanked the people in attendance for their comments.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

#### **ARPA COMMUNITY SURVEY DISCUSSION - KEVIN LAMBERT**

K. Lambert said he is a volunteer in town and coaches kids. He was involved in the effort to consider whether the general store could become a community supported enterprise. Since they didn't want community supported enterprise, he developed a survey to help determine what the community did want. He said he believes everyone in the room has good intentions and would like everyone to operate in good faith. He said people are coming together to build community. The survey was intended to help objectively determine what the town wants, and what our neighbors want. A lot of the survey responses were regarding the roads and keeping up on the road maintenance. Many responses wanted the money to go to each household, an idea he firmly disagreed with. He noted that people want a general store, but they don't want town money going to it. He spoke about the difference between ARPA funds and tax dollars. The survey indicated interest in high speed internet access, funding the fire department, healthcare, town forest, youth and teen activities, and educational facilities. The informal survey had over 300 responses. K Lambert noted that preserving the rural character of Monkton is important; we don't want to be Hinesburg or Bristol. Monkton doesn't have water and waste infrastructure so that will limit growth. How do we gather as a community? How do we help the farmers? He noted that the board is serving the public and they have good intent. No one is trying to put one over on the public. He noted that the new town hall was created to bring the community together. S. Pilcher offered to put a link to the survey results in the minutes, if Kevin would provide a digital copy. Link to K Lambert's survey:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Aoedjhp7BLyuUKvkKsL7ZRMCSwFWMej3/view>

K. Pelland thanked K. Lambert for his efforts. K. Lambert noted it was an ongoing issue trying to get community input.

#### LOCAL HAZARD MANAGEMENT PLAN CONTRACT

**M. Kelley moved to approve the LHMP contract with ACRPC. J. McNerney seconded. All voted in favor.**

#### UVM MONITORING STATION - TYLER BRIDGE ROAD

**P. Low moved to approve the monitoring station by UVM. M. Kelley seconded.** J. McNerney wanted to make sure those doing the work were covered by UVM's insurance. S. Pilcher said he would follow up. **All voted in favor.**

#### FINANCIAL REVIEW MANAGEMENT REPRESENTATION LETTER

There was a discussion about how frequently the town is fully audited.

**M. Kelley moved that as the town treasurer has provided the financial information requested and as the Selectboard has no knowledge of complaints from any regulatory organization, the Select Board authorize S. Pilcher to sign the Financial Review Management letter. W. Crandall seconded. All voted in favor.**

#### SMALL SCALE IMPROVEMENT GRANT APPLICATION

S. Pilcher said the proposed use for the grant was for painting fog lines on all the town's class 2 roads. The town would be responsible to maintain the lines in the future. S. Wilbur noted that the lines could be repainted in small portions each year to reduce costs. There was discussion about the importance of signage. Stop lines were discussed. Fog lines were painted years ago as a traffic calming effort. M. Kelley asked if the lines would require time and labor from the road crew? The response was that they were contracted out. It was noted that the road foreman would like them, and that they would add a measure of safety. **M. Kelley moved to apply for the small scale improvement grant. P. Low seconded. All voted in favor.**

#### APPOINTMENTS

**M. Kelley moved to appoint Vickie Stern as alternate on the Development Review Board for the balance of term expiring 3/2026. All voted in favor.**

#### POND ROAD CULVERT UPDATE

S. Wilbur said there is a grant to do the work on the Pond Road culvert. The wetland requirements need to be met and a plan needs to be submitted. There is currently a 60" diameter culvert; an 8' replacement with a natural bottom will replace it. There are two houses that will be impacted by the work.

#### BIKE/PED GRANT STATUS / RFP AND REVIEW COMMITTEE

The request for proposals will be posted in the Addison Independent. A committee will be formed including town board members and road bicyclists/walkers to review the proposals.

#### HOUSING COMMITTEE STATUS

S. Pilcher's request for persons interested in looking at making a committee to look at affordable housing turned up a good group. They will form a mission statement and work to make progress on affordable housing in Monkton. S. Pilcher said ACRPC has done a great "how to" on accessory dwelling units.

#### MOUNTAIN ROAD CULVERT UPDATE

S. Wilbur said the town can draw down 70% of the FEMA money to finance the project.

#### 1859 BUILDING

S. Pilcher asked how the Selectboard would like to proceed with the sale of the building. M. Kelley asked if anyone from the community had come forward with a plan. S. Pilcher said no. M. Kelley said she would like to notify the community about the next steps. She wondered how preserving the exterior historical look would impact the value. S. Pilcher said he would ask the assessor about the impact. J. McNerney said if a community group wanted it, how would it proceed? The response was that the Selectboard would consider the offer. The Selectboard intends to put the building on the market by August 22, 2023.

#### EV CHARGING STATION

S. Pilcher said there was an interesting discussion with GMP. They are getting federal money to install charging stations and costs of installation were discussed. M. Kelley asked about a charging station at the Rec Center [Morse Park]. There was a concern about vandalism or getting buried in snow. S. Pilcher said they would work on getting a price. S. Wilbur said GMP manages the grant.

#### LOWER TOWN HALL PARKING LOT

P. Low fixed up the lower parking lot for the strawberry festival. He is speaking with paving companies, and they are busy until the end of summer.

#### BEAVERS

J. McNerney paced off the dam on Boro Hill Road and it is 200' long. The property owner is going to take the maintenance of the water level in hand on his own. After speaking with two water flow device installers, he plans on maintaining it on his own and limiting his liability. A suggestion was made that he should be working with the Agency of Natural Resources.

There was discussion about recurring areas of beaver conflict around town. The town put aside funding to do some contract work. S. Pilcher suggested asking the road foreman where he would like to see water flow devices. J. Demeritt commented that Duxbury keeps track of areas of beaver concerns and is gradually addressing each area with a water flow device.

### **OLD BUSINESS:**

#### **SALVAGE YARDS IN MONKTON**

S. Pilcher has continued working on getting a plan of action for a location on Hollow Road.

#### **ARPA FUNDS STATUS / PROCESS**

J. McNerney mentioned the fire department had an initial request and wondered if there was any update. No update has been submitted.

### **OTHER BUSINESS:**

P. Low said W. Crandall agreed to assist him with road issues.

J. McNerney discussed maintaining Old Airport Road. S. Pilcher said there would be legal involvement for the maintenance agreement. M. Kelley said a shared road has an agreement that spells out how costs are divided. Vermont law says if you are on the road, you must share the costs. The Selectboard agreed there are a lot of questions. S. Lawrence has estimated some costs. The property owners, their existing agreements, and A. Johnson's contributions are all pieces of determining the costs.

The next meeting will be on Tuesday, June 27, 2023 at 7pm.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

none required

**M. Kelley moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:11 pm. All voted in favor.**

Respectfully submitted,

Jessica Demeritt.