

MONKTON SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, February 25, 2025

(Approved 2/25/25)

The meeting was called to order by Stephen Pilcher at 7:01 p.m.

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

Members absent: none

Others in attendance: Stan Wilbur (town administrator), Jessica Demeritt (recording secretary), Tom Steadman, Tom Kenyon, Ivor Hughes, Jaime Schulte, Jim Jewell, Susan Randall Davis, Larry Pike, Debra Sprague, Anthony Delgreco, Denise Dalton, Shane Lawrence, Deb Gaynor, Robin Hopps, Brett Conner, Bill Pelland, Cale Pelland, Chan Washburn, Mark Boltz-Robinson

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

none

REGULAR BUSINESS:

APPROVE MINUTES

J. McNerney moved to approve the minutes of the February 11, 2025 bike/ped scoping study draft report. J. Szarejko seconded. The vote passed 5-0-0.

J. McNerney moved to approve the minutes of February 11, 2025 as written with M. Kelley's statement regarding conflict of interest. W. Crandall seconded. The vote passed 5-0-0.

REVIEW AND APPROVE CHECK WARRANTS

J. McNerney moved to approve AP 50127 in the amount of \$4,806.03. W. Crandall seconded. The vote passed 5-0-0.

J. McNerney moved to approve PR 50224 in the amount of \$17,415.94. J. Szarejko seconded. The vote passed 5-0-0.

J. McNerney moved to approve AP 50210 in the amount of \$31,401.91. W. Crandall seconded. The vote passed 5-0-0.

REVIEW AND APPROVE OVERWEIGHT PERMITS, ETC

The following permits were reviewed and approved:

Spence Excavating

Ross Express

ALH Transit

Ormond Bushey

D & F Excavating

G Stone Commercial

FACILITY USE REQUEST

W. Crandall noted that people are requesting the space further out into the year.

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PUBLIC COMMENT

Ivor Hughes said thank you to the Selectboard on behalf of the Planning Commission for their work over the years. It was noted that the Selectboard is an intervenor with VT Gas. I. Hughes said that there will be a public hearing with VT Gas about issues with the 12" transmission line. He stated there were substantial changes when the line went into the ground. He wondered if the newly elected Selectboard would want to hold a public meeting about the pipeline with so many houses on and near the transmission line including the school. T. Kenyon asked if S. Pilcher will explain the budget at Town Meeting. The reply was in the affirmative. T. Steadman noted a \$79,000 deficit in the budget. S. Pilcher replied that there is always a general fund deficit because of delinquent taxes. There was discussion about deficits, revenues, and expenses. T. Steadman noted that he was on the Selectboard in the 1980's and there was discussion about similarities and differences over the years. M. Boltz-Robinson, Monkton Tree Warden, noted that he is responsible for shade trees in the town right of way and on municipal property. He is working on a Shade Tree Preservation Plan. He discussed who has a working impact on the town right of way including the road crew and the power companies. He referenced the Better Roads Manual and noted guidance for tree removal, root pruning, and more. A. Delgreco noted another source for maintaining trees in municipalities. M. Boltz-Robinson encouraged having more discussion on right of way maintenance. M. Kelley asked if there was a difference between shade trees and other trees. M. Boltz-Robinson noted that these could include ornamental trees, landmark trees, and trees above a specific diameter. A. Delgreco asked about ash trees in right of ways. There was discussion about ash tree locations.

NEW BUSINESS:

MONKTON SCHOOL BOARD BUDGET PROJECTIONS

no action taken

HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT UPDATE

S. Lawrence noted plowing, salting and sanding had taken a lot of time. The grader will be in the shop for three days to get the roller working better on the back. They have been repainting the shop to make it brighter. J. Szarejko noted there have been a few FEMA meetings. S. Lawrence said that FEMA will not cover Tyler Bridge Road culvert replacement due to the prior issues with it. He noted that the town will be responsible for an expensive culvert; he estimated at least \$600,000.

TOWN GARAGE / RECYCLING CENTER GATE

R. Hopps asked about the background on the gate. S. Pilcher noted that the Agency of Natural Resources required the town to restrict access to the recycling center. The Selectboard made a decision to place a gate near the main road. R. Hopps noted that there has not been vandalism lately. She asked if a remote

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would be a good idea. S. Lawrence noted that the gate was inconvenient because of salt deliveries and parts deliveries, and having to dig it out. A suggestion was made to move the gate closer to the recycling center. It was noted that there can be a \$25,000 fine if access to the recycling center is not restricted. A. Delgreco asked about installing a remote activated motor to open the gate. M. Kelley asked about using a chain in the short term in order to be in compliance. D. Gaynor explained the minimum requirements for restricting access to the center. She noted that inspectors are in Addison County now handing out substantial fines. J. Schulte suggested using Jersey barriers and using a chain. S. Lawrence noted that he could do that tomorrow.

FEMA - PINEY WOODS ROAD

It was noted that FEMA needs to know what the town will be doing with Piney Woods Road. The road could be closed, put back the way it was, or there could be mitigation - hire an engineer or do a hydraulic study. There was discussion about choices and costs. S. Lawrence noted he has been working for 6 months to try to get a hydraulic study done; things seem to be in motion now. There was discussion about possible culvert needs. T. Kenyon asked if perhaps a beaver dam had broken upstream and increased the damage. The beaver impoundments should be considered when any repair decisions are made. J. McNerney noted that putting it back the way it was seems like a bad idea since it has blown out twice. W. Crandall noted that even the work from a mitigation plan may get destroyed in a future storm. J. Szarejko said all the folks who have reached out to him would like the road to be open. There was discussion about the process for moving forward. S. Pilcher proposed telling FEMA the town is interested in mitigation. There was discussion about the costs for an engineer. It was asked if the town would get to vote on the future of Piney Woods Road. B. Pelland proposed putting the road back the way it was; he has seen use on the road for over fifty years. T. Steadman asked about the total costs for mitigation. S. Lawrence suggested it may be around \$900,000. There was a suggestion to do some emergency repairs to prevent further deterioration of the road. A. Delgreco noted that debris had caused a lot of damage in his observations. It was noted that the road is in a stream valley.

SOUTH WING CHANGE ORDERS

S. Pilcher noted that there was a change order to insulate the windows and doors and hang a mural. S. Pilcher noted a technician from Pella spotted some missing weatherstripping that may help with condensation. **W. Crandall moved to pay the amendment to the contract for Red Lion Construction for \$740.77. J. McNerney seconded. The vote passed 5-0-0.**

VTRANS ANNUAL FINANCIAL PLAN

no action taken

ANAC OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES

no action taken

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ITEMS IN THE TOWN RIGHT OF WAY

J. Szarejko asked for a letter to be sent to an individual on Barnum Road regarding removing items in the town right of way. S. Wilbur noted that he received a call from a person on Hollow Road who had received a letter. The person said he would do his best to move items out of the right of way. A deadline of March 15 was noted.

OTHER BUSINESS

OLD AIRPORT ROAD MAINTENANCE AGREEMENT

S. Pilcher noted that a change had been made to the agreement regarding mediation, and read the change. T. Kenyon noted that he is not signing any paperwork. There was discussion about class 4 roads and that public roads should be maintained by the town. S. Randall Davis thanked S. Pilcher for the hard work. She noted that she and D. Dalton had emailed and contacted the landowners on Old Airport Road (OAR) and had believed that there was consensus to sign the maintenance agreement. She apologized that that was not the case. S. Randall Davis noted that if the process was started tonight, it would take time to pull out the pieces in. **M. Kelley moved to approve the road maintenance agreement with OAR, with a deadline for signing of one year, and have the Selectboard Chair sign. J. McNerney seconded.** M. Kelley asked about assigning a time period for considering signing the agreement. **The vote passed 3-0-2.** J. Szarejko and W. Crandall recused themselves.

OLD AIRPORT ROAD DEEDS OF DEDICATION

no action taken

OLD AIRPORT ROAD CLASS 4 HIGHWAY

no action taken

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

none needed

The next meeting will be Tuesday, March 11, 2025 at 7 p.m.

W. Crandall moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:09 p.m. All voted in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Jessica Demeritt