

MONKTON SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, October 8, 2024

(Approved 10.22.24)

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

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

Members absent: Marikate Kelley

Others in attendance: Jessica Demeritt (recording secretary), Stan Wilbur (town administrator), Anthony Delgreco, Shane Lawrence, Dylan Giambatista, Jennifer Baker, Debra Sprague, Adam Miller, Sue Stasny, Nate Palmer, Jane Palmer, Danielle Winslow, Jaime Schulte, Ralph Fitz-Gerald, Tony Curtis

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

none

**REGULAR BUSINESS:**

APPROVE MINUTES

**J. McNerney moved to approve the minutes of September 24, 2024 as written. J. Szarejko seconded. The vote passed 3-0-1. S. Pilcher abstained.**

REVIEW AND APPROVE CHECK WARRANTS

**J. McNerney moved to approve PR 41007 in the amount of \$14,349.14. J. Szarejko seconded. All voted in favor.**

**J. Szarejko moved to approve AP 40927 in the amount of \$59,393.20. J. McNerney seconded.** The expenses included Acker Waste Management, the sheriff's department, phone, life insurance, sand and gravel. **All voted in favor.**

REVIEW AND APPROVE OVERWEIGHT PERMITS, ETC

none

FACILITY USE REQUEST

W. Crandall said there was one for a baby shower in December.

PUBLIC COMMENT

none

**NEW BUSINESS:**

HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT UPDATE

S. Lawrence noted that the Mountain Road ditching and hydroseeding was completed. He submitted a grant. Pond Road was ditched and culverts were replaced. Gravel needs to be applied. States Prison Hollow Road will be ditched next week. The large culvert on Tyler Bridge Road will receive some work. He is

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possibly looking for a temporary bridge. It would be about \$100,000 to move, install, deinstall. The hope is that the town crew will be able to stabilize it. Per state regulations, this will need to be replaced with a bridge or box culvert for the long-term solution. Smaller culverts and some paving jobs are coming up as long as weather allows. The town received a \$15,000 grant which will be put toward work on Jockey Lane. J. Szarejko asked about a short stub of road intersecting Roscoe Road. It is a section of the road that should probably be thrown up, noted S. Pilcher. A. Delgreco asked about temporary culverts and why they are used. S. Lawrence noted that hydraulic studies are needed for bigger culverts that can take up to a year. He also explained that expense can lead to a temporary culvert. S. Pilcher asked if S. Lawrence had spoken with any FEMA representatives yet. S. Lawrence responded not yet. FEMA will need a hydraulic study for Piney Woods Road.

### FEMA STORM DAMAGE PROJECTS

S. Wilbur noted that the FEMA payments for work to replace the large failed culvert with a bridge on Mountain Road have been finalized. He observed that it took 5 years.

### TOWN GARAGE/RECYCLING CENTER GATE

no action taken

### ITEMS IN TOWN RIGHT OF WAY

J. Szarejko said he spoke with Sheriff Elmore about Hollow Road and the town right of way. It was suggested that the town needs an ordinance in order to be able to enforce issues regarding items in the town right of way. J. McNerney noted that per VLCT there are some state statutes as well which should not require a town ordinance, details were provided in an email he forwarded to the Select board. S. Pilcher noted it would be discussed at the next meeting.

### CHANGES TO THE ADDISON NATURAL GAS PIPELINE

S. Pilcher noted that the state Supreme Court ruled that the Public Utilities Commission(PUC) had to follow regulations regarding the public good and the Addison Natural Gas Pipeline when asking for an amended Certificate of Public Good.

J. Baker commented on the certificate of public good, the summary of violations by James A. Dumont, esq., and the summary of violations report. She said basically Vermont Gas Systems(VGS) didn't do what they were supposed to do for many items. Monkton can be an intervener. Monkton would need to fill out a one page form in November to have that option. J. Baker suggested that the Selectboard do that so the town can take action in the future. J. Baker recommended having someone come talk to the town. She said it was important to look at the safety issues, and receive heightened inspection and management. N. Palmer noted that VGS is behaving as though this is business as usual. N. Palmer noted that there are a number of safety violations and paying a fine

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doesn't make these problems go away. J. Palmer said the PUC and the Department of Public Service have been running interference for VGS. She noted that there was no licensed engineer for the project. There were many safety infractions and the PUC narrowed it down to just five and then fined VGS. J. Palmer noted Hinesburg has already voted to intervene. She suggested a public meeting would be a good step. J. Baker noted that VGS' response regarding the violations was simply, no, we're good. J. Palmer noted that people have been reaching out to her to keep them updated on the issue. S. Pilcher noted that the town website has a VGS tab. It would be a good place to post information. **J. McNerney moved to authorize the Selectboard chair to file to become an intervener on the Vermont Gas Systems issue with the Certificate of Public Good. J. Szarejko seconded. All voted in favor.**

S. Pilcher noted that if the town invites Jim Dumont, then they would invite VGS as well. There was discussion about a town member inviting Jim Dumont to speak at a public informational meeting. S. Pilcher noted that he would speak to the town attorney. D. Giambatista, director of public affairs for VGS, noted VGS would be glad to come speak to the town. He explained the history of the Addison Natural Gas Pipeline. Installation was completed in 2017 and there have been seven years of safety. He noted that there was an exhaustive investigation after the installation, and VGS is an open book and fully regulated. The PUC and the independent hearing officer declared it was safely and adequately installed. He noted everything was routine. S. Pilcher thanked D. Giambatista for coming. He noted that he would like to talk to the town attorney regarding the next step for a public meeting on the issue.

### BASEBALL DUGOUTS AND STORAGE SHED - ARPA

Conditions of the dugouts and storage shed are in very poor condition, noted J. Szarejko. He explained that at a Rec Committee meeting, some interested residents were encouraged to go ahead with the improvement project. He noted that they were not attempting to take ARPA money from any proposed projects. He noted many people were interested in helping with the project. A. Delgreco said he had drawn up some plans for materials for new dugouts, a cost of \$2000 for each dugout. The 10x10 shed materials would come out to \$3000 with concrete siding. He noted that sometimes materials are donated. S. Pilcher said the town of Monkton was given ARPA funds that need to be obligated by the end of 2024. He believes that there are funds remaining that could be used for this project. R. Fitzgerald asked if a commercial container would be possible, like a shipping container, \$2,000-3,000, which would be waterproof and rodent proof, and could be recycled when the town was done with it. T. Curtis commented that the container idea was a good idea. **J. McNerney made a motion to issue a letter of support for the dugout and shed project. J. Szarejko seconded. A. Delgreco offered to build a composting toilet as well. Further discussion noted that people seemed to be satisfied with the porta-potty there now All voted in favor.** S. Pilcher asked when the project would start. A. Delgreco replied in the spring.

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### MULTI-SPORT PLAYING COURT INVITATION FOR BIDS

no action taken

### BLUE CROSS/BLUE SHIELD HEALTH REIMBURSEMENT ARRANGEMENT RENEWAL

There was a brief discussion about the current health care plan.

### TOWN PLAN

S. Pilcher noted that the Selectboard received a new Town Plan from the Planning Commission. The Selectboard will need to look at it, and schedule a hearing with the hope to get it before the voters in March.

### MUNICIPAL ENERGY RESILIENCE PROGRAM(MERP) IMPLEMENTATION GRANT APPLICATION

The application has been submitted, said S. Wilbur. S. Pilcher noted that we were unlikely to receive the grant.

### MONKTON TOWN FOREST OPTION ASSIGNMENT

no action taken

### MONKTON TOWN FOREST AMICABLE AGREEMENT

no action taken

### PLANNING COMMISSION APPOINTMENT

J. McNerney noted that the Chairs of the Monkton Planning Commission are in favor of A. Miller's appointment. **J. McNerney made a motion to appoint A. Miller to the Planning Commission for a balance of the term exp 3/2025. J. Szarejko seconded. All voted in favor.**

### ZONING ADMINISTRATOR

S. Pilcher noted that there was an ad going out for a Zoning Administrator. J. McNerney said Andrew Peterson was willing to do the job in the interim. He may need to provide services by appointment, rather than have hours. **J. McNerney moved to appoint A. Peterson as interim Zoning Administrator effective October 8, 2024. W. Crandall seconded. All voted in favor.**

### BUDGET STATUS REPORT

no action taken

### OLD BUSINESS

### OTHER BUSINESS

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OAR Maintenance

J. Schulte noted that it would be good to bring it back into the conversation. Residents of the road are interested in what maintenance will look like. There was discussion about a road maintenance agreement. S. Pilcher asked how snow removal currently works? J. Szarejko replied that he does the plowing now.

J. Schulte spoke about the process for public input on the Town forest management plan.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

none

The next meeting will be Tuesday, October 22, 2024, at 7 p.m.

**J. McNerney moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:42 p.m. All voted in favor.**

Respectfully submitted,

Jessica Demeritt