

MONKTON SELECTBOARD MEETING
MINUTES
Tuesday, July 11, 2023

The meeting was called to order by Stephen Pilcher at 7:05 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), Joe Szarejko, Debra Sprague, Andrew Peterson, Jaime Schulte, Bob Heiser (Vermont Land Trust)

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

S. Pilcher said the educational tax rate for fiscal year 2024 is as follows: the homestead tax rate \$1.8558, nonhomestead tax rate \$1.7220.

S. Pilcher stated that the 1859 building was painted and it was for less than the quote. There was discussion about how that would affect the budget.

REGULAR BUSINESS:

APPROVE MINUTES

J. McNerney moved to approve the minutes of June 27, 2023 as written. W. Crandall seconded. The vote passed 4-0-1. P. Low abstained.

REVIEW AND APPROVE CHECK WARRANTS

J. McNerney moved to approve AP 30630 in the amount of \$18,611.20. M. Kelley seconded. All voted in favor.

J. McNerney moved to approve PR 30630 in the amount of \$12,761.93. M. Kelley seconded. All voted in favor.

REVIEW AND APPROVE OVERWEIGHT PERMITS, ETC.

The following overweight permit was reviewed and approved:
Paquette Inc.

FACILITY USE REQUEST

P. Low said there were no new requests.

PUBLIC COMMENT

none

NEW BUSINESS:

ZONING ADMINISTRATOR INTERVIEW / APPOINTMENT

J. McNerney moved to go into executive session for purposes of interviewing a zoning administrator candidate at 8:00pm. M. Kelley seconded. All voted in favor.

J. McNerney moved to leave executive session at 8:16pm. M. Kelley seconded. All voted in favor.

The Planning Commission interviewed and recommended A. Peterson.

M. Kelley moved to appoint A. Peterson as the interim Zoning Administrator and 911 coordinator. J. McNerney seconded. All voted in favor.

911 COORDINATOR APPOINTMENT

see above

CHARLOTTE FIRE AND RESCUE UPDATE

S. Pilcher noted that he reached out to John Snow, a member of Charlotte Rescue, who said they would no longer be the primary ambulance service for Monkton because of the expense. S. Pilcher suggested that the town could maybe chip in some money through the social services the voters approve at town meeting. He said he would keep working on it and see what happens. P. Low said he had spoken to some people from Charlotte as well to express his support for continuing service. P. Low said the average number of calls that Charlotte responds to in Monkton per year is twelve.

TOWN FOREST COMMITTEE UPDATE

S. Pilcher noted the forest committee has a “new member” as the chair has delivered a baby. J. Schulte said that the flooding has prevented B. Heiser from attending in person. J. Schulte went over the twenty page progress report. He discussed funding for the forest, and public outreach for town input. He detailed the mail survey that went to the voter list. There was a 25% response rate. 75% of the responses were in favor of the town forest. Overall support for the project is 3 in favor to one against. He said a next step would be engaging the residents of Old Airport Road further regarding shared maintenance costs. The committee is waiting to hear about whether a large federal grant is approved. Fundraising for the final \$50,000 would be in the fall/winter. A management plan would occur after that. J. Schulte emphasized that the process for a management plan would be out in the open and that there would be more community outreach to learn what the community would like for the town forest.

S. Pilcher said he thought the committee did an outstanding job with community outreach and should be congratulated. He is interested in the ongoing conversation with the Old Airport Road residents. J. Schulte said at this point the residents are talking and taking some time to consider what they want and the impacts of more road usage. He said the current costs for road maintenance are \$2500 and 40 hours of labor with compact tractors maintenance. J. McNerney Noted that one outstanding issue is how the town’s and the adjacent landowner’s

liability will be impacted if we have a private road used by the public. S. Pilcher responded that there is an ongoing conversation with the insurance company. S. Pilcher said we want the forest to be sustainable.

AGRICULTURAL AND NATURAL AREAS COMMITTEE FUND REQUEST

B. Heiser said an application was submitted from Vermont Land Trust to ANAC. He said Monkton was fortunate to be able to purchase the A. Johnson land for a town forest. S. Pilcher asked if there was a response from ANAC. J. Schulte said they approved it in June. He noted that the amount of the request from ANAC was typical for the project size. He noted that a big difference was allowing public access to the conserved land. P. Low asked how the use of ANAC funds and the easement will impact land use and management. J. Schulte compared Morse Park uses to uses for the town forest land. S. Pilcher clarified that ANAC does not put additional limitations on land use. Those usually come from the easement holder. B. Heiser noted there may be some natural communities that may have restrictions based on forest management such as vernal pools and the dry oak forest. J. Schulte said there might be help from some graduate students to inventory the forest. W. Crandall said the committee is very motivated to maintain a relationship with the Watershed. J. Schulte said it would be important to align management plans and compatible use since the properties adjoin. **M. Kelley moved to approve ANAC's fund request for up to \$45,000 for the town forest project. J. McNerney seconded. W. Crandall is an adjoining property owner and abstained. The vote passed 4-0-1.**

ARPA ALLOCATION FOR TOWN FOREST

J. McNerney moved to approve the ARPA request for the town forest for up to \$150,000. M. Kelley seconded. The vote passed 4-0-1. W. Crandall abstained. J. McNerney acknowledged the work of Bob Heiser of VLT, Callie Brynn, and Jaime Schulte for doing the lion's share of the work. J. Schulte thanked J. McNerney for all his work.

TYLER BRIDGE CULVERT

S. Pilcher said there are 3 possibilities for a culvert replacement: a small bridge, an open bottom arch, or a concrete box. There was an agreement that S. Wilbur would reach out to Otter Creek Engineering for a cost proposal.

DENTON CURB CUT

W. Crandall said he and the road foreman agreed the Denton curb cut was compliant. A culvert is required. J. McNerney noted that the condition should be added referring to compliance with the driveway standards. All agreed. S. Pilcher said that at some point, the application should be updated to reflect the town highway access policy. **J. McNerney moved to approve the Denton curb cut with the amendments. W. Crandall seconded. All voted in favor.**

P. Low said James Burnett of Bristol Road would like to do work in the right of way on his driveway. There was discussion about how the permit should work. S. Wilbur said he is in the process of updating the form.

CLASS 2 PAVING GRANT - UPDATE REQUIRED

S. Pilcher said there is an update that would require an increase in the town's match to get the full amount available under the grant. **J. McNerney moved to increase the town's match to the class 2 paving grant to \$50,000 in order to qualify for the full \$200,000 amount available under the grant. P. Low seconded. All voted in favor.**

MOUNTAIN ROAD CULVERT UPDATE

S. Pilcher said construction started on July 5, 2023. There was discussion about an end date and it was noted that the project is currently ahead of schedule.

PACIF LOSS CONTROL / SAFETY INSPECTION

S. Pilcher said the PACIF inspector came through. There were a number of detailed issues to address such as inspecting fire extinguishers, having safety gear for the road crew, having MSDSs for chemicals used, and others.

EMAIL SERVER

S. Pilcher said he is looking into email hosting. He is trialing a new service that starts at \$3 per account per month. The current service has limitations involving archiving and data limits.

IT SUPPORT

S. Pilcher said Dominion Tech is going up 20%, and the users are not happy with it. There is concern about backups and help support. S. Pilcher would like to bid out IT support and see if someone local might want it.

LOWER TOWN HALL PARKING LOT

no update

BEAVERS

P. Low reported that the Hollow Road/Rotax Road area will be attended to by Skip Lisle.

OLD BUSINESS:

SALVAGE YARDS IN MONKTON

S. Pilcher noted that the Addison County Solid Waste District does not assist with salvage yards; that is handled by the Department of Environmental Conservation.

ARPA FUNDS STATUS / PROCESS

S. Pilcher said the town clerk is going to put together a request for funds to digitally scan the land records. M. Kelley asked if they would be accessible to the public. S. Pilcher answered that they would be available for a fee per page.

J. McNerney asked if the fire department had responded regarding their initial request. He said he could follow up. There was discussion about the need for a new fire truck and a NIMS grant.

OTHER BUSINESS:

There was discussion about important upcoming Selectboard meetings and vacations.

The next meeting will be Tuesday, July 25, 2023 at 7:00pm.

J. McNerney noted that he will not be at that meeting.

M. Kelley moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:10 pm. All voted in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Jessica Demeritt.