

Select board Meeting

March 18, 2021

7:00pm

Virtual Meeting

Present were Darlene Wyman, David Bemis, Denise Randall, Danny Taylor, Dennis Mirante, Fact TV, Hannah Regier, Janet Perry, Lynn Morgan, Tina White, John Maciejowski, Sherry Maher, Matt Perry, Camilla Roberts, April Lyman, Tim Stevenson and Wichi Artu.

David called the meeting to order at 7:03pm.

Denise made the motion David Bemis be elected as chair person. Janet seconded. Put to a vote. The motion carried.

Adjustments to the agenda: There were no adjustments to the agenda.

Minutes: Camilla wished to clarify the February 18 minutes to clarify the use of ATVs on the Massey property being purchased by the Windmill Hill Pinnacle Association. According to the conservation easement they are not allowed on the property. If it does happen it is a rare exception. There are instances historically where there has been an exception to the conservation easement. David made the motion to accept the minutes adding the rare exception for use of ATVs on the conservation property. Denise seconded. Put to a vote. The motion carried. David made the motion to approve the motion from the prior meeting of the February regular selectman meeting to support the conservation of the Massey property off the Brookline Road. Janet seconded. Put to a vote. The motion carried.

Public comments: Sherry wished to congratulate Janet on being elected as select board. However, she was concerned about there being a conflict of interest with the board going into executive session concerning a personnel matter. David stated the board will follow the conflict of interest policy. Denise stated the policy would be followed and the person involved would recuse themselves from any decisions being made. Sherry asked if a person had to recuse themselves if they would not attend the executive session. David stated this would be determined at each session. Wichi asked what recused meant. David stated the person would not vote on the matter and not participate in the decision and could to the fact of the person leaving the room. Wichi asked if there was guidance through VLCT. David stated the conflict of policy was modeled after the VLCT policy and this policy is located in the town office.

Boards and Officials: Sherry stated the Meetinghouse Committee received a grant for \$50,000.00 from the Paul Bruhn Memorial grant program with the Preservation Trust of Vermont. With this grant and a substantial gift given to the Athens Historical Society last year will enable the Meetinghouse committee to tackle the exterior work on the Meetinghouse this

summer. Sherry wished to acknowledge and thank Candace Damon for the work she did on the grant. The committee has received two proposals regarding the windows. One was reproducing windows exactly like the ones that we have. They would be using the existing glass and replace the frames. The other one was about rebuilding the existing windows, restoring the wood that holds the panes of glass in. The Paul Bruhn grant is federal funding through the National Park Service and they will require an assessment be done of the windows. . The cost will be \$500.00. The Athens Historical Society will pay \$250.00 and a matching grant through the Preservation Trust of Vermont will match \$250.00. The Bruhn grant has a 15 year covenant which is a formal agreement which stipulates they have a significant interest in the building going forward for the 15 years of the covenant. Denise asked if the project would have to go out to bid. Sherry stated it would, which would cover the whole project of repairing the windows, carpentry work on the exterior and painted, the thresh holds of the two entry way doors and a hatch in the floor in the back corner for ongoing access to underneath the Meetinghouse and it would need to be approved by the National Parks service. Denise asked if there was a time frame in which the grant monies would have to be spent. Sherry will check into this. David asked that once the grant is received, Sherry email it to the select board. Denise made the motion to approve David to sign the grant if needed. Janet seconded. Put to a vote. The motion carried. Sherry stated the Meetinghouse Committee was planning on planting a tree in memory of Eleanor Bemis. They hope to dedicate the tree at the annual plant sale to be held the Saturday of Memorial Day weekend. Lynn stated that Ginger Maciejowski was appointed to the school board at their meeting last week. She also stated that both Grafton and Athens approved the withdrawal of Westminster from the union. It is now in the State's hands.

Trash and Recycling: David stated that Triple T has notified the town they will no longer be serving the town for trash and recycling removal. They will continue their service through April and possibly to May 10th if needed. David stated RFPs need to be sent out to area companies. David made the motion the budget committee put out RFPs to local haulers and try to follow the decision made at Town Meeting for trash one week and recycling the next week. If that can't be done it could be changed and to get quotes from the trash haulers. Janet stated she had been in contact with area haulers and the budget committee will discuss this at their meeting on Tuesday. Denise seconded the motion. Put to a vote. The motion carried. Hannah asked about the RFPs being published or if it's okay to call the companies. David stated he thought it could be both. He stated it could be published or put on line and also to contact the haulers. The contract will have to go out to bid. The board hopes to have this ready by the April meeting.

Annual Appointments, Auditor and Budget Committee: David made the motion to reappoint Donald Capponcelli, Robert Anderson and Adrian Tenny as fence viewers. Denise seconded. Put to a vote. The motion carried. David made the motion to appoint Janet Perry to replace James Trimble on the Housing Grant Committee. Denise seconded. Put to a vote. The motion carried. David made the motion to reappoint Janet Perry to the Planning Commission. Denise

carried. David made the motion to reappoint Janet Perry to the Planning Commission. Denise seconded. Put to a vote. The motion carried. David made the motion to reappoint Don Capponcelli as Surveyor, Wood & Coal.. Denise seconded. Put to a vote. The motion carried. Tree Warden- David made the motion to reappoint Bob Anderson. Denise seconded. Put to a vote. The motion carried. Town Service Officer-David made the motion to reappoint Lynn Morgan. Denise seconded. Put to a vote. The motion carried. Windham Regional Commission-- David made the motion to reappoint Andy Toepfer and Bob Anderson. Denise seconded. Put to a vote. The motion carried. Athens Emergency Management Director-Janet Perry made the motion to reappoint David Bemis. Denise seconded. Put to a vote. The motion carried. Budget Committee-David made the motion to reappoint Janet Perry and Amber Stevens. Denise seconded. Put to a vote. The motion carried. Denise Randall resigned. Janet made the motion to appoint Carol Bingham to replace Denise. Denise seconded. Put to a vote. The motion carried. Southern Windsor/Windham Solid Waste Management Representative and alternate-Denise made the motion to reappoint David Bemis. Janet seconded. Put to a vote. The motion carried. Alternate: David made the motion to appoint Denise Randall. Janet seconded. Put to a vote. The motion carried. David made the motion to appoint James Trimble as Auditor until Town Meeting. Janet seconded. Put to a vote. The motion carried. Tim Stevenson asked about the Planning commission since there has been no effort to revive it since the last town plan was attempted. David stated it is reasonable to have a planning commission and a town plan. Discussion followed as to the reasons why the town plan failed. Tim would like the select board to take a more active part in the planning commission. Anyone interested in reviving the planning commission contact the select board or Tim Stevenson.

Local Emergency Management Plan: David made the motion to adopt which is basically the same as last year with just a change of dates and added phone numbers. Janet seconded. Put to a vote. The motion carried.

Warrants and Mail: David made the motion to approve and sign the warrant. Darlene will leave the warrant at the town office to be signed. Denise seconded. Put to a vote. The motion carried.

Roads: Matt stated everything is holding up and going well. Matt asked about purchasing a couple loads of 1 ½ inch gravel from Palmer Goodrich at \$24.00 per yard delivered to fill in really bad spots in the dirt roads due to mud. Denise asked if Bazins had more gravel. David asked if Matt thought the gravel from Palmer would work better to fill in the mud. Danny asked why the town is buying from Bazins if they think the gravel is not good enough for mud season. Matt commented it is good enough for mud season but he is concerned about the really bad spots that he is dumping a lot of gravel in when he wouldn't have to use as much with the gravel from Palmer. Dan asked why we would buy twice as much from Bazins when it would be half as much gravel from someone closer. Matt stated he would like to try the gravel from Palmer. Danny commented it seemed like a lot of money since we have already spent for gravel that has already been hauled in. David asked about just a couple loads to see how it

works. Matt agreed to this. Dan asked about the gravel Matt has used and if it is working. Matt replied he hadn't used much and it is working, but he would like some on hand for really bad spots. Dan asked if Matt had used Bazins gravel in bad spots in previous years. Matt stated he had, but would like to see if something else would work a little bit better. the gravel from Palmer would work better. Denise asked if the potential bad spots were on the lower road by the pond. Matt stated the Reed Road has been the worse this year. Denise asked about the underdrain work. Matt replied he has to wait until the snow goes. Denise asked Matt which roads he thought there may be potential problems. He stated he was concerned about the Brookline Road from Hannah Regier's to Steve Oakes's because it has not thawed out yet and Reed Road. Sherry asked if the town received compensation from the log trucks on Reed Road. Matt replied we do not and the log trucks are done on Reed Road. David made the motion to try two truckloads of the 1 ½ inch gravel. Janet seconded. Put to a vote. Two voted yes. One voted no. The motion carried. Tina asked about posting the roads. Matt felt there was not a need to post the roads. He stated if there was any activity on the road that's destroying the road, he would post it. He stated that the worst violators are the oil companies and they have been really good by coming in early and not running when it is warmer. Tina suggested the roads be posted for caution's sake and it would help if a legal situation arose. Darlene asked Matt why Air Gas has not sent a bill for two months. Matt stated he would look into this.

Wichi stated he found some of the VLCT guidelines about recusal. He stated a public officer who has recused himself or herself from participating in an official act or action by a public body shall not sit with the public body. He wanted to make a public acknowledgement that if an officer is to recuse himself especially from an executive session where the public is not allowed then that official must remove himself from the executive session. David reiterated the policy is from the VLCT and Wichi can view it at the town office.

Executive Session: At 8:08pm the board moved into executive session to discuss a legal matter where premature general public knowledge would clearly place the town of Athens at a substantial disadvantage. Denise seconded. April asked what the board would be discussing. David stated they would be discussing Taylor Hill. April stated that Janet has a conflict of interest in the matter of Taylor Hill because she has a sister that owns property on Taylor Hill. Discussion followed as to whether there would be a conflict of interest. David withdrew his motion to go into executive session and proceed without an executive session or discussion on that and bring it up at the next April meeting or at a special meeting if needed. David will check with counsel and Denise will check with VLCT.

Denise asked if anyone who needed to be sworn into office had done so. Darlene stated they had.

Darlene stated she had two weight permits to for David to sign.

Further Business/Adjourn: There being no further business Denise made the motion to adjourn. David seconded. Put to a vote. The motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:14pm.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Darlene Wyman".

Darlene Wyman, Town Clerk