

Athens Selectboard Meeting Minutes
August 17, 2023
7:00pm at the Athens Town Office

In attendance: Sandi Capponcelli, Hannah Regier, Janet Perry, David Bemis, Denise Randall, Krista Gay, FACT TV (Cody), Darlene Wyman, Don Capponcelli, Anna Warn, William Borsi

Called to order at 7:01

Adjustments to Agenda

Janet wants to talk about an estimate for the town garage bathroom and office addition. David says that can happen in Boards and Officials.

Minutes of Prior Meeting

David makes a motion to accept the minutes as they are. Sandi seconds. Put to a vote: all in favor.

Public Comments

William Borsi asks why the road crew is more out of town than in town. He says he sees them almost every day at the Harmonyville store. He says he is paying for that salary and fuel from his taxes. He thinks the town truck and workers should stay in town. He suggests that the road crew could pick up the garbage in town if they have so much spare time. Anna Warn shows photos with dates to the selectboard. There are 4 photos and dates all in June. She says she has also seen the road crew in other locations in Townshend several times. Anna says she thinks it ridiculous that the road crew is on a coffee break outside of town three days in a row. Anna also thinks the trash needs to be removed more than once a month. She also suggests that the road crew could pick it up if they have enough time to be riding around out of town.

Hannah asks if a landowner needs to take down a tree that would fall across the town road, what is the procedure for working with the town on flagging. David says they should talk with the road crew to figure out how and when to do it. David says if the tree is in the town right of way, the road crew should be able to help the landowner take it down.

Treasurer Report

Hannah points out on the balance sheet that the General/Highway fund total assets line is now a positive number as a result of tax payments and grant reimbursement for the beaver pond culvert work. Items of note on the budget report are that 27% of current taxes have now been collected, state grant revenues reflects the culvert reimbursement, and sales of trash bags are lower than predicted. The town office supplies are a bit over budget because Hannah had to purchase a new land records book and paper, but she doesn't expect many more expenses in that category the rest of the year.

Boards and Officials

Hannah asks if the fill pipe on the oil tank has been fixed yet. David asks Don Capponcelli if he would do the rethreading/taping work. Don says he can take a look at it.

Hannah says there is a letter in the selectboard inbox from Chris Campanay of WRC saying that they have hired a consultant to work with the town on project prioritization , grant writing and management. The consultant's name is Maggie Foley and she will be reaching out to schedule a meeting with the selectboard late August or September.

Hannah says she had the five land records book that hadn't been backed up scanned to microfilm which she will get to the state archives for storage. The expense came out of the Record Preservation Fund. She is going to try to do two books at a time moving forward.

Krista – schoolboard: Reads a letter from Lynn Morgan, attached to the minutes.

David says the listers would like the Property Valuation and Review form 4155 to be signed.

David makes the motion to approve and sign the form. Sandi seconds. Put to a vote: all in favor.

Krista – Campbell Fund: The loan that was distributed earlier this year has been repaid and the committee received a new application. They will be meeting on Monday to go over that application.

Sandi – Community Center: Sandi says the committee doesn't want Josh Ferenc to keep the key for the Community Center. David says to ask him for the key back. Krista mentions there will be a chili cookoff on September 30th at 5:00pm. It's free to submit chili. There is a \$5 entrance fee to be a taster. Prizes are gift cards for J&H Hardware. The committee is having a bake sale at the Grafton tractor show September 2nd.

Janet got an estimate for the town garage bathroom addition. 12' x 60' addition on the town garage. \$160,000 was the first estimate. She got a revised estimate of \$90,000 for a 12' x 30' addition. This doesn't include the insulation or roof on the existing building. Sandi has a proposal from Michael Marquis for \$2,000 for the septic design and permit. Sandi is asking for it to be signed and the money to come from the ARPA funds. David says there needs to be a hearing on how to use the ARPA funds before any of the money is used. Janet suggests a special meeting for the hearing.

RFP Reed Rd.

There are two bids for the work on the slide on Reed Rd. The board opens and reviews the bids.

A. S. Clark: \$121,750
Ivor Stevens: \$135,500

Darlene asks if the town is getting FEMA funds for the work. The board says hopefully, but they don't know. There may have been a little more sliding in the area but not much.

Sandi has a release from Cersosimo to build a temporary road on their property to fix the slide.

Krista makes the motion to go with A. S. Clark. Sandi seconds. Put to a vote: all in favor.

Sand Bids

There are two sand bids. The board opens and reviews the bids.

Derrg Construction: 23.80 / cy delivered
JP Trucking: 24.00 / cy delivered

Hannah says the budget for sand is \$19,000.

David makes a motion to go with Derrg, up to a sum of \$19,000 of sand. Denise seconds. Put to a vote: all in favor.

David says that will be about 800 yards of sand.

Scoping Proposal / Grant

Hannah says there is a grant for \$6,000 from BDCC to be used towards the scoping of the garage and community center projects. She and Don met with a couple of architects and engineering firms in addition to the previous proposal from David Cotton which wasn't exactly what the town needed. The town has received proposals from Jon Saccoccio for schematic design and cost estimating for both projects which Hannah emailed earlier in the week. These phases of work are necessary for the USDA CF grant, and others. The scoping project costs are \$10,425 for the garage and \$21,975 for the community center. The town has \$10,000 in grant money to put towards this work. Hannah explains that the scoping work wouldn't be complete in time for the December deadline of the USDA CF grant, but could be used for the April 2024 deadline or next December. For the garage, the CF grant could get another \$50,000 towards the work that needs to be done. David asks how long the scoping work is good for. Hannah thinks the design is good indefinitely, but the estimate probably has a lifespan. She says the town will not be receiving the congressional earmark funds for the Community Center, so she recommends using the \$10,000 towards scoping work for the garage and the town would have to pick up \$425. Hopefully the WRC MAP consultant can help put together a plan for the community center. There is a bit of complication around when the \$6,000 from BDCC needs to be used which she is working out. She is hoping it can all be used towards a downpayment.

Denise asks if there is a time limit once the scoping work is done to do the construction work. Hannah and David say that there isn't any time requirement.

Janet says there was an engineer on the estimate she got from the construction company.

Don C. says he is disappointed with how high the proposals were. He doesn't know what the best option is. He says the town will also get information from the MERP assessments. Hannah says she and Don both thought that Jon Saccoccio seemed like he would be great to work with and that he was enthusiastic about working with the town. He has done work for towns before and was willing to incorporate input from MERP and work with grant funding. Don liked his ideas but worries that the town won't be able to afford to implement them.

Janet asks about the extension for the BDCC grant to September 30th. She asks if the decision could be put off to the next selectboard meeting. Hannah thinks they could, but that it would be nice to let Jon Saccoccio know because his proposal is good for 30 days. Janet considers if the grant should be used for the community center or the garage and David points out the extra cost of the community center scoping proposal. Krista thinks the garage bathroom is higher priority than the community center. Hannah points out that the vault is also a pressing need, but probably lower priority than the bathroom. Janet doesn't want to waste the \$6,000 if there is another way to do it for the town garage. Hannah suggests that Janet share the USDA specs with her contact; or, if the USDA grant isn't needed for the garage, then maybe the scoping work isn't necessary.

David says that there isn't as much given out by USDA as people might think. Janet says it's really hard to get a grant for a town garage. David says to try for it, the town needs to do the scoping work.

David suggests paying Jon Saccoccio half as a downpayment and then getting another bill before the end of September for work done, which would probably come to a total of \$6,000.

Janet makes a motion to go with Jon Saccoccio's scoping proposal for the town garage. Krista seconds. Put to a vote: all in favor.

Roads

Janet says Matt has stopped down to Kathy and Henry Woodbury's a couple of times, but they haven't been home. David says that some of the work they want done isn't in the town right of way so the town can't really help.

Executive Session

David makes a motion to go into Executive session at 7:55 for legal matter, for which premature public knowledge would put the town at a substantial disadvantage. Denise seconds. Put to a vote: all in favor.

David makes a motion to exit executive session at 8:05. Sandi seconds. Put to a vote: all in favor.

No votes were taken in executive session.

Warrants and Mail

The warrant was signed and mail opened.

Further Business

Krista asks if they are setting a time for a special meeting for the ARPA hearing. The board chooses Tuesday, August 22nd at 7:00pm. A notice of the hearing needs to go out because the selectboard will be present. Sandi will contact the Athenian. Janet says the warning can be simple "ARPA informational meeting to get public input." The board can share their thoughts on what they want to use the money for. Hannah suggests that the board have the list of what ARPA funds can and can't be used for so there isn't any question at the hearing.

Denise asks about the GMP check that was lost in the mail. David asks about electronic bill pay. Hannah says she could try to set up the procedures, but isn't sure if there are security ramifications. She will ask VLCT about it.

David asks about the generator repair and insurance claim. Hannah says she submitted the invoices and VLCT PACIF will be reimbursing the cost minus the \$1000 deductible. Total repair cost was around \$2,300.00.

David makes a motion to adjourn. Denise seconds. All in favor.

Adjourned at 8:28

Respectfully submitted,
Hannah Regier, Town Clerk