

**BRATTLEBORO SELECTBOARD
TUESDAY, JANUARY 28, 2020
SPECIAL MEETING – 6:15PM
SELECTBOARD MEETING ROOM, MUNICIPAL CENTER
MINUTES**

Selectboard members present: Brandie Starr, Tim Wessel, Elizabeth McLoughlin, Daniel Quipp, and David Schoales.

Staff Present: Town Manager Peter Elwell, Assistant Town Manager Patrick Moreland, Police Chief Mike Fitzgerald, and Police Captain Mark Carignan.

Media present: Chris Mays representing the Brattleboro Reformer, and BCTV staff and volunteers.

Others present: Michael Lonardo, Adrasteia Andrews, George Anthes, Franz Reichsman, ASL interpreter Janet Dickinson, and others who did not sign the attendance sheet.

Chair Brandie Starr called the meeting to order at 6:15pm. She confirmed that the meeting was properly warned.

SELECTBOARD COMMENTS AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

Schoales reported that the Workforce Development Committee of the Community Equity Collaborative sponsored the second annual Bridge to Brattleboro student visit yesterday with a dozen college students of color from Franklin Pierce College. He said they participated in site visits with members of the Town, School District, Hospital, HCRS, Building Green, and the Police Department, followed by lunch with a group of community members at The Root Social Justice Center. Town Manager Elwell spoke about the positive nature of the event. Police Chief Fitzgerald said that his department had been involved with the Community Equity Collaborative for a few years and that he was pleased to showcase the Police Department and the Town to the college students. He added that some members of the Police Department were invited to Franklin Pierce College last spring to speak with graduates from the criminal justice program.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Michael Lonardo, property owner on Marlboro Avenue, spoke about the recent spike in property thefts and break-ins into homes and vehicles in his neighborhood. He said that neighbors were frightened, and he asked for a public forum for residents to speak with members of the Police Department, Selectboard, and local and state legislators. He said that he had installed lights and recording devices on his property. He thanked the Chief and Town Manager for coming to meet with the neighbors last evening.

Adrasteia Andrews said that she read that it was not a crime for people to enter into someone else's car. Chief Fitzgerald confirmed that Vermont did not have a law making it a crime to enter another person's vehicle so long as they did not cause damage or steal from it. Andrews said that was confusing and she hoped to learn more at the upcoming public forum. She suggested gifting "no trespassing" signs to the public. She also inquired about the liability associated with posting individuals' faces on Facebook if she believed they were the offender. She also asked about opinions on preventing 5G from coming into Town.

George Anthes stated that it was an offense in the countryside to trespass if the property was posted or if someone had been warned not to trespass, but that in town it was not a crime unless the person entered someone's car that was within a gated or fenced property. He clarified that entering into homes without permission was always trespassing.

Chief Fitzgerald confirmed there had been a significant spike in larcenies and attempted vehicle larcenies in the past 3 months. He reported that 12 incidents were reported last year in this time period and that 39 incidents were reported this year in the same time period. He said that the incidents occurred in certain areas and that the Police had been speaking with neighbors and had changed some tactics in response to the increase, particularly during overnight hours. He encouraged the public to call the police even if

nothing was stolen because the police may be able to arrest that person because they may be in violation of other conditions. He said that such reports would be added to the department's data base and could assist with tactical efforts. He cautioned about posting pictures on Facebook. Captain Carignan confirmed that it was not a crime in Vermont to enter into a car or onto someone else's property unless the property was posted or the person had been warned against trespassing. He agreed that entering into someone's home was a crime.

There was some discussion by the Board. Starr announced that a public forum to discuss this matter was scheduled on Saturday February 29, at 10:00am, at the Library. She said that the children's room would be open and that organized childcare was being discussed. Town Manager Elwell said that the forum was in the planning stages and additional information would be released when available.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Approve Selectboard's Recommended FY21 Budget. Elwell noted that the Board held several discussions over the past three months about the proposed FY21 Budget, and the decisions made by the Board at those meetings were included in his January 23 memo. He said that a two-page summary was attached to that memorandum and the proposed 20-page budget in a detailed spreadsheet was included in the Board's back-up materials. He said that the Board was asked to approve the budget as its' recommended FY21 Budget to be included in the Town Report and considered at the Representative Town Meeting on March 21, 2020. Franz Reichsman, from the Finance Committee, provided comment and asked for a clarification. There was some discussion about the thoughtfulness that went into the proposed budget.

MOTION BY DAVE SCHOALES TO APPROVE THE FY21 PROPOSED BUDGET AS PRESENTED AND ADD IT TO THE WARNING FOR REPRESENTATIVE TOWN MEETING. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.

Approve Town Meeting Warnings - Annual Town Meeting on Tuesday, March 3, and Representative Town Meeting on Saturday, March 21, 2020. Elwell said that the Board reviewed the draft warnings at the January 21 Selectboard meeting, and that the warning for the March 3 Town Meeting was modified slightly to eliminate Article 2 (Election of School Directors) at the direction of the School District. He added that the March 3 and the March 21 warnings were divided into separate documents to accommodate including the School District's separate warning for the March 3 Town Meeting election. Schoales clarified that all of the towns in the unified school district would be voting on March 3 for school directors from all of the towns. He said that a candidates' forum for school directors would be scheduled and posted on the school's website soon. There was some discussion by the Board.

MOTION BY DANIEL QUIPP TO APPROVE AS PRESENTED THE WARNING FOR THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING TO BE HELD ON MARCH 3, 2020, AND THE WARNING FOR THE ANNUAL REPRESENTATIVE TOWN MEETING TO BE HELD ON MARCH 21, 2020. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.

NEW BUSINESS

Appointment for Ratification at Representative Town Meeting - Interim Town Treasurer. Elwell said that the Board was asked to appoint Assistant Treasurer Deborah Desrosiers as Interim Town Treasurer, following the retirement of Finance Director John O'Connor, until a new Finance Director was hired. There was a brief discussion by the Board.

MOTION BY ELIZABETH McLOUGHLIN TO APPOINT DEBORAH DESROSIERS AS INTERIM TOWN TREASURER, SUBJECT TO RATIFICATION AT THE REPRESENTATIVE TOWN MEETING ON MARCH 21, 2020. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.

Sidewalk Project to Connect the New Hinsdale Bridge to Royal Road – VTrans Municipal Assistance Bureau Grant Recipient Project Commitments Form. Elwell said that the Board was asked to authorize him to execute a Project Commitments Form and for him to submit it to the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) to indicate the Town's commitment to partnership with VTrans in the design and

construction of a sidewalk between Royal Road and the new Hinsdale Bridge. He said that VTrans would pay 80% of the cost of the sidewalk (plus 100% of the cost of intersection improvements at Route 142 and Royal Road), while the Town would pay 20% of the cost and provide in-kind procurement and project management services, as set forth in his memorandum dated January 23, 2020. Franz Reichsman, from the Finance Committee, inquired about the effect of the bridge project on the 5-way intersection at lower Main Street. There was a brief discussion by the Board.

MOTION BY TIM WESSEL TO AUTHORIZE TOWN MANAGER ELWELL TO SIGN AND SUBMIT A PROJECT COMMITMENTS FORM TO THE VERMONT AGENCY OF TRANSPORTATION FOR A SIDEWALK PROJECT TO CONNECT THE NEW HINSDALE BRIDGE WITH ROYAL ROAD. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.

There was no further business.

MOTION BY DAVE SCHOALES TO ADJOURN AT 7:15PM. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.

Elizabeth McLoughlin, Clerk