

Town of Mendon

Selectboard

November 22, 2021

Members of Selectboard present: Richard Wilcox, Larry Courcelle, Val Taylor

Town Officers and employees present: Sara Tully, Town Administrator & Health Officer, Bill Ellis, Road Commissioner, Nancy Gondella, Town Clerk & Treasurer, Mary Ann Reich, Deputy Health Officer

Visitors present: Fred Bagley, Cort Jones, Bryan Sells, Jessica Sardelli, Cameron Sardelli

The Selectboard Meeting was called to order at 5:00 PM at the Town Office.

Agenda:

Motion by R. Wilcox to approve the agenda with the addition of ARPA Community Outreach Meeting and Reapportionment update. Motion seconded by L. Courcelle. The Selectboard unanimously approved the motion.

Announcement

Selectboard Rules of Procedure are available for view.

The Selectboard meetings in December will be held on December 7th at 8:30 AM and December 13th at 5:30 PM at the Town Office. There will be no meeting on December 27th.

Administrative Matters

Selectmen's Orders were reviewed.

Motion by R. Wilcox to approve orders for 11/16 for \$60.64 and \$101,494.43. Motion seconded by V. Taylor. The Selectboard unanimously approved the motion.

The Selectboard Meetings in December will be changed to December 7th at 8:30 AM and December 13th at 5:30 PM. The Selectboard changed the start time of meetings from 5 PM to 5:30 PM.

Minutes of Previous Meeting: L. Courcelle moved to approve the minutes of 11/9/21. Motion seconded by V. Taylor. The motion passed.

Public Comment None

Business

ARPA Community Outreach The Selectboard will schedule a community outreach meeting to collect ideas of projects that would be eligible for American Rescue Plan Act funding. ARPA funds are federal dollars that require projects to be eligible and follow strict spending and reporting requirements. L. Courcelle informed the Board that Eric Hall, Rutland Regional Planning Commission is attending community meetings to discuss project eligibility. The Selectboard try to schedule the meeting so Eric Hall can assist to facilitate the discussion in Mendon. This meeting will be scheduled for January 2022.

Reapportionment N. Gondella reported that she reached out to the Town Clerk in Killington regarding their position on reapportionment districts. Killington has made the same recommendation as Mendon which support a district of Chittenden, Mendon, Killington and Pittsfield as all Rutland County towns meetings the population requirement. N. Gondella also reached out to Rutland Town which did not support Rutland Town being broken up into multiple districts and would welcome a population of 200 people to join a district with Rutland Town. N. Gondella will continue to gather information from Chittenden and Pittsfield. The Reapportionment Council will be updating their recommendation and submitting it to the legislature in January.

Rutland Regional Ambulance Service Mary Ann Reich provided information about the Regional Ambulance Service and the 2022-2023 budget request which has remained level funding for many years. M. Reich provided an update on COVID and some of the reasons for community spread. She stressed the importance of safety procedures to protect the employees. She also discussed hospital capacity and encouraged the town to keep track of what is going on in the community.

COVID-19 Safety Procedures S. Tully provided an overview of COVID-19 cases as reported by the Vermont Department of Health dashboard. Currently, there is a 14 day total in Rutland County of 853 which has seen a sharp and consistent over the past month. In September the town implemented a mask requirement regardless of vaccination status in all Mendon owned buildings and vehicles when social distancing can not be accomplished. At that time cases were on the rise in Rutland County and were at 386 on September 27th. The legislature convened a special session on November 23rd to discuss providing authority to municipalities to impose a town-wide mask mandate that would be temporary. S. Tully reported the mask requirement in the municipal buildings and vehicles was based off a VOSHA workplace safety memo that continues to be posted on the state's website. S. Tully recommended the safety procedures remain in place until the town receives information otherwise or if cases dramatically decrease in the community. The Selectboard agreed to keep the mask requirement in place.

Mendon on the Move:

Transportation Alternative Grant F. Bagley and D. Neary submitted the final draft of the Transportation Alternative Grant to conduct a scoping study of Route 4. The application incorporated the individual comments from the Selectboard last week. The Selectboard approved the final draft and S. Tully will submit tomorrow.

Report from Mendon on the Move Outdoor Recreation Committee J. Sardelli, C. Sardelli, B. Sells, and C. Jones provided an update on goals of the Mendon Mountain Biking Club to expand trails in Mendon. The club would like the Selectboard support to approach Rutland City to allow trails through the Rutland City Forest in Mendon. The former Beaver Pond access on Route 4 provides parking as well a potential opportunity to connect with the Velomont Trail planned to be developed in the area. The club reported the Rutland City Department of Public Works expressed concern about erosion from trails and its effects on the Rutland City Watershed. They would like the opportunity to dismiss these concerns and educate how trails could be constructed to not effect the watershed. The Selectboard agreed to issue a letter to support the project and instructed the Mendon Mountain Biking Club to be well prepared in their presentation. The Selectboard stressed the town values our relationship with the City of Rutland. The Mendon Mountain Biking Club also requested an appropriation for the 2022-2023 budget. The Selectboard provided instruction on how to petition the town for new appropriation requests.

Reappraisal Recap N. Gondella presented a wrap up for the town-wide reappraisal. The BCA heard 44 appeals resulting in a decrease of property values of \$1,563,400 and a municipal tax decrease of \$5,940. There are currently 13 appeals that have not reached the deadline to appeal to the state but at this time the town is aware of five appeals to the state appraiser and one appeal to Superior Court. According to 32 V.S.A. §4461 the Selectboard can settle an appeal before it reaches a hearing by stipulating to a result in rating with the taxpayer. The stipulation must be offered to the state appraiser or court for approval and the issuance of an order. Any change of appraisal as a result of a settlement or appeal to the State Appraiser or Superior Court made after the end of the year will require the town to not only absorb the municipal tax difference but also the education tax difference. If values are lowered by the State Appraiser or Superior Court the town must also reimburse with a 1% per month interest and if the value is changed more than 20% the appeal fee paid by the applicant must also be reimbursed.

Motion by R. Wilcox to enter Executive Session at 6:45 PM pursuant to 1 V.S.A. §313 for the purpose of discussing property appeals to the State Appraiser or Superior Court with the Selectboard, N. Gondella and S. Tully present. Motion seconded by L. Courcelle. The Selectboard unanimously approved the motion. The chair declared the board out of Executive Session at 7:45 pm.

No action taken by the Board as a result of discussions in Executive Session.

Road Reclassification – The Selectboard reviewed a report submitted by David Conger, Dubois & King with estimates of required work to upgrade the legal trail on the Falls Road to class 3 through the first two hills. The total cost is estimated at \$887,000. The Highway Reserve Fund has budgeted \$220,000 for part of the required work.

Regional Emergency Management Committees Motion by L. Courcelle to appoint Phil Douglas and Val Taylor as Mendon’s voting members of the Regional Emergency Management Committee. Motion seconded by R. Wilcox. The Selectboard unanimously approved the motion.

Update Job Descriptions S. Tully provided a draft of an updated Director of Public Safety Job Description. Discussion tabled until the next meeting.

2022-2023 *Budget* Tabled until the next meeting.

There being no further business, R. Wilcox moved to adjourn at 8:30 PM. Motion seconded by V. Taylor.
The Selectboard approved the motion.

Date Approved _____

Richard Wilcox

Sara Tully - Clerk of the Board

Larry Courcelle

Val Taylor