

Town of Danville
Selectboard Minutes
December 1, 2022
Danville Town Hall (6:00 pm)

Board Members Using Microsoft Teams: Kellie Merrell and Peter Griffin

Board Members Present: Eric Bach and Janice Ouellette

Board Members Absent: Ken Linsley

Others Present: Audrey DeProspero, Keith Gadapee, Jim Brimblecombe, David Kyle and Wendy Somers

Others Present Using Microsoft Teams: Craig Morris

Meeting called to order by Chair Eric Bach at 6:01 pm.

1. **Additions to the agenda:** Budget Committee December Schedule
2. *Motion by Kellie Merrell, 2nd by Janice Ouellette to approve minutes of Regular meeting of November 17, 2022 as written. Vote 4-0-0. All in favor.*
3. **Visitors**
 - **Jim Brimblecombe, H2O Innovations – Wastewater Treatment Plant ARPA fund request –** Upgrades to the facility are needed and ARPA funds are being asked to be used for these upgrades. A 10K watt generator is needed if the power goes out so that the plant will still have heat and UV units, the Sugar Ridge pump station and the one down by Marty's are both in need of attention as the rails, electrical and controls are dated, the UV units are almost 20 years old and the controls are having issues, some indicator lights have been replaced but those are just temporary band aids, the SCADA/Alarms for all pump stations are needed currently and the only station with an alarm is on the Danville/Peacham Road, a lagoon cover is needed, an influent flow meter is needed and siding is needed to be done next year on the building.

Eric Bach noted the Selectboard had not made any solid whereabouts for use of the ARPA money and the wastewater system is for a specific group of people in Danville.

Janice Ouellette discussed obtaining other grants that they could use the ARPA funds for.

Kellie Merrell discussed sewer plant and Secretary Moore's letter regarding increased monitoring fees. Kellie Merrell suggested taking the list of upgrades and setting up a meeting with Secretary Moore to find out what other ARPA funds are available for sewer treatment plants. She noted she would follow up with Tom Brown in regards to his earlier discussion with the Selectboard.

The possibility of available sewer funds was discussed however the Town Clerk was not present to give information.

Increased Waste Water Treatment Facility Monitoring

Jim Brimblecombe discussed the letter sent by ANR Secretary Julie Moore. This letter has been forwarded to Randy Bean. Jim Brimblecombe would like Randy Bean's opinion on the letter and how to proceed.

Kellie Merrell discussed the entire State of Vermont being evaluated for permits and monitoring as it was not being done sufficiently.

Jim Brimblecombe noted once he receives a reply from Randy Bean he would come back to the Selectboard to discuss.

PFAS Lawsuit

Jim Brimblecombe discussed the national class-action lawsuit against manufacturers of PFAS compounds which has been filed by the National Rural Water Association. He suggested the Town register before the end of the year. There's nothing the Town needs to do except to register and if they qualify in the lawsuit they will receive money, if they do not, they will not.

Consensus is for Audrey DeProspero to fill out the online registration paperwork.

- 1) **David Kyle – H518 (Energy)** – member of the Danville Energy Committee and one who supported the Window Dressers initiative. David Kyle noted there are currently no funds available from H518, it is a six-to-twelve-month process then there is a three-year process to expend the funds. H518 is energy efficiency, greenhouse gas of fleet of buildings for municipal owned government. Legislation passed bill on how to expend money: 1) energy audit by single contractor who will audit every town in the state. The completed assessment must be done by January 2024; 2) every town is eligible for up to \$500,000 for collection of projects approved by audit; and 3) application process for grants. The cost is fully paid for by this grant with no matching funds. A revolving fund is set up for every town who qualifies to expend these funds. Grants are to be awarded by 2024 and then expended by 2026.

Peter Griffin discussed the program having ability to borrow money and wondered if it was attached to this grant program.

David Kyle noted it was not attached to this grant.

Discussion ensued on solar canopies and heat pumps.

4. Town Clerk (Wendy Somers) –

- Certificate of Compliance for sewer connection for Ramsdell on Upper Drive which was approved at the prior meeting now needs signature.

Motion by Kellie Merrell, 2nd by Janice Ouellette to authorize Eric Bach to sign the Certificate of Compliance for the Ramsdell's sewer connection on Upper Drive. Vote 4-0-0. Motion carries.

- There are \$640,636.51 in ARPA funds available.
- Health Insurance for 2023 (MVP vs BCBS). MVP is lower than BCBS. MVP is also the current health insurance carrier for full time employees. MVP cost is \$122,456.52 for 9 full time employees while BCBS is \$125,478.12. Staying with MVP saves the town \$4,415.04.

Peter Griffin inquired if there was any reason to not go with what they currently have.

Wendy Somers noted no.

Keith Gadapee noted the only feedback he received was MVP is a little cumbersome for the HRA.

Janice Ouellette inquired how long the Town had been with MVP.

Wendy Somers noted one year.

Janice Ouellette inquired who they were with before.

Wendy Somers noted BCBS.

Discussion ensued regarding cost difference between both companies and staying with MVP and relooking at it again next year.

Motion by Kellie Merrell, 2nd by Janice Ouellette to accept the MVP Platinum Insurance Plan for 2023. Vote 4-0-0. Motion carries.

5. **Highway Foreman** (Keith Gadapee) –

- Curb Cut for Walden Hill Road for a permanent driveway.

*Motion by Kellie Merrell, 2nd by Peter Griffin to approve the Curb Cut for Walden Hill Road.
Vote 4-0-0. Motion carries.*

- Permission to apply for Better Roads Grant. The application is due in December and is a \$20,000 grant which is for stone lined ditches and water. The plan is to do work on Hastings Hill Road.

Motion by Kellie Merrell, 2nd by Peter Griffin to support the Better Roads Grant and for Keith Gadapee to apply for the grant. Vote 4-0-0. Motion carries.

- Permission to apply for grant which does not open until January 1, 2023. The grant is a PACIF grant thru VLCT for safety items. Keith Gadapee would like to use the money to purchase a backup camera on the new dump truck being built and a tailgate stop mechanism that is used to latch in to the tailgate to keep it open so it does not pinch part of a person's body who would be working on the body of the truck. This grant is 100% and does not require a match.

*Motion by Kellie Merrell, 2nd by Peter Griffin for Keith Gadapee to apply for the VLCT PACIF grant.
Vote 4-0-0. Motion carries.*

6. **Issues and Information** (All)

(a) **Health Insurance** – See Town Clerk's report.

(b) **Increased Waste Water Treatment Facility Monitoring** – See Visitor Section: Jim Brimblecombe.

(c) **Personnel Policy** –

Janice Ouellette received input from Jill Muhr of VLCT on the Personnel Policy, there was a concern for use of town equipment.

Keith Gadapee noted it was personal equipment brought into garage to change oil and use tools not equipment. The employees are not bringing an excavator home.

Eric Bach noted they may not want to take away, but perhaps just change wording. He noted there would be tweaks moving forward and legalities, however the overall piece is that we are going down the right path.

Keith Gadapee noted that Janice Ouellette has put together a presentation that she is still working on regarding what has changed. This document shows in detail what is different in the personnel plan from the original one.

Kellie Merrell inquired about feelings on the new policy.

Keith Gadapee noted old Vermonters don't like change and he is hoping his crew goes into this with an open mind to advance.

Janice Ouellette noted they need to look at FMLA/FMSA as they don't have 10 full time employees and by adding an additional road crew person, they still don't have 10.

Kellie Merrell suggested to add it in the new policy.

Janice Ouellette noted if it was listed then there were many hoops to jump thru.

Keith Gadapee suggested to hold it out until they have 10.

Kellie Merrell wondered what would happen if three women become pregnant and required time off.

Keith Gadapee noted they are available to use their 510 hours of accrued sick time leave which divided by 40 is 12 weeks.

Craig Morris noted that the Town is always going back to the state as a comparison and the state does not give any maternity leave.

Keith Gadapee noted this would be a definite change in the present system that they currently have.

Eric Bach noted he was okay with the policy that they have however the general overall is to let employees see it and explain things and iron things out.

- (d) **Pay Scale** – Eric Bach – we have created an actual pay matrix. Before there was just a base rate which didn't matter. The new system is based on how long you are here and the base rate is similar to where they are now. There are 15 potential steps, the higher the step is the more pay. The longer you have been here the more pay. The matrix is broken up into five-year increments. A percentage of increase is listed to help understand the increase. As steps go up there are more things an employee will have to do. There will be training and more knowledge learned by employees. Pay increase is based on longevity. Bottom of chart shows standard benefit package amount and the current crew is represented by colors. The first year the employee would move quickly, once they've been here 1-5 years, they'd be looking at increase, during the 5 to 10 year mark the steps won't be happening that much. During annual reviews a committee will be evaluating persons to see if they need to increase a step. This will allow the Selectboard to give a more modest cost of living increase. The steps give individuals a chance to learn and advance.

Kellie Merrell agrees with the matrix.

Peter Griffin looked at all and agrees but wondered if there was anyway anyone on their staff would see a smaller pay check.

Eric Bach noted no. Once this is implemented, they will be on different levels.

Kellie Merrell noted this would make the Town competitive with VTrans.

Peter Griffin noted this was a big step forward in terms of equity and clarity and supported it.

Keith Gadapee discussed descriptions for pay grades and noted trainings are part of descriptions and VLR trains highway folks and offers a ton of things along with achievements. He noted he has already planned his goals meeting for January with employees.

Eric Bach discussed descriptions and noted this was not a perfect document and may need to be tweaked many times but after the first year of implementation, it will help iron out the needed changes.

Discussion ensued regarding meeting dates: Meeting with Highway Department planned for December 8th at 7:30 and policy to be voted on at December 15th Selectboard meeting to move forward on January 1, 2023.

Janice Ouellette inquired as to what would happen if the budget didn't pass.

Eric Bach noted if the budget doesn't pass, they would have to re-evaluate.

Discussion ensued regarding relooking at budget items and the removal of items.

- (e) **Budget Committee Schedule for December** – Eric Bach – noted since three members of the Selectboard were meeting for the Budget Committee the meetings needed to be warned.

Discussion between Janice Ouellette, Peter Griffin and Eric Bach regarding dates for Budget Committee meetings. Decided was December 8 at 1pm, 13th at 10am and 20th at 9am.

Meetings are warned meetings and public is welcome.

7. **Financials: Orders to review and sign** – Financials Signed.

8. **Adjourn** - *Motion by Janice Ouellette, 2nd by Kellie Merrell to adjourn at 8:30 pm. All in favor.*

Minutes taken by Audrey DeProspero submitted December 2, 2022 at 12:36 pm.