

**Town of Tinmouth
Select Board
Thursday, December 12, 2024
Meeting Minutes (Regular)**

Members present (in-person): Kevin Eaton, Melody Squier, and Judy Gilmore

Others present:

In-person: Eric Buffum-Road Commissioner, Michael Fallar, Marshall Squier, Caleb Scott, David Birdsall, Hollis Squier, Doug Fontein, Rep. Chris Pritchard, and Gail Fallar-Select Board Assistant (SBA)

Via Zoom and phone: Sherry Johnson, Kim Harbaugh, Nancy Gucker Birdsall, Cindy Pollock, and Rick Fallar

Kevin called the meeting to order at 7:00, welcomed everyone.

Members reviewed the **agenda** – no changes.

Minutes of 11/14/24 and 12/4/24 - Judy moved, Kevin 2nded to approve as written, all voted in favor.

Citizen's Input ~ David expressed concern with meeting videos being deleted from the Town's website, Board added to the agenda for January 9th. Gail advised that none of the videos have been deleted.

Kim expressed support for appointing Marshall Squier to the Planning Commission, and concern that trucks were purchased to go places, icy or muddy.

Highway ~

Eric reported road crew has been plowing, **flagging for the tree work** being done, sander for the one-ton truck needs repair. He advised the Board go out to bid with the specs for the 615 International for a **replacement tandem truck**. After discussion, Kevin moved and Melody 2nded to send out requests with a return date of January 9th. All voted in favor. Discussed Equipment Fund, with the FY25 allotment and the FY26 allotment, there should be enough.

Board reviewed FY24 **Highway End of Year report**, Melody moved and Judy 2nded to accept, all voted in favor. Board will review draft budget proposal for January meeting.

VLCT PACIF Safety Grant application for an alarm system for the town garage, after discussion, Board agreed by consensus to ratify the Chair's signing due to the deadline.

Better Roads grant – Eric noted that Josh Carvajal (VTRANS stream alteration specialist) advised that a hydraulic study was needed before he could determine the needed culvert size. That will take time, the deadline for this grant is December 27th – so have to pass for this year.

Transfer Station Retaining Wall ~ Board discussed the deterioration of the wall – 40 years or so old, old poles are rotting. Eric noted he would like to cut it down to match the wall for the metal dumpster and rebuild the roof. Board asked for an estimate for their special meeting on the 30th.

VAST (Vermont Association of Snow Travelers) request – Eric requested permission for snowmobilers to use the Town Trail in the Purchase and down to the ball field. It will not be on the official VAST map, but the change was necessary as a previous location next to the town garage lot is no longer available. Board agreed by consensus.

Financial ~

FY 24 General Fund End of Year Report – Kevin moved and Judy 2nded to accept – all voted in favor.

Bills and Orders ~ Board reviewed warrants, Judy moved and Kevin 2nded to approve all. All voted in favor. Payroll warrants #20, 21, 22, and 23; and Accounts Payable warrants #18 and 19.

ARPA ~ Current balance of unallocated of \$22,613 is left. It was suggested that some of it be used to help underprivileged for help with wood, fuel oil, etc. Other possible uses are an updated OWL speaker system

– estimated to cost \$4K to \$5K and will allow for better participation for virtual users; as well as air exchangers for the town office. Will discuss further at a special meeting on December 30th.

Rep. Chris Pritchard – Chris advised he was checking in with all the Boards to offer his contact information and ask for concerns to take to Montpelier. He wants to be accessible to everyone. Major concern raised was property taxes.

Employee Holiday Bonus ~ Board agreed by consensus to pay a \$100 holiday bonus to the road crew, transfer station crew and the town office staff.

Pavilion Next Steps ~ Melody advised that an engineer from Otter Creek Engineering had advised that the pavilion would have little effect on the water run-off as long as it was built without addressing the existing water issue. If the ditching was done as first proposed, that might require some engineering work. So now the proposal is to build the pavilion with a gravel (shur pak) floor, a wide drip line, and not fix the water problem.

There were concerns raised: about not doing anything with the long existing wet area, scheduling its use, bathroom access, and lack of process (like not going out to bid).

These were met with: why worry if the funds are donated, it's a gift – don't worry about getting a better price, don't look a gift horse in the mouth, and there were many unanswered questions when the community center was built that were dealt with after it was constructed.

47 voters signed a **petition** for the Select Board to hold a special vote in January. *"Shall the Town of Timmouth accept the gift of a timber framed community shade structure, to be constructed on the Town Green next to the playground, to be paid for with grants, donations and volunteer labor?"*

Much discussion. Why couldn't the vote wait until town meeting (March 4th). Supporters wanted the early vote to be able to secure contractors. Others thought the Select Board should add the question to the town meeting warning.

After discussion which included advice from the Vermont League of Cities and Towns that petitions could not specify a date and that this might set a precedent for future petitions; and that the Board could add it to the warning for town meeting, Melody moved and Kevin 2nded to accept the petition. They voted yes, Judy voted no (noting that town meeting was just around the corner).

After more discussion of time frames required, Melody moved and Kevin 2nded to hold a **Special Town Meeting** on Tuesday, January 28th, with the Informational meeting on Saturday, January 25th at 1:00 at the Community Center. All voted in favor.

Board scheduled a **special Select Board meeting** on December 18th to approve and sign the warning for the special town meeting. Melody will draft a letter to the Town of Marshfield and VTTimber Frames advising them of the current status of the pavilion project, for the Board to review at that meeting.

Planning Commission (PC) Vacancy ~ Michael as PC Chair, advised that the PC voted 7 to 1 to recommend Joe Buffum be appointed to the Planning Commission to fill the vacancy created by Bob Lloyd's resignation. They also felt that Robbie Leeds would be a good choice if another vacancy occurred. After discussion, Judy moved and Kevin 2nded to appoint Joe Buffum, they both voted yes, Melody abstained.

Peg-TV request ~ Board added to the special meeting on the 30th, having come up with more questions.

Meeting adjourned at 9:0 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Gail Fallar, Select Board Assistant