

Rockingham Selectboard

Tuesday, February 20, 2024, 6 pm in the Lower Theater

Present: Chair, Peter Golec, Vice-Chair, Elijah Zimmer, Rick Cowan, Bonnie North, Susan Hammond, Selectboard; Scott Pickup, Municipal Manager; Gary Fox, Development Director; Walter Wallace, CLG Coordinator; John Leppman, RMHA; Stan Talstra, Walk Bike Committee; Kathy Urffer, CT River Conservancy; Andrew Smith, Jamey Berrick, Steve Crofter, Betsy Thurston, Residents

Zoom: Press: FACT TV, Alex Stradling, Brattleboro Reformer Susan Smallheer Board of Liquor Control

1. A) Application for Second Class License
B) Application for Tobacco License (112 Rockingham St. Walgreen's)
2. A) Outside Consumption Permit
B) First Class Club License
C) Third Class Club License (59 Westminster St. Moose Lodge #527)
3. Application for First Class Restaurant/Bar License (275 Williams Rd. Vermont Vines Vineyard)
4. Application for Second Class License (1292 Rockingham Rd. Vermont Country Store)
5. Application for First Class Commercial Caterer (59 Westminster St. Wild Goose Players)
6. Application for Outside Consumption Permit (Rte 103 Bellows Falls Country Club)
7. Application for Second Class License (809 Rockingham Rd. Sandri #210)
8. Art Gallery Serving Permit (single event 2/23/24) (35 Main Street, Main Street Arts)
North moved to approve all (8) License applications, Cowan seconded and motion carried.

Approve Minutes of February 6, 2024: *Zimmer moved to approve minutes of 2/6/24, North seconded. Motion carried.*

Additions to the Agenda for Routine Administrative Matters and/or Pressing Matters that will require ratification at a future meeting: None

Public Comment on Items Not on the Agenda (3 minutes per person): *Berrick asked if a presentation with all 3 Fire Departments on Feasibility study would involve public input. Pickup said Fire Committee Meeting was open to the public, on Thursday, February 22 5:30 pm in the 3rd Floor Conference Room. He asked for the Town website to be updated with Glen Schreiter's contact on Highway Dept. and Saxtons River Fire Station valid website link. He suggested Library events; Third Saturdays Meet Legislators and this Saturday, Feb. 24 Introduction to Town Meetings should be on Town Calendar.*

Manager's Report- Pickup said Asplundh would be starting tree work to include pruning around power lines and neighbors should see door knocker labels to indicate they will be

in your neighborhoods. The blue ribbons on the Ash trees along Atkinson Street are the ones infested by the Emerald Ash Borer and unfortunately would be removed. Zimmer requested they propose a plan to replace the trees.

1. Approve Final Town Meeting Warning and Articles April 1 & 2, 2024 -Pickup said there were two Warnings, one indicating the **Town Meeting delay: Monday, April 1, with election on April 2, 2024**, with an additional article for the Town Meetings to be held on the Saturday preceding the first Tuesday in March, and the other Warning with the updated date of **Town Meeting April 1, with election on April 2, 2024**. *Cowan moved to approve the first, with the Article for Town Meeting on Saturday, North seconded.* Hammond was concerned this additional change was confusing and said they had decided to hold a Special Meeting to discuss a change of day for Town Meeting. Cowan and North agreed that based on survey results 82% indicated inconvenience of Monday night as a reason for not voting, so both supported the Warning to vote on holding Town Meeting on Saturday. Golec was concerned about parking on a Saturday. Zimmer said the complication of improper posting of the Warning was confusing and suggested the timing was not the best. Berrick agreed with Zimmer and Hammond. Pickup clarified the April 1 Town Meeting would involve the school board and select board, but as it is a Presidential primary election and by state mandate the High School and River Valley Tech Center budgets must be vote upon on Tuesday, March 5. All other Articles will be discussed on April 1, voted upon on April 2. Golec said a press release and warning went to The Shopper after the lawyers met, on Feb. 16, 2024. Cowan and North agreed a Special Meeting was appropriate. *Cowan moved to withdraw motion. North moved to redact prior motion to adopt the Warning with Article 31 to vote on meeting on the Saturday preceding first Tuesday in March, Zimmer seconded. By roll call motion was approved. NEW MOTION: North moved to adopt the Warning eliminating Article 3 to meet on Saturday, March 1, 2025 and to eliminate Article 31 to vote on meeting on the Saturday preceding first Tuesday in March. Cowan seconded and by roll call, the motion was unanimously approved.*
2. Presentation on FERC Re-licensing (Kathy Urffer)- Urffer explained the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) re-licensing began in 2012. This license affects 175 miles of the CT river and will not be renewed again until **2064**. Cowan mentioned threatened bobolinks and eastern bluebirds on hayfields owned by Great River. Urffer suggested that comment should be shared with FERC. Public comments are desired, so if there are concerns, suggestions and desires for the

river, conservation, public access, etc. visit the CRC website at <https://www.ctriver.org/our-work/hydropower/>

3. Consideration of Waypoint Center Use June 8, 2024 Bellows Falls Rotary- The Board suggested half price, plus the \$50 facility use. *Cowan made the motion to approve the reduced fee for a total of \$175 for the BF Rotary use of Waypoint Center on 6/8/24, Zimmer seconded, motion carried.*
4. Draft Update to Open Burning Ordinance and Permit to Kindle Fire- Pickup suggested an attorney should assist with language and add specific guidelines for fee collection. Hammond suggested they add fireworks to the permits. Smith added his concern about permits and general air quality issues due to impending wildfire smoke. *Cowan moved to authorize the Municipal Manager to expand and improve the process and rules governing the application. Golec suggested the fee schedule should be attached. Permit will be available online once drafted. Hammond seconded, motion carried.*
5. DTF Bellows Falls Complete Streets and Gateway Project- Pickup said this project would rehab bumpouts, ADA compliant requirements, green infrastructure additions, lighting at crosswalks and on Rockingham St. and design a gateway arch at the Designated Downtown.
North moved the resolution to allocate and expend \$24,000 of Town of Rockingham highway funds for the Bellows Falls Complete Streets and Gateway Project as presented, and sign said document. Zimmer seconded; motion carried.
6. USDA EWP 796 Saxtons River Road Erosion Mitigation- Pickup explained the Budzik land was impacted heavily by July flooding, and this grant was a pass-through assistance grant but needed Town's agreement to provide the 25% match, at no cost to the Town and was paid for by the Budzik's, for a total project cost of \$115K. *Cowan moved to authorize the Municipal Manager to execute the USDA Emergency Watershed Protection Grant application as presented and any related documents. Zimmer seconded and motion carried.*
7. USDA Rural Business Development Grant Wayfinding System and Website Upgrades- Fox said with the VT Outdoor Recreation Economic Collaborative (VOREC) grant the funding would help the Town rework the website, to be more user friendly. The Village Trustees had approved \$50K ARPA funding, this was

\$10K for technical assistance, with no match required. This funding would assist the wayfinding and marketing aspect of the project, total cost of \$105K and enhance standard operating procedures.

Cowan moved to authorize the Municipal Manager to execute the USDA RBDG application for \$10K and any related documents. Zimmer seconded and motion carried. Berrick asked if there would be a single point of contact at Town Hall. Pickup said in most municipalities it was the Town Clerk, and this would be part of the discussion.

8. NPS Semiquincentennial Grant Rockingham Meeting House Resolution- Wallace announced this was a \$750K grant, with no required match to pay for Phase II (clapboards and plaster) and III (pews and interior woodwork), they have procured funding for Phase I. Leppman said the building would be raised by hydraulics. *North moved to approve the resolution, "Whereas, the Town of Rockingham owns the Rockingham Meeting House property located at 11 Meeting House Rd., Rockingham, VT 05101. And whereas, the RMH is a designated National Historic Landmark. And whereas, the Town of Rockingham accepts stewardship of the RMH on behalf of the American people, and whereas the Town Meeting House property is undergoing a major preservation project to ensure the building stands for future generations, And whereas the National Park Service has issued a request for proposal for a Cultural Resources Financial Assistance Semiquincentennial Grant (CRFASG) (Opportunity P23AS00504) geared to preserve cultural resources related to the founding of the nation in anticipation of July 4, 2026, and whereas, the Rockingham Town Selectboard recognizes that Semiquincentennial Grants are awarded through a competitive process and do not require non-Federal match. BE IT RESOLVED that the Town of Rockingham Select Board approves submission of a proposal in response to a request for proposal from the NPS for a CRFASG (Opportunity P23AS00504) geared to preserve cultural resources related to the founding of the nation in anticipation of July 4, 2026, in the amount of \$750,000."* Cowan seconded the resolution, motion carried unanimously.
9. Town of Rockingham- Rockingham Meeting House Association Contract Approval for Services with CPG Enterprises, Inc. *Zimmer moved the Resolution for CPG Enterprises, Inc. and authorize the Municipal Manager to execute the contract agreement with CPG Enterprises, Inc contingent on a \$15,000 donation to the Town for this purpose and authorize sub-contracting to the Rockingham*

Meeting House Association, with a pass-through of all terms and conditions, seconded by Cowan and motion passed unanimously.

Review & Approve Orders, Bills & Warrants- *Zimmer moved to approve orders, bills and warrants, Cowan seconded. Motion passed unanimously.*

Review Agenda Items for next SB meeting on Tuesday, March 19, 2024 (TOWN MEETING on Monday, April 1 with voting March 5 and April 2)

- ISO New England presentation

Review Agenda Items for Tri-Board Meeting- Tuesday, April 30, 2024

- Fire Feasibility Report
- Tax Sale
- VHB and VTrans presentation on Depot St Bridge Project

Other Business- Zimmer thanked everyone for their efforts in the projects and grants that were being submitted: Wallace, Pickup, Fox, Thurston.

Executive Session- *None needed*

Adjourn- 8:27 pm North moved to adjourn at 8:07 pm, seconded by Hammond, motion carried.

Attest: _____Recording Clerk Betsy M. Thurston_____

Betsy Thurston, Recording Clerk