

**Town of Moretown
Selectboard Meeting
Via Zoom Meeting ID 620 104 2716
Passcode D84ysR
08/03/2020**

Board Members Present: Tom Martin, John Hoogenboom, Rae Washburn, Callie Streeter, Don Wexler

Guests Present: Martin Cameron, Stefan Pratt, Neil Nussbaum, Orca Media, Hadley Laskowski (Valley Reporter), Sasha Elwell-Badore

Meeting called to order 6:00 pm by Tom

Public Comment: Martin joined to inform the SB that there is an issue with Rodney's truck (2012). This came about after budget time, so it is an unanticipated expense. The side dump hinges are broken. He received the final quote information just before he went on vacation (the previous week). To repair the hinges (with no guarantee how long it will last) it would cost \$9,000. To repair the side of the dump body it would cost \$18,000-\$20,000. To replace the dump body would cost \$32,500, Martin asked if they could do it for \$30,000. The hinges have all "blown out" and there isn't any material to weld to, so repairing is not really much of an option at this point. The next budget time, Martin was putting in to replace the 2012 truck, but the mileage right now is pretty low. If the body was to be replaced, ordering is about 120 days out, which puts us into the winter season. The SB agreed that it should be replaced and asked that Martin work on getting concrete numbers and come to the next SB meeting with that information. Martin was asked if there is any trade in value to the truck and he has not explored that option, but he will and bring that back to the board in two weeks.

Martin said that the Road Crew has been working on MRGP projects and ditching on the Mountain Road. Ditching and culverts on Lover's Lane and Longley Road. John mentioned that there was a note of praise sent in for the nice work done on Lover's Lane.

Don brought up the concern Callie had mentioned at the last meeting, about mowing the road sides and her concern with the poison parsnip that has grown worse in the last few years. Don asked if it would make sense to purchase our own mower. Martin advised that the town pays out \$6,000 a year for road side mowing and over a few years it would pay for itself. Tom mentioned that there is a grant that Cherilyn was notified of for a hydro seeder and perhaps a mower would be used more and that Martin should get with her on it.

Rae said that he had received a call from John Summers on South Hill Road, regarding the culvert at the end of his road and it needs to be replaced. He advised Rae that he thought the town should help with the cost of it. Martin doesn't think that the town has done any work that would increase the flow there. Rae and Martin agreed to go look at it Tuesday morning.

John mentioned that Pike had a mishap with TAC on the town hall lawn. If Stefan's mowing it down short doesn't fix it, then Pike will bring in some top soil and re-seed the affected area.

6:30: Pulling out of the School District, Neil Nussbaum was present to speak with the SB about the procedures for pulling out of the School District. It is a three step process: first there needs to be an informational meeting so that all are informed; 50% of Moretown residents need to be in favor of withdrawing from the School District; it would then go up for vote to the other towns; and then it would take place for the following July. There was discussion on having an organizational meeting to feel it out and see how many people are behind this.

Tom asked for the SB's thoughts on this:

John would like to know if it would be saving the town money, and if the Moretown Schoolboard members are behind it as well. He does know that Gabe Gilman is in favor of it. He also mentioned that Covid-19 has changed a lot of things. And with MECA = NOW having been displaced from the MES building, because they are looking for a building, it is going to be difficult. He feels that it is too early to start votes, not knowing what the numbers are and if there will be any savings for the town by doing this.

Don is still educating himself on all of this, he thinks that we need to get through Covid-19 first. He brought up that Neil has a petition with the required signatures and how could we have a meeting at this time, because of Covid-19?

Rae thinks that the focus right now is on Covid-19 and just getting the kids back to school is a priority, but thinks this is something that needs to be looked into.

Callie agrees with Rae.

Tom thinks that there is too much going on to have a general public meeting on this, perhaps further down the road. He is not disagreeing with it, it's just that other things have taken priority. Timing is something that Tom feels strongly about and it is not the time for this, there is just too much happening right now. Rae agreed.

The SB would like Neil to go ahead and do some more research on this. Tom would like to wait until the end of the month and see what happens with the schoolboard meeting. The SB thanked Neil for all of his efforts, they know that his heart is really into this.

7:04: Construction update: John took a ride through town and it's looking great. He mentioned that he looked at Piazza's and said that he can mow it. He advised that the Fire Department does have a right of way across Garrett Bergey's property, he has been very nice. John brought up an email from Gary Butler about the sand in front of his house, and that the mess needs to be cleaned up. It has been swept, but needs more attention. Tom asked Rae if the excavator could pull some of that material out and maybe place some stay-mat there. Rae said that he would look at it the next morning when he is in town. The last catch basin by the Saint Patrick's Church is the last to be done, and that is the purpose of the meeting Tuesday morning.

Reports and Communications: Sasha told the SB that Linda Vantine had left a message to see if there has been any decisions made on her abatement. Tom reminded the SB that due to Covid-19, the SB can make the decision on abatements. The SB asked for more information, due to her kids being on her deed. No decision will be made until this additional information is received, and they are giving a deadline of one more month.

John had nothing to report.

Rae had nothing to report.

Callie said that she had spoken with Stefan about the Pike mishap at the town hall. John thanked Stefan for taking care of it.

Don had nothing to report.

Tom brought up a Sheriff's presence when the bridge is closed. He found out that the Sheriff's Department wouldn't give any rates because Moretown has no contract with them. Discussion was had on having VSP somewhere on Route 100B so that any tractor trailers that miss the signage can be turned around before getting to the village. Two spots that were tossed out were at Steven's Brook Road or the Ward swimming hole. Tom asked that prices for "campaign" size signs were obtained, to say "Drive as if your kids live here" for posting on Pony Farm Road throughout the bridge closure. Sasha reminded the SB that Cory Stephenson's kids would like to make some similar signage to put out there as well.

John asked that we contact the Town Manager of Waitsfield and see what they are doing with signage, so that we could coordinate.

New Business: there was none

Old Business: Tom and Don discussed briefly the sub committee for the town hall / library. Thoughts are that maybe pushing the organization of the committee out further, due to the pandemic would be a good idea. Now that the library is in the town hall for at least another year, there is no urgency for this right now. Rae agreed, we need to get passed the Covid-19, and work only on what is needed, although frustrating. Tom

asked that Don get the list of names that are interested in this committee over to Sasha. A few of the names tossed out with interest were: Johnny Summers, Karen Horn, Denise Gabaree, John Schmeltzer and a few of the library trustees.

Don brought up the redesign of the land behind the gravel pit and getting information from the office on how much land is there. Tom reminded him that there is always going to be about 5,000 yards of sand there, so to keep that in mind.

John said that he spoke with Steve Robbins about the conservation committee and put it out there, but it is still a little pre-mature.

John also spoke to David Westerman about the Lone Pine and donating a piece of that wood to the town office. John would like to thank the anonymous donor for \$200 that came in to put towards a bench for the town hall porch, to be constructed out of the Lone Pine wood. Michael Brown is being contacted to help with that. John said that so far \$400 has been raised for the library from proceeds of the tree.

John made the motion to approve the SB minutes of 07/20/2020. Callie seconded. All were in favor.

7:40: Tom reminded everyone to be on the look out for a Zoom meeting invite to set the tax rate. The listers have lodged the grand list, so now the town is just waiting for the State to set the school tax rate. The budget can be discussed at that meeting. Once the tax rate is set, the tax bills can be printed and sent out by Cherilyn and Sasha.

Adjourn: Tom made the motion to adjourn at 7:47 pm. Rae seconded. All were in favor.