

Select Board Meeting Minutes

September 24, 2019

Select Board (SB) Members: Jared Cadwell (Jared), Chuck Martel (Chuck) and Mike Jordan (Mike)

Select Board Assistant: Patti Lewis (Patti)

Road Foreman: Stuart Hallstrom (Stuart)

Minutes Recorder: Lisa Koitzsch (Lisa)

Guests: Bob Crean, Jennifer Fallaice, Beth Garvin, Natalie Vasseur, Rebecca Baruzzi, Dana Witzel, Dave Knoop, Patty Martley, Madhuri Barefoot Maves, and Jill Ellis

Jared called the meeting to order at 4:59 p.m.

1. Chuck made a motion to approve the minutes of September 10, 2019. Mike seconded, no further discussion, all in favor, motion approved.
2. Road Foreman Update:
 1. Phen Road culvert work and Bragg Hill paving project are finished. The lip on the Nolan driveway has been fixed.
 2. The crew is currently working on Manlin Road.
 3. The two dump trucks are being inspected.
 4. Stuart would like to pull in the edges of the blacktop on German Flats Road and there is still \$1400 left in the rental budget to put towards this project.
 5. Jared told Stuart that Ethan Vasseur is okay with taking a pine tree down so that work can be done on the ditch at the south end of the Phippen property.
 6. Stuart looked at Fayston Farm Road near the Savino property and will coordinate with John Reynolds regarding proposed work John has suggested.
 7. SB discussed erosion along Route 17 near the Mad River parking lot, and a private road along the backside of that area. They determined the damages are either a homeowner association and/or Mad River Glen issue.
 8. A request from a resident on Carey Strong Road to cut trees down along the Class 4 portion of the road was discussed. The SB determined the road crew would try to clear the right of way first as the road is an important connecting road and then will revisit the request if necessary.
 9. Horseshoe Road residents will pay to fix and upgrade their road. Stuart reiterated the culvert is too small and needs to be replaced.
3. Sharpshooter/Gravel Pit Spring: The SB discussed putting a shutoff valve on the spring head because several residents have expressed concern about ground water flowing openly to the surface and water freezing during the winter. Stuart said the water has already been turned down and should be left to run otherwise the pipes will freeze and possibly split. No action taken on this matter.
4. Estate of John A. Smith Quit Claim for Release of Lease Lands: (This item was originally listed as Item #6 on the agenda.) Jennifer Fallaice, Attorney, presented a Quit Claim Deed for 298 Center Fayston Road and asked the SB to approve conveyance of the Lease Land portion of the property to the owner of record. Chuck made a motion to approve the request of the Quit Claim

Deed, Mike seconded, no further discussion, all approved, motion passed. Jared signed on behalf of the Town.

5. Slide Brook Road Discussion: (This item was originally listed as #4 on the agenda) Bob Crean came to the meeting to review his plans for Slide Brook Road and the work he intends to do. Bob handed out several documents to show the history he has had with the SB and his request to widen the Class Four road (Attached). In 2007, the SB denied Bob's request to widen Slide Brook Road but in a Road Agreement dated April 2, 2010, the SB gave him permission to improve the road per the SB's requirements on width, culvert size and other specifications. The agreement allowed Bob to widen the road up to 16'. Jared told Bob the SB wants to work with him to maintain his adherence to the requirements of the agreement. Bob is going to request a fisheries study from the State to determine replacement culvert size. Stuart warned him the State is tripling the size of culverts at this time. Bob said he is happy to work with Sugarbush on a ski trail right of way. Bob said the trail might be tight over the culverts and Sugarbush might have to work with him a bit. Chuck reiterated that a road width of 16' is allowed and Bob expressed concern that this may not be wide enough. He will have Stuart look at the work he does so that he can report back to the Select Board for their approval. Bob does not think he will get the culverts replaced this year.
6. Boyce Road Property Update:
 1. Patti is waiting to hear back from VLCT regarding liability for a Town owned pond.
 2. The next Steering Committee meeting is being scheduled for next week and will be warned on the Town's website. Jared asked the Committee to review the VLT Easement and address any concerns. He said Patti Martley and Tom Knox would like to be added to the list of interested parties. Lisa said she would add the SB to the list as well.
7. Letter to HUUSD: Members of the Friends of Fayston (FOF) group appeared before the SB to discuss the possibility that the Fayston Elementary School could be closed at some point. Rebecca Baruzzi (Rebecca) asked if the SB had any questions about the FOF meeting that took place last Thursday. Jared said it was an informational meeting and he is looking forward to attending more HUUSD meetings on the topic. Rebecca asked if the SB was surprised by the process and Jared stated he has been part of the process for quite some time. It is now decision time and this has focused everyone's attention on the issue. Rebecca asked the SB directly if they minded the Fayston School being closed. Chuck replied that as an individual he felt that the Fayston school representatives were elected to make decisions regarding the schools and he was not sure how much the SB will impact that decision. Concerning the impacts on the Town of Fayston from the closing of the school, he is not sure what the impact would be on property values. Jared commented proximity to quality schools for families influences property values. For others without young children, this may not be a factor. When the district voted on the issue three years ago, there was a majority vote and the potential impact of a merger and consolidation were addressed. He acknowledged that this is a painful topic. Natalie Vasseur disagreed with Jared and summarized a section of the Act that stated nothing in the Act contemplated closing any small schools. Jill Ellis (Jill) said she understands what Jared is saying but commented that many people who voted thought the merger would actually save the Fayston Elementary School. She acknowledged that different people voted on the merger for different reasons. Jared said the reality of the situation is that the District is facing the possibility of school closings. Jill told the SB that Fayston voters would look to the SB to advocate for them and help keep the school open. She added that there has been ample opportunity through the

process for the SB to step up. Jared said there is some confusion about governance. The Town has two representatives that speak for the Town at the HUUSD meetings and Fayston has a long history of separation between school governance and town governance although he understood that FOF wants the SB to take a stand to protect Fayston's School. Jared would like time to read and digest the information recently released by HUUSD prior to their Wednesday night meeting. Beth Garvin expressed concern that they have been flooded with data with no chance to review it before the matter has to be voted on. She added that it appears the data has been swayed to pre-determined outcomes. Rebecca said it is not clear what benefits there are to closing the school and wondered if the Town's leaders were concerned about that. Jill stated the most the School District could save by closing Fayston was 1.7 million and urged people to look at savings and costs. Jared questioned what alternative uses there would be for the school and Jill replied there would be many. FOF expressed concern that Fayston will lose its center of community connectivity if the school is closed and this would be giving away a valuable community resource. Jill told the SB they do have a voice in this situation and cited the Moretown SB's letter in support of keeping Moretown's Elementary School open. She said a letter from the Fayston SB in support of keeping the Fayston Elementary School open would hold a lot of weight. Dana Witzel expressed frustration that there is a lot of talk that Fayston is going to close and that this is premature and gives Fayston a disadvantage. Dave Knoop said the closure could affect local business, especially the trades, and the economic impact could be big on the town. Madhuri Barefoot Maves (Madhuri) said that a lot of Fayston property renovation and improvement has come from young families with children in the school system. She asked the SB what happens to property acquisition trends without a school. She also said that without a grocery store, post office or a school, there is no community in Fayston. She encouraged the SB to have a broader conversation and look at all the impacts, not just financial. Act 46 was said to be better for education and money but it isn't. She does not see the upside of closing the school. She wants to get the Town to represent its citizens and be clear about the identity we are losing. At this point, a draft letter in support of keeping the Fayston School open was presented to the SB by FOF for their review and signature. Jared told the group this was the SB's first look at the letter and he proposes warning a special SB meeting on Thursday to review it. He asked FOF if it was willing to turn the letter over to the SB for them to edit as they see fit and then send it out. The initial answer was that they wanted final say but conceded in the end that it should be the Selectboard letter. The group reiterated that they wanted their concerns to be expressed and Jared said he understood this. He pledged to attend as many of the HUUSD meetings as possible. Madhuri told the SB that many people do not understand exactly what is happening in this district and asked them if they could take on the role of breaking the issue down into smaller pieces and educating the Fayston voters. Mike said there are larger issues such as property tax implications that need to be addressed. Madhuri agreed that it goes beyond parents with children.

The Board vote will take place on November 13, 2019. FOF wants the SB to address the implications of the school's closing on property values, taxes, school choice, broad economic impact, and community implications. Jared asked FOF members to send any additional questions and concerns they have to the SB after the meeting. The Special Meeting of the Fayston Select Board will be on Thursday at 1pm at the Fayston Municipal Building and the purpose is to review a Fayston SB letter to the HUUSD.

8. The SB read mail and signed orders.

9. Other Business: Jared announced the SB acknowledges with great pleasure Patti Lewis' award as Vermont Treasurer of the Year and Sarah Stavraký's award as Vermont Assistant Treasurer of the Year at the 83rd Annual Awards Banquet of the Vermont Municipal Clerks and Treasurers Association (VMCTA) on September 12, 2019. The SB expressed their congratulations and appreciation for Patti and Sarah.

At 6:37 p.m. Chuck made a motion to adjourn the SB meeting. Mike seconded, no further discussion, all in favor, motion approved.

The next SB meeting is **October 8, 2019 at 5:00 p.m.** at the Robert Vasseur Municipal Building.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa O. Koitzsch

Approved: Jared Cadwell