

Town of Waltham
2053 Maple Street
Waltham, VT 05491

Selectboard Minutes 2-5-2024

Members Present: Andrew Martin, Brent Newton-Chair and Rhonda Williams

Others Present: Ellie de Villiers, Lesley Huston, Mimi Clark, John Stroup, Cookie Steponaitis and Linda Devino

Brent Newton called the meeting to order at 7:02pm.

There was no road report as Chris LaPete was not in attendance.

Andrew moved to approve the January minutes as written. Rhonda 2nd and the minutes were unanimously approved.

Mimi Clark and Jon Stroup were asked multiple questions about the district school budget. They explained the increased cost of educating students. The loss of Federal funding and the State mandates (including free meals, mental health care, behavior interventionists, building upgrades, etc.). The district is trying to keep all classes and sporting events intact. With declining enrollment the expenses appear more costly to the smaller towns.

Ellie de Villiers told of the progress being made by Maple Broadband in Waltham. She said fiber would be available for 90% of the Town by late spring early summer 2024. Once the wires are at the roadside folks will have to contact Maple Broadband and purchase a subscription. There are some programs available to reduce the costs for qualifying households. She suggested going to their website for more details.

The Local Hazard Mitigation Plan was not discussed as there was no representation from our Planning Commission.

The Warning for Town meeting was discussed. Andrew discussed the cost of the South Middlebrook Road Culvert replacement as there are no additional grants available. Also discussed were the upcoming increases in costs from Vergennes Area Rescue Squad and Vergennes Fire Department. The warning for town meeting will include an article to address these needs.

Brent made a motion to move into executive session for discussion of contracts. Andrew second and the vote was unanimous. The contracts in question were discussed. No formal action was taken. The meeting returned to regular session at 8:22pm.

The financial status was reviewed. The need to borrow for the culvert replacement, the increase in the EMS costs and the fact that we are still waiting on grant monies we were promised but are not yet available were the main topics.

Pay orders were reviewed. Andrew moved to approve the \$63,445.98. Brent 2nd and the amount was unanimously approved.

Correspondence was reviewed as well any other business that needed discussion. The only action taken was the Board instructed Linda to order new 35 MPH speed limit signs.

It was noted that the March 4th meeting will be held at 5:00pm prior to our annual Town Meeting at 7:00pm. The meeting was then unanimously adjourned at 9:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Devino

Clerk / Treasurer