

Town of Pownal
Select Board Minutes
Monday, September 9, 2024
6:30 pm Regular Meeting

I. Call to Order by Chair Morris at 6:30 pm

Members Present: Jon Morris, Andy O'Brien (Kate Day absent, excused)
Town Administrator: Becky Taylor-Chase
Road Commissioner: Matt Nielsen
Fire Chief: Jesse Peters

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Accounts Payable Warrant & Payroll Journal

- FY25 AP Warrant #8 in the amount of \$108,943.62.

Selectperson O'Brien motioned to approve FY25 AP Warrant #8 in the amount of \$108,943.62. Chair Morris seconded the motion.

Discussion: None

Vote: Yes 2; No 0

- Payroll Journal #105 in the amount of \$9,541.17.

Selectperson O'Brien motioned to approve Payroll Journal #105 in the amount of \$9,541.17. Chair Morris seconded the motion.

Discussion: None

Vote: Yes 2; No 0

IV. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

- Regular Meeting August 12, 2024

Selectperson O'Brien motioned to approve the August 12, 2024 regular meeting minutes as written. Chair Morris seconded the motion.

Discussion: None

Vote: Yes 2; No 0

V. Public Comment – Non- Agenda Items

None

VI. Department Head Reports

(Department head reports can be viewed on their respective website page(s))

- Select Board

Selectperson O'Brien gave a PCWA generator update stating that the generator will be going online Friday.

VII. New Business

- **Abatement Acct 199, Map 2, Lot 24**

Chair Morris read the abatement summary. Selectperson O'Brien motioned to approve the abatement of Acct 199, Map 2, Lot 24. Chair Morris seconded the motion.

Discussion: None

Vote: Yes 2; No 0

- **Pole Permit, Libby Road**

Chair Morris asked if the Road Commissioner has evaluated the area? He stated yes and everything looks good. Selectperson O'Brien motioned to approve the pole permit. Chair Morris seconded the motion.

Discussion: None

Vote: Yes 2; No 0

- **Hannaford Trash Bag Invoice**

The Town Administrator stated that Hannaford reached out via email asking for the Town to pay for the 60 cases they have in stock now that we have suspended our PAYT program. That invoice came to \$17,160.00. Chair Morris stated we need to look at the contract we signed with Waste Zero and make sure that our recollection is correct that we paid for the bags before they were printed. The Town Administrator stated that the Town would get an invoice when they stocked the factory and then when we placed an order to stock the town office, we would get a second invoice. That is the piece that Hannaford is asking to be paid.

- **Economic Development & Sustainability Committee Final Report**

Susan Briggs Peters stated that all 3 members of the committee have given their notice. This report that you received is a synopsis of what we did while the committee was in session. ~~She is in the process of scheduling a meeting with the new committee members to review~~ with them the work done in the last few years and go over the GPCOG work. Chair Morris mentioned that the last meeting he attend there was an issue with the GPCOG report being finalized. Has that been finalized? Mrs. Peters stated it has been finalized but she has one question. She has reached out to them 3 times and has not heard back. Chair Morris stated he was fairly certain GPCOG promised a new sketch and revision of the village center make up. Has that ever come back? Mrs. Peters was unsure of what he is speaking about. This was the meeting with Kristina Egan. Mrs. Peters stated that they feel they have submitted their final report. Chair Morris stated GPCOG agreed that more work needed to be done at that meeting. Mrs. Peters commented that the committee is not impressed with the work received. We received a final report with some changes. It was emailed to the Select Board. Chair Morris asked if she could send it again. He thanked Mrs. Peters and the committee for their work. Chair Morris clarified that the committee's recommendation for the Select Board is? Selectperson O'Brien answered with looking at some zoning changes for the Village District. Chair Morris asked about the water study. Selectperson O'Brien stated that is ongoing now. Chair Morris asked about the Farmers Market. Mrs. Peters stated she believed the Select Board set up a separate committee. The Town Administrator stated we have appointed 2-3 people and our town planner has been working on organizing a meeting. One of them had a personal thing that prevented them from meeting earlier.

Also, with new members coming onto the Economic Development & Sustainability Committee he was holding off until everybody could meet at once since they will report to that committee. Mrs. Peters stated there needs to be some clarity on how the two were going to intermingle. Originally, we had thought that was what was happening but are unclear. The Town Administrator stated the Economic Development and Sustainability committee asked for a subcommittee which was the Farmers Market Committee then the three resigned so we didn't have a committee per se but now we have appointed 3 new members, so she feels the intent from the Town Planner is for the two committees to work together. Mrs. Peters feels the confusion lies when the Select Board made it a committee and not a subcommittee. She feels there just needs to be some clarity. Chair Morris stated in all practicality it won't happen this year. Mrs. Peters stated they are looking to next Spring as a goal.

- **Water Capacity Study**

Selectperson O'Brien said they are ready to start doing test drilling. He will bring it over to Mr. Dugas to sign. He has already agreed we could drill in the Knight's Pit. The Town Administrator stated this agreement has not yet gone to Natalie for review. Selectperson O'Brien motioned that we enter into an agreement with Mr. Scott Dugas to drill a test well in his Knights Pit on Libby Road pending attorney approval. Chair Morris seconded the motion. Discussion: Question from the public asked when it needed to be completed by. Selectperson O'Brien stated by the end of the month.

Vote: Yes 2; No 0

- **Glenn Jonsson-645 Hallowell Road/Abandoned Tuttle Road**

Selectperson O'Brien stated there have been a few emails come through. There are some questions to the abandoned Tuttle Road and whether that can be used as frontage to reach the back of that lot. Chair Morris asked who is questioning? Selectperson O'Brien answered with real estate agents and many others. Chair Morris stated the answer is no unless they want to take the town to court and overturn 200 years of common law. The frontage is the frontage, they can't have it both ways. Ginny Giddinge did an incredible service by compiling notes but he's not sure those are complete yet. Selectperson O'Brien asked if we should get something in writing from Natalie. Chair Morris stated because the state legislature has no idea really what to do, what we need is another town to go to court. An abandoned road is an abandoned road and the town still owns it. Selectperson O'Brien stated that we would have to open the road back up. Chair Morris stated that this is where they could negotiate and come to the town and ask what would it take for the town to open the road. That would be a town meeting vote and there would be some concessions. The gatekeepers for the town meeting vote are the Select Board. I'm not sure it's the town's responsibility to mold what type of development should be there but it's certainly in the town's best interest to oversee compliance with the land use ordinances. The phone calls received have been bullying phone calls. Stating "you must do" etc. Code Enforcement Officer Ginny Giddinge stated the property owners and real estate agents came by today and wanted to know what folks were being told about the property and basically it needs to be surveyed. The only path forward she can see is if they demolished the house and built a road. They are having a hard time understanding that that road is still a town road but is abandoned and they can't just divide it so this person gets half and this person gets half.

That's not what it falls under. She told them they needed to stop asking questions and go to the Select Board because it was constant push back. They just like to ask the same question many different ways and expect a different answer. Chair Morris thanked the CEO and appreciated the service to the town.

- **County Tax Warrant**

The Town Administrator stated it's the annual warrant for the required county tax. It needs to be signed by the Select Board. Chair Morris motioned to approve the County Tax Warrant for \$212,105. Selectperson O'Brien seconded the motion.

Discussion: None

Vote: Yes 2; No 0

The Town Administrator stated that the State is now making all towns go to an online dog registration system. Pownal already participates but they are holding a 1 hour ZOOM for the new format on September 23rd. I would like to close the counter during the training so both Pascale and I can attend without interruption. Chair Morris also confirmed that the counter would be closed on Wednesday, September 11. The Town Administrator stated yes so we can attend an election training and I will reopen on Thursday.

VIII. Old Business

Chair Morris asked Chief Peters how the generator "gate" is going. Chief Peters stated the way it was left with the Select Board and Ms. Munsen is we would move it to the back. He then got a text from her later that day stating we did not own enough land in the back to move it. Chief Peters replied back stating he would do some research and will get back to her. He and the Road Commissioner measured the right of way of the road where we think the right of way is. She was measuring off the edge of the road and we measured off the right of way. This gives us 33 feet from the center which gives us 9 feet behind the building according to their calculations. It's a 4-rod road. He will go talk to her later in the week to let her know there is enough room and we will move it to the back of the building.

Selectperson O'Brien stated there was a statement from a previous Road Commissioner that said the center of the road is not always the center of the road. Chair Morris stated Fickett Road was surveyed by Commissioner Bennett. The Road Commissioner stated he is in the process of moving his office and going through things so he may find it. He believes the whole road was surveyed. Chair Morris stated he believes there is metal pin in the intersection of Lawrence and Fickett. He believes it was placed in the road. Maybe summons a metal detector. The Road Commissioner stated because the center of the road is not always the center going off the abutter's pins on the opposite side of the road the calculations are very close. Chair Morris stated Mr. Bradstreet has a completed survey of his property on the intersection of Fickett heading down Lawrence so that can be a reference. Chief Peters stated he should contact Mr. Bradstreet to see if he can get a copy. Chair Morris stated that having a licensed electrician needs to be done. Chief Peters stated that still needs to be figured out. Before anything happens that will be figured out. Selectperson O'Brien said the electrician has a licensed electrician that will sign off on the work. He said the same for the Pownal Center Water Association. Chair Morris stated if he needed help

with the resident to let them know. Chair Morris asked if PCWA needed to be dug up. Selectperson O'Brien stated he has a commercial electrician that will inspect and sign off.

Chief Peters stated they did hose testing and only lost one section.

Chair Morris asked if there was a chance that the next Select Board meeting could be moved one day forward to Tuesday. He has a scheduling conflict.

IX. Correspondence

The Town Administrator stated she got an email from Waste Zero that they are sending 70 cases of trash bags to us that were produced. We will want to talk about where we are going to put them and will need an idea for how we will get rid of them. She should get tracking information and has reached out to the Solid Waste Committee for help moving them. Chair Morris stated we may need to revisit the ordinance and go back to using them. Chief Peters suggested we use them for the clean Pownal week. Chair Morris stated we need to look at the contract and we may have acted hastily to repeal the ordinance.

The Town Administrator stated she has been working on getting the town enrolled in the Community Resilience Program. She worked earlier in the year with GPCOG but it didn't move forward. She met with North Star Planning last week and they have received grant money to enroll us so now it will cost the town nothing. They will do all the work and it includes writing the first grant. Items that are covered under the grant are culvert replacement, lighting, heat and cool pumps, solar panels, electric chargers. They can be the pay as you charge ones. New ev/hybrid vehicles, emergency response, engineering plans for future road maintenance, open space and parks development. It can also be used when a new building is constructed for heating, cooling and lighting. It opens up a huge opportunity for grant money and we really don't have to do anything for the first grant.

Chair Morris stated at the next Planning Board meeting there should be a rough draft of the short-term housing ordinance so the protocol is going to be drafted by the town planner and be vetted by the Select Board for final approval and then to town meeting. We need to give the town planner the next ordinance to work on. Chief Peters has an idea about fire alarms for commercial buildings. We do not have an ordinance in the town requiring it. With more commercial stuff coming in it's one we should have.

Chair Morris stated the town of Pownal, Vermont has reached out to him and they would like to develop a sister city relationship. I'm not quite sure where this will go.

X. Any Other Business

None


XI. Adjournment

Selectperson O'Brien motioned to adjourn the meeting. Chair Morris seconded the motion.


Discussion: None

Vote: Yes 2; No 0

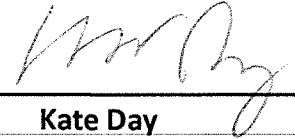
The meeting adjourned at 7:07 pm.



Jon Morris



Andy O'Brien



Kate Day
