

**Stowe Selectboard, Liquor Commission & Water/Sewer Commission Meeting
Monday February 7, 2022**

Present:

Selectboard Members: William Adams, Nick Donza, Jo Sabel Courtney, Lisa Hagerty (via Zoom)

In Person attendees: Paul Sakash, Harry Shepard, Emily Rosenbaum, Richard Bland, Ryan Percy, Paul and Lee Percy, Heidi Scheuermann, Sam Schofield, Renee Mitchell, Arnold Ziegler, Shari Vermeulen, Shapleigh Smith

There were 27 participants on Zoom.

Call to Order

Chair Adams called the meeting to order at 5:31pm.

Approve the Agenda

Chair Adams requested the addition of an announcement and dedication to the agenda, prior to the consent agenda.

On a motion by Mr. Nick Donza, seconded by Ms. Jo Sabel Courtney, the Board approved the agenda with the addition of an announcement and dedication.

Selectboard Announcement

Chair Adams made the announcements that William Noyes has resigned from the Selectboard. He submitted a letter of resignation on Wednesday February 2, 2022 to be effective immediately. Mr. Noyes has asked that people respect his privacy at this time, but any questions about his resignation or decision to leave the Selectboard should be directed to Mr. Noyes directly.

Mr. Noyes had one year remaining in his term, and the Selectboard will follow the Town Charter and State Statutes in replacing Mr. Noyes for the remainder of his term. The Selectboard is responsible for appointing someone to fill this position unless called to a special election. Chair Adams stated that he will work with the rest of the Board on how they plan to proceed and will let the community know shortly what next steps the Board will take.

Annual Report Dedication

Chair Adams requested that the Percy family, specifically Paul Percy, attend the meeting. Chair Adams noted that this has been a very difficult year for Mr. Percy, having lost both his brother earlier in the year and recently the devastating fire that resulted in the loss of most of his cows and total destruction of his barn. Chair Adams said the community is supporting the Percy's, including through fundraising in the Stowe Community Fund.

Each year, the Selectboard dedicates the Annual Report to a citizen(s) who have served the community. This year, prior to the recent fire, the Selectboard had chosen to dedicate the Annual Report to Paul Percy. Chair Adams read the dedication aloud, noting that Mr. Percy served as a lister for 47 years, and continues to serve as their chair, served for nearly 30 years on the Planning Commission, and was instrumental in the conservation of farmland in Stowe, particularly the Mayo Farm. He thanked Paul on behalf of the Town for his service to the community. Mr. Percy spoke to the overwhelming support the Town has shown him since the fire, and thanked the community for this dedication.

Consent Agenda

1. 1/24/22 Minutes
2. Sewer Easement Modification – 605 Maple Street
3. Liquor Consent Items

On a motion by Ms. Lisa Hagerty, seconded by Ms. Courtney, the Board approved the Consent Agenda as presented.

Stowe Quality Youth Development Community Certification

Recently the Town of Stowe was named a Quality Youth Development Community by the Vermont Quality Youth Development Program. Sarah Brunkhorst, Program Director, was at the meeting to present the certification, and explained that Kate Lewton, a Stowe High School Senior, and other high school students, had worked to meet 7 out of 10 benchmarks showing a commitment and dedication to positive youth development in our community. Ms. Lewton was also present at the meeting to discuss the project. She noted that along with a steering team and a lot of community support, the group of students was able to demonstrate youth engagement already happening in the community and brainstorm for future ways to get youth involved. She noted this could involve having youth perspective and direction on Town Boards & Commissions, on Town Projects, and other opportunities in Town. Ms. Lewton noted that one major goal of the group was to find a location for a youth center in Stowe. She also said they are working with younger high school students and middle school students to keep interest in this project alive for many years to come. The Selectboard thanked and congratulated Mr. Lewton and her classmates on achieving this certification and asked to keep the conversation going on having youth perspectives on Town projects, as well as considering a youth center in future plans for the Gale Recreation Center.

Working Communities Challenge

Ms. Emily Rosenbaum presented to the Selectboard the work she is doing as for the Lamoille County Working Communities Challenge. This is a group that works on reducing barriers to employment in our community by focusing on three priority areas: Housing, resource hubs and partnerships for cross-sector collaboration. Transportation, experts by experience and racial equity are also crucial components. This group is funded by a group of dedicated individuals in Vermont, meets monthly as a core group with working groups that meet throughout the month. In an effort to expand their collaboration efforts, Ms. Rosenbaum extended an invitation to the municipality of Stowe to join in a substantial way as a core partner. This would involve having a representative attend monthly meetings and report back to the Selectboard and/or Town Manager and provide opportunities for the Town to work collaboratively with the WCC. This could be an employee, Selectboard member or community member. The Selectboard indicated they would be interested in having a representative in the group and would work on a call for volunteers.

School Withdrawal Update

On May 11, 2022, The Town of Stowe voted to withdrawal from the Lamoille South Unified Union. In December, Morristown and Elmore held votes to ratify Stowe's departure from the Union. The issue is now to be taken up by the Vermont Board of Education. However, they have declined to take the issue up to date as they state they are waiting on a legal opinion from the Attorney General's Office. At this time, it appears that may not be forthcoming, and a dedicated group of individuals in Stowe are now requesting that the issue be taken up without waiting on the legal opinion. A letter requesting the topic be added to the next agenda has been sent by local legislators, Representative Heidi Scheuermann, Senator Richard Westman, Representative David Yacovone and Representative Avram Patt. The group has also requested that a letter be sent by the Stowe Selectboard requesting that the topic be put on the next agenda. A draft letter was provided to the Selectboard for their consideration. Town Manager Charles Safford provided some background information from legal counsel regarding Westminster's and Ripton's recent requests to withdrawal, which states in part "Nothing in statute, however, authorizes a town or its selectboard to make decisions for or take action on behalf of a school district during the process leading to the State Board's declaration of withdrawal..." Town Legal Counsel indicated that the authority of the Selectboard is limited in this matter but that the proposed letter is simply a reminder and request and should be okay. Those in attendance at the meeting noted that the Selectboard would not be called to speak on behalf of the Town, rather that would be a designated group of people consisting of James Brauchausen, Richard Bland, Leigh Pelletier and Heidi Scheuermann. This group will speak to the Towns desire to have two

districts under one supervisory union, as was done prior to the merger, and that this will meet the educational requirements as outlined by the Vermont Department of Education. This group feels they are ready and able to answer questions and represent the Town before the Board of Education.

On a motion by Mr. Donza, seconded by Ms. Courtney, the Board approved the proposed letter asking the State Board of Education to include Stowe's Withdrawal from the Lamoille South Unified Union School District on their February 16, 2022 meeting agenda.

Civilian Conservation Core Site Improvements

The asbestos abatement work at the old CCC camp is now complete. This work required the removal of substantially all of the interior finishes of the building. However, upon further assessment by the Public Works Department it was found that the structure of the building is still in very good condition structurally. The building serves as a visual barrier to the site, screening some of the property, which is used for fire training purposes. Because of this, the Town is now recommending not removing the building when the remainder of the outbuildings and additions are removed in the spring. There is no immediate use for the building but could be used for dry storage. Chair Adams asked what could be done to fix the exterior so it is not an eye sore for neighbors, which Public Works Director Harry Shepard indicated could be done internally with the highway crew and parks department staff. Additionally, berms will be constructed to provide additional screening on the property using overburden material from the Town gravel pit.

On a motion by Ms. Courtney, seconded by Mr. Donza, the Board approved the proposed site plan for the Moscow Garage/Fire Training site and authorized the Town Manager to sign and submit the requisite zoning permit application, along with a transmittal letter affirming the Selectboard support for the project on behalf of the Town.

Proposed Zoning Amendments

Sarah McShane, Planning & Zoning Director, along with members of the Planning Commission and Historic Preservation Commission, attended the meeting to go through proposed zoning regulation amendments with the Selectboard. These amendments were submitted to the Selectboard on 1/24/22 and the Board must hold two warned public hearings between 30 and 120 days. This meeting was to begin the process of reviewing the proposed amendments and providing feedback from the Selectboard. Ms. McShane began her presentation by discussing the purpose of the amendments to better implement the 2018 Stowe Town Plan and to clarify issues that have been identified by the Development Review Board, Historic Preservation Commission and the Zoning Administrator. She noted there were no radical or controversial changes, but rather making sure the regulations conform to the Town Plan. Ms. McShane then went through the changes outlined, which included clarifying exemptions in certain zoning districts; clarifying what projects the Zoning Administrator can review without referral to the DRB; a new section that addresses damaged or destroyed structures; guidance relating to setbacks for specific zoning districts; changes to the Accessory Dwelling Units to clarify the definition of living area and incorporate recent legislative updates; Landscaping standards within certain overlay districts; comprehensive update to the outdoor lighting section; a new section relating to performance standards drive by recent legislative updates and regulating the intensity of land use to prevent adverse impact on nearby properties, as well as general standards for noise, lighting, odor, air quality and more; a new section related on Accessory On-Farm businesses, a response to recent legislative changes and allowing municipalities to apply performance standards and site plan review standards; Outdoor seating for restaurants using feedback from the interim zoning put in place as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic; definitions of tiny houses. Finally the board looked at Zoning Map Amendments specific to the Lower Village Commercial District, which includes expanding the district to follow parcel boundaries at the Commodores Inn and R.K. Miles.

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At the next Selectboard meeting, discussion will continue on the proposed zoning amendments, covering changes related to overlay districts, flood plain and fluvial plans and definitions.

Manager's Report

It was noted that Town Manager Charles Safford has been summoned to Jury Duty on 3/14/22 but anticipates he will be able to get back to Stowe in time for the Selectboard meeting that evening.

Mr. Safford also supplied the Board with the Highway/Wastewater Treatment Plant 3-Acre Stormwater Discharge Permit. It requires site analysis, engineering evaluation and design and final notice of intent for stormwater system improvements by 6/24/23. Implementation is required five years after that.

On a motion by Ms. Courtney, seconded by Ms. Hagerty, the Board went into Executive Session at 8:34pm to discuss Personnel.

The Board came out of Executive Session at 9:24pm.

On a motion by Ms. Hagerty, seconded by Ms. Courtney, the Board appointed Catherine Gott to fill a vacant seat on the Conservation Commission with a term to expire April 30, 2024.

There being no further business, Chair Adams adjourned the meeting at 9:38pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Abigail Sweetser.