

Town of Londonderry, Vermont
Selectboard
Meeting Minutes
Monday, September 21, 2020
Meeting held remotely via online video with no physical presence

Board Members Present: Georgianne Mora, Thomas Cavanagh, Taylor Prouty, Vincent Annunziata, and James Fleming (via telephone).

Board Members Absent: None.

Others in Attendance: Town Officials – Town Administrator Shane O’Keefe, Town Treasurer Tina Labeau, Emergency Management Director and Town Constable Kevin Beattie, Planning Commissioner Sharon Crossman (6:18 PM) and Road Crew member Jarrett Sanderson (6:04 PM). Others – Residents Richard Phelan, Melissa and Duane Hart (6:11 PM), and Cherise Forbes (Chester Telegraph).

1. Call meeting to order

Selectboard Chair George Mora called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM.

She noted that in response the Governor Scott’s January 20, 2020 declaration of a State of Emergency due to the spreading COVID-19 pandemic, and his “Stay Home, Stay Safe” executive order restricting and minimizing all unnecessary activities outside of the home, and in accordance with Act 92, signed into law on by the Governor on March 30, 2020, which allows for changes to the Vermont Open Meeting Law to protect the health and welfare of the public, that the meeting was being held entirely remotely with no physical presence.

She added that the meeting was being conducted entirely on Zoom meeting software and that the Board members and staff were participating by video except for Board member Jim Fleming, who was participating via telephone. She noted that the public was permitted to participate via video or telephone. And that the agenda posted on September 17, 2020, and still available on the Town’s website, provided information on how the public could participate in the meeting.

She noted a few matters of meeting process, including the requirement that all non-unanimous votes by the Board must be taken by roll call vote, with each member stating their name and vote.

Mora provided some technical guidance for participation by both phone and video. Each of the Board members than vocally identified themselves.

2. Additions or deletions to the agenda

Mora noted that Tom and Judy Platt had called that day to say that they would not be attending the meeting to discuss item 10.c., regarding the FEMA grant related to their properties at 2116 and 2136 North Main Street, so this matter can be deleted from the agenda.

Kevin Beattie requested to add a Town Constable issue to the agenda.

Taylor Prouty moved to add a Town Constable matter to the agenda as item 7.d., seconded by Tom Cavanagh, passed unanimously.

Shane O’Keefe requested to add to the agenda establishing a voting delegate to the upcoming of the Vermont League of Cities and Towns annual meetings.

Taylor Prouty moved to add to the agenda as new item 11.e. the appointment of a voting delegate for the upcoming VLCT Legislative Policy meeting, and annual VLCT, PACIF and VERB meetings, seconded by Vincent Annunziata, passed unanimously.

This decision moved the scheduled executive session to item 11.f.

3. Minutes Approval – Meeting of August 31, 2020

Tom Cavanagh moved to approve the minutes of the Selectboard meeting of August 31, 2020, seconded by Vincent Annunziata, passed unanimously.

4. Selectboard Pay Orders

Tom Cavanagh moved to approve the pay orders for payroll and accounts payable, seconded by Taylor Prouty, passed unanimously.

5. Announcements/Correspondence

Tina Labeau spoke on behalf of Town Clerk Kelly Pajala noting that the State of Vermont is sending out ballots and Londonderry’s should go out this week. Voters can drop off ballots at the Town Office, mail them or bring them along on election day, she noted, and that if anyone does not receive their ballot by October 1st should contact the Town Office so it can be remedied.

O’Keefe noted that there was a meeting with the VT Agency of Transportation earlier that day on the ongoing paving of VT Route 11, and gave a brief update on the status, mentioning that everything will be done this fall except for the wear coat that will be applied in the spring of 2021. He stated that VTrans is working closely with one property owner who has expressed some concerns about the project. Mora added that these meetings have been going for weeks and noted that there has been some confusion about drainage structures in the village area, and she provided clarification on the drainage construction process.

O’Keefe noted correspondence included in the Board’s meeting packet was as follows:

- A 9/1/2020 response letter from the Taylor Farm on some land use matters.
- A Farm Determination letter, dated 9/9/2020, from the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets regarding the status of the Wright Farm as a small farm operation.
- A letter of thanks, dated 8/11/2020, from Ruck Up thanking the Board for its permission to hold a coin drop, which unfortunately had to cancelled due to the ongoing paving project on VT Route 11.

6. Visitors and Concerned Citizens

Richard Phelan thanked the Board and Town employees for doing a great job, and mentioned that he was very proud to have moved to the community.

7. Town Officials Business

a. Emergency Management Director – COVID-19 response updates

Emergency Management Director (EMD) Kevin Beattie briefed the Board on the COVID-19 pandemic and the declared state of emergency. He noted that there is discussion about deactivating the mountain towns virtual Emergency Operations Center (EOC), but it was decided to wait to see what happens with school openings and foliage season with a target of deactivating around Columbus Day.

The shelter situation has changed, he mentioned as the Flood Brook School gymnasium is not being used so it is again available if necessary.

b. Town Treasurer – Year-to-date budget review

c. Town Treasurer – Review draft 2020 Town Audit

Regarding these two agenda items, Mora noted that there had been too little time to review the documents and they should be passed over and moved to the next regular meeting. Labeau noted that there were no significant findings in the draft audit, and that we had a deficit but that it had been known earlier that that would be the case. She mentioned that if anyone had specific questions to give her a call.

d. Town Constable – Discuss Constable matter

Beattie noted that at the request of the Vermont State Police he had been asked to perform standby duty in a landlord-tenant dispute when the former tenant looks to retrieve their belongings. He stated that the VSP does not do this work and being new to the Constable position he was seeking to consult with the Board on process.

It was discussed that that he would only acting as a witness to the activity, but it was emphasized that he should be accompanied by another person, and Richard Phelan in his new role as Town Health Officer volunteered to do that. Beattie reminded the Board that by Town Meeting vote the Town Constable has no law enforcement authority.

8. Transfer Station/Solid Waste Management

a. Updates

Tom Cavanagh stated that the Town can hold off on advertising the Sunday part-time position as the employee may be able to balance the job with his new job, and he'll keep the Board informed of the situation.

b. Review bids and award contract for winter plowing & sanding

O'Keefe provided the two bids received in response to the Invitation to Bid for this service, which included options for either a 1-year contract or 3-year contract. He noted that the Invitation to Bid stated that "no bids will be accepted by mail, fax or in-person and all bids must be submitted electronically via email...", but that one of the bids was submitted by hand and then sent to electronically. Bids were received as follows:

	<u>FY'21</u>	<u>FY'22</u>	<u>FY'23</u>
Dana R. Griswold, Andover, VT	5,800	5,900	6,000
Hart's All Season Maintenance, Londonderry, VT	6,500	6,500	6,500

It was noted that Dana Griswold handled this service this past year, and Tom Cavanagh mentioned that he had done a good job but only had one truck and there were two or three instances where the Town's Road Crew had to apply sand when the vehicle was down for repairs. It was also mentioned that Hart's had done the work in past years and also had done a good job.

The difference in cost between the bidders was \$700 for the 1-year period and \$1,800 over the 3-year option. The importance of service reliability due to fleet size of the two bidders was discussed and it was the consensus that security and reliability was very important in order to lessen the burden on the Road Crew. Whether to award a 1-year or 3-year contract was also considered, and Labeau mentioned that the latter was preferred from a budgeting standpoint. The need for a clause allowing for cancellation of an extended contract for lack of service was supported.

Georgianne Mora moved to accept the bid from Hart's All Season Maintenance for winter plowing and sanding of the Transfer Station for the next three years in the amount of \$6,500 per year, with a clause that the Town may cancel the contract if it is unhappy with the services, and the bid irregularity which was the submission of the bid in-person instead of electronically, and authorize the Town Administrator to enter into a contract agreement for these services on behalf of the Town, seconded by Tom Cavanagh, passed unanimously.

9. Roads and Bridges

a. Updates

Taylor Prouty mentioned that the Derry Woods Road project is almost completed and that the contractor, Hunter Excavating, has done a very good job. Project cost and grant reimbursement was discussed, as was the fact that the dry weather aided in project timing and cost.

He also mentioned that the planned tree work on Thompsonburg Road by the old schoolhouse property was tentatively scheduled for later in the week, depending on the availability of a traffic control subcontractor.

b. Access permit 2020-06 – Haven Hill Road, Parcel #043003.000 (Veech)

Prouty mentioned that the subdivision creating this lot has been approved by the Development Review Board but the individual lot has not been conveyed separately as of yet. Beattie noted that he works for Mr. Veech and confirmed that the Town has not received the deed as of yet. Labeau confirmed that the subdivision plat has been filed with the Town.

Prouty in his role as Road Commissioner noted that there were no issues with the proposal provided a condition on conveyance of the property is included in the approval.

Taylor Prouty moved to approve access permit application No. 2020-06, submitted by Thomas Veech for parcel #043003.000, located on Haven Hill Road, with the condition that 1) the proposed access replaces an existing field access, which will no longer be active, and 2) that the property (subdivision Lot 2, as previously approved by the Development Review Board) is conveyed separately from the existing parent lot within six (6) months of this date, seconded by Tom Cavanagh, passed unanimously.

10. Old Business

a. Ratify Board vote to participate in the Okemo Valley Regional Chamber of Commerce COVID-19 Recovery Marketing Plan

The matter of participating in the Chamber's marketing plan was added to the agenda at the previous meeting and therefore required ratification per the Board's Rules of Procedure.

Crossman noted that the Chamber was successful and has received the grant approval.

Tom Cavanagh moved to ratify the Board's August 31, 2020 decision to participate in the Okemo Valley Regional Chamber of Commerce COVID-19 Recovery Marketing Plan, seconded by Vincent Annunziata, passed unanimously.

b. Ratify Board vote to convene meeting of the Board of Health to consider recommendation of a Deputy Health Officer

The matter of the Town's Board of Health meeting to select a new Deputy Health Officer was added to the agenda at the previous meeting and therefore required ratification per the Board's Rules of Procedure.

Tom Cavanagh moved to ratify the Board's August 31, 2020 decision to convene meeting of the Board of Health, and its decision to recommend Georgianne Mora for the position, seconded by Jim Fleming, passed unanimously.

c. Discuss FEMA grant for 2116/2136 North Main Street -- Garden Café & Restaurant (Tom & Judy Platt)

This matter was passed over by the Board at the request of the property owners.

d. Review proposed invitation to bid for Town Office Cleaning services

Following up on the discussion at the previous Board meeting, O'Keefe had prepared with the help of Town Office staff an invitation to bid for cleaning of Town Office, which would allow for an option of a 3-year contract. O'Keefe noted that he had confirmed with the Vermont League of Cities and Towns that any cleaning contractor would need to use their own equipment but that cleaning supplies would be supplied by the Town to ensure that the right ones are being used.

Taylor Prouty moved to approve the Invitation to Bid for Town Office cleaning services, and authorize the Town Administrator to take all necessary steps to solicit bids for review by the Board, seconded by Vincent Annunziata, passed unanimously.

11. New Business

a. Consider proposal for Town Hall structural assessment, and authorize use of Town Building Reserve Fund

Following up on the previous meeting discussion on efforts to renovate the Town Hall, Sharon Crossman shared with the Board a proposal to conduct a structural analysis of the building. This is the last of the four general areas that engineer Chris Cole had suggested needed analysis along with thermal, environmental and life safety reviews. The cost of the analysis is estimated to be between \$3,500 and \$4,000.

The structural analysis will look at the balcony and whether it is safe to continue to be used for seating, and determine any needed repairs. It was noted that the Town would need to have a carpenter on site during the evaluation in case of the need for removal of walls, and Jim Fleming volunteered to help with this.

The State Fire Marshall will eventually visit the building and consider life safety requirements and improvements.

Taylor Prouty moved to 1) accept the proposal from Engineering Ventures, PC as submitted for structural assessment services for the old Town Hall, estimated to cost up to \$4,000, 2) authorize the Town Administrator to sign any documents necessary for the hiring of the firm to conduct the necessary work, and 3) authorize the expenditure to be paid from the Town Building Reserve Fund, seconded by Tom Cavanagh, passed unanimously.

b. Planning Commission - Project Londonderry overview

Crossman spoke about the Project Londonderry effort, which was spawned by the Planning Commission prior to the COVID19 pandemic, but is even more important now given the economic conditions.

She mentioned the mission, purpose and vision of this community-based effort as follows:

Mission: To re-energize and revitalize Londonderry.

Purpose: Identify strategies and implement activities that will improve and sustain the economic and social vitality of our town.

Vision: Build a stronger, more inclusive, and connected community for all Londonderry residents.

She reviewed with the Board a Project Londonderry overview handout, which included the following:

Why Project Londonderry?

- COVID 19 has created hardship in our business sector.
- Ten years ago, Tropical Storm Irene seriously damaged parts of Londonderry, changing our landscape (5 buildings lost to flooding).
- We are losing our tax base of businesses (The Mill, The New England Shoe Barn, The Clothing Barn, etc.) for various reasons.
- As our tax base decreases, it affects our Town's ability to provide services and raises property taxes for all residents.
- Our designated Village Centers need revitalization and their streetscapes need improvements.
- As commercial properties deteriorate, it makes them more difficult to sell while making our town look neglected.
- A lack of infrastructure such as water and sewer can cause property transfer issues making commercial and residential properties more difficult to sell.

What steps are taking place now:

- The Planning Commission is initiating “Project Londonderry” to engage our citizens in an effort to revitalize our town.
- The Planning Commission is rewriting the Town Zoning By-laws to make them more easily understood and to streamline the process.
- A study is underway to assess the status of water and septic needs in our villages to establish a baseline, and then be able to propose solutions going forward.
- Daycare and affordable housing are incorporated into the Town Plan adopted in 2017 with specific goals, policies, and actions.
- The Town is working to upgrade the Twitchell Building (the Town Office) to bring it up to current codes, make it more accessible to all residents, improve energy efficiency, and provide more usable space for Town administrative and community needs. Some issues have already been addressed (drainage, wet basement) and they are moving forward on the other improvements.
- The Planning Commission is working on a plan for the preservation of the Town Hall on Middletown Road to make it available for year-round community use.
- Both South Londonderry and Londonderry have received “Village Center Designation” which offers significant benefits to businesses for technical assistance, planning, access to funding sources and tax credits.
- Efforts are underway by the Planning Commission with support from the Conservation Commission to identify and develop safe, alternative pathways and routes for multimodal purposes (People, Places and Pathways).

How to move forward:

- Need to identify a core working group, ask them volunteer to serve in a working group in a specific focus area of interest.
- For each of the four focus areas, identify a “team leader” to manage the meetings, projects, and progress reports. The working groups, which include approximately 50 volunteers, are:
 - ✓ Main Street Working Group
 - ✓ Recreation Destination Working Group
 - ✓ Economic Vitality Working Group
 - ✓ Community Connections Working Group
- Have working groups identify stakeholders, and local and state partners for each committee and engage with them as they work on projects.
- Working groups identify short-term and long-term goals, begin work on short-term projects, while starting to think about how to tackle long-term goals.
- Project Londonderry Working Groups, the Planning Commission and others work together to find funding & grants from multiple sources (federal, state, and private sources). A Planning Commission member will serve on each working group.

c. Planning Commission - Authorize submittal of Municipal Planning Grant

Related to the some of the Project Londonderry work, Crossman noted that the north village area has taken a series of hits over the years, given its location in an active flood hazard zone, and more recently the economic impacts of the pandemic, and the Planning Commission would like to seek funding for a master plan for the area. She stated that the funding source would be the Vermont Department of Housing and Community Development's Municipal Planning Grant Program, which recently funded the Zoning Bylaw rewrite, and reported that Windham Regional Commission staff mentioned that this was a very good project for this funding source. She added that the request would be for \$22,000, that the program requires a 10% local match and that the Planning Commission's budget had these funds available.

There was general support for the project from Board members. There was discussion about ongoing local efforts that can specifically add value to the potential master plan, such as the Town's request for a VTrans road safety study and a State DEC-funded water/wastewater study of the village.

Taylor Prouty moved to: 1) support and authorize the submittal of a Municipal Planning Grant of up to \$22,000 for the development of a master Plan for the North Village area of the community; 2) enter into and agree to the requirements and obligations of this grant program, including a commitment to match funds; 3) designate the Town Administrator and the Planning Commission Chair to serve as the primary and alternate Municipal/Authorizing Officials for the Grant Electronic Application and Reporting System, respectively, and to execute the Grant Agreement and other such documents as may be necessary to secure these funds; 4) designate the Town Administrator as the Town's Grant Administrator, with overall Administrative responsibility for the Municipal Planning Grant program activities related to the application, and any subsequent Grant Agreement provisions; and, 5) authorize the Selectboard Chair to execute the required Municipal Resolution on behalf of the Selectboard, seconded by Tom Cavanagh, passed unanimously.

d. Consider membership in the Okemo Valley Regional Chamber of Commerce

The Board briefly discussed re-establishing membership with the Chamber, which the Town dropped last year. Mora stated that the \$149 membership cost would be well worth it for the Town given the recent attention the Town has received from the Chamber.

George Mora moved for the Town join the Okemo Valley Regional Chamber of Commerce, seconded by Vincent Annunziata, passed unanimously.

e. Appoint voting delegate for the upcoming VLCT Legislative Policy meeting, and annual VLCT, PACIF and VERB meetings

O'Keefe noted that he had received a request from the Vermont League of Cities and Towns on the upcoming annual meetings, and he volunteered to participate on this online event unless someone else would like to do that.

George Mora moved to move to appoint Town Administrator Shane O'Keefe as the Town's voting delegate for the September 23, 2020 Legislative Policy Conference Meeting of the Vermont League of Cities and Towns, and the September 30, 2020 annual meetings of the

Vermont League of Cities and Towns, the VLCT Property and Casualty Intermunicipal Fund, and the VLCT Employment Resource and Benefits Trust, seconded by Vincent Annunziata, passed unanimously.

f. Executive Session – The appointment or employment or evaluation of a public officer or employee, per 1 V.S.A. 313 (a)(3)

George Mora moved to enter executive session to consider the evaluation of a Town employee, pursuant to Title 1 V.S.A. Section 313(a)(3), with Jarrett Sanderson, Shane O’Keefe and Tina Labeau in attendance, seconded by Taylor Prouty, passed unanimously.

The Board entered in executive session at 7:12 PM, and Sanderson left the executive session at 7:36 PM. The Board came out of executive session at 8:05 PM. No decisions or announcements were made.

12. Adjourn

Tom Cavanagh moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Taylor Prouty, passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:06 PM. The next regular meeting of the Selectboard is scheduled for October 5, 2020.

Respectfully Submitted,



Shane P. O’Keefe
Town Administrator

Approved October 5, 2020.

LONDONDERRY SELECTBOARD


Georgianne Mora, Chair