



Town of Brookfield
Board of Selectmen Meeting Minutes
March 19, 2024

ATTENDANCE: **Selectmen:** Rich Zacher, Chair; Ed Gauthier; Brian Robisbeau

Also Present: Joanne Dolbear, Treasurer; Leah Gage, Administrative Assistant; Town Clerk Karen Servacek; Chris Kinville, Road Agent; Ed Comeau, Videographer; Jan Ledbetter, Heritage Commission; Craig Evans, Town Archivist

Members of the Public: Mark Stengel

Meeting called to order at 5:59 pm by Chair Rich Zacher

Pledge of Allegiance

Public Input: None

OLD BUSINESS:

- **Reorganization of the Board:** Town Elections were held on March 12, with Rich Zacher winning reelection. His new term will expire in 2027. Ed Gauthier nominated and motioned to reappoint Rich Zacher as Chairman of the Board of Selectmen. Brian Robisbeau seconded the motion. **Vote 3-0 All in Favor**
 - Rich Zacher nominated and made a motion for Ed Gauthier to replace Brian Robisbeau as Vice Chair. Brian Robisbeau seconded the motion. **Vote 3-0 All in Favor.**
 - The committee assignments of the Selectmen are to remain the same, except in the case of the Trustees of the Trust Fund; Ed Gauthier will replace Brian Robisbeau as Selectmen's Representative for the Trustees of the Trust Fund.
- **Home Based Businesses:** Rich Zacher reiterated the Town's stance that if someone has a business within their home that is internal, with no external impacts, and the business is legal, then it is acceptable to run a home-based business in Town. **No motions were made, or votes taken.**
- **Town Property Insurance Coverage:** Treasurer Joanne Dolbear presented a breakdown of the Town's current property insurance costs, both per property and per building. After some discussion it was agreed that Mr. Zacher will discuss re-evaluation of the Town's properties with the Code Enforcement Officer and Assessor Clerk. Mr. Robisbeau will take pictures of Pike Brook Bridge for the insurance company. The Town's insurance needs will be fully reassessed at a later date. **No motions were made, or votes taken.**
- **Amendments to February 20, 2024 Minutes:** After the last Selectmen's meeting on March 5, it was brought to Mrs. Gage's attention by several sharp-eyed people that she'd made some errors in the February 20, 2024 meeting minutes, therefore the following amendments were proposed: changing the listed bank account the \$25 donation to the Heritage Commission went in, from "*Heritage Trust*

Account” to “**Heritage Fund**” to accurately reflect where the money was deposited; and adding to the sentence under “Voting Booths” that says, “*State voting laws require towns to have 1 booth per 100 registered voters,*” to reflect that the Town is required 1 voting booth per 100 registered voters **for national elections**. Rich Zacher motioned to accept the amendments to the February 20, 2024 Selectmen’s Meeting Minutes as proposed. Brian Robischeau seconded the motion. **Vote 3-0 All in Favor.**

- After the vote, Mr. Zacher explained that The Heritage Commission has three sources of funds: the Heritage Trust account, which is managed by the Trustees of the Trust Fund; the annual operating budget allotment, which is managed by the Selectmen via the Treasurer; and the Heritage Fund, which the Heritage Commission manages. The Heritage Commission is the only commission allowed to accumulate and carry over funds from year to year, making accuracy in the records especially important.
- **Voting Booths:** The voting booths the Town currently uses are inadequate for the number of people now registered to vote in Town. The Selectmen toured the booths Farmington uses and were impressed by the circular “pod” design of booth, which can accommodate up to four people at once. Each “station” on the pod has its own curtain and light. The cost of the two pods the Town would need to be in compliance with NH Election Law is \$3173.22. Ed Gauthier motioned to approve the expenditure of \$3173.22 for the purchase of two “4 Station Franklin Voting Booths” from *Inclusion Solutions*. Rich Zacher seconded. **Vote 3-0 All in Favor.**
 - Town Clerk Karen Servacek will work on ordering the booths so they can be used for the upcoming Presidential Primaries.
- **Approval of Minutes:** Public and non-public Minutes from the March 5, 2024 Selectmen’s meeting were presented as written by Administrative Assistant Leah Gage. Ed Gauthier motioned to accept the public and non-public minutes as presented. Brian Robischeau seconded the motion. **Vote 3-0, All in Favor**

REPORTS FROM TOWN OFFICIALS:

- **Archivist Report:** Craig Evans presented an invoice for the conservation and digitizing of Town Record Books #5 and #6 by Northeast Document Conservation Center. The total cost is \$10,570, but only 1/3 is due now as deposit. Rich Zacher made a motion to approve the expenditure and to move forward with the conservation and digitization of the Town Record Books #5 and #6 by Northeast Document Conservation Center. Ed Gauthier Seconded. **Vote 3-0, All in Favor.**
- **Road Agent:** Chris Kinville presented quotes to repair the Moose Mt. Rd. Bridge. He said the quotes reflect a minimal cost of \$14-16,000, or a more comprehensive repair cost of \$45-50,000. Ed Comeau asked if storm water mitigation improvements would slow or stop erosion around the bridge footings. Mr. Kinville believes that the erosion has been caused by Hanson Brook itself, not runoff from the barrage of storms we’ve received over the past year. He added that the cost to fully repair the bridge would be much higher than the quotes presented. Rich Zacher suggested having a State inspector inspect the bridge and compare the suggested repairs in the quotes to see what level of work is necessary to remove the bridge from the “red list.”
 - **Paving and Chip Sealing:** Mr. Kinville presented quotes for paving and chip sealing portions of Stoneham, Garney, Clark, and Pleasant Valley roads. Garney Rd. would be “chip-sealed” to lengthen the life of the new pavement, and the portion that was not paved in 2023 would be “shimmed.” Pleasant Valley Rd would be overlaid to finish work done in 2023. Stoneham Rd would also be overlaid, as it hasn’t been done in 14 years or so. Brian Robischeau will create a spreadsheet of costs of repairs per road to be reviewed at the April 2 BoS meeting. **No motions were made, or votes taken.**

- **Dirt Road Dust Control:** The liquid sprayed on our dirt roads to control dust was last ordered in 2010. Mr. Kinville says the tank it's held in is roughly 4500 gallons, and a refill will cost between \$7-8,000. He estimates he uses about 1,000 gallons of the liquid/year. The Selectmen will review the materials presented. **No motions were made, or votes taken.**
- **"200" Garney Road:** No driveway permit has been found in relation to the property, despite a house currently being built there. Mr. Kinville requested the Selectmen write a letter to the owners, as he's tried to reach them with no luck. Rich Zacher will have the Code Enforcement Officer visit the location and rescind the building permits.
- **Heritage Commission:** Member Jan Ledbetter spoke on behalf of the Commission and reminded people that Ed Gauthier will be giving a "Maple Syrup 101" talk at the Town House on Saturday March 23 at 10 am. The event is free and open to the public.
 - **Mini Assessment Grant:** Mrs. Ledbetter reported that the application for the mini assessment grant was submitted on Feb. 29. She will reach out to the providers of the grant to ask for a timeline of approval and assessment, and will update the Selectmen at a future date.
 - **Letter from the Chair:** Ed Gauthier read a letter written by Commission Chair Marilou MacLean nominating Bob Servacek for a new three-year term expiring in 2027, and asking that Jan Ledbetter be promoted from Alternate to full membership, with a term expiring in 2026. Ed Gauthier made a motion to accept and approve the nominations of Bob Servacek and Jan Ledbetter to the Heritage Commission. Rich Zacher seconded the motion. **Vote 3-0, All in Favor.**
- **Town Clerk:** Karen Servacek described two upcoming trainings offered by the NH Municipal Association that are open to staff, as well as the public. The Town will attend the trainings via Zoom. The first is April 3, 9 am – 4 pm and will provide a general overview of tools and procedures for municipal employees and elected officials, including how to run meetings, prepare and stick to budgets, Right to Know laws, etc. This training is free to all. The second training is April 17 from 9 am – 2:30 pm and will cover the latest updates to NH RSA 91-A, specifically as the law applies to Governmental meetings and records. A copy of the materials given for both meetings will be available as needed. The second training is \$70 for the Town to attend via Zoom.
 - **Dog Registrations:** Mrs. Servacek reminded people of the need to register their dogs as soon as possible. There was a dog bite incident in Town during the weekend of March 15-17. If a dog isn't registered and up to date on their shots, any such incidents leave the pet's owners liable for any damages and charges brought. Dogs **must** be registered by April 30. Reminder postcards will be sent to dog owners. There are "ruffly" 250 dogs in Brookfield. Three low-cost rabies clinics are upcoming, and Mrs. Servacek will work with Leah Gage to get them posted to the website and to otherwise notify people about them.
- **Treasurer:** Joanne Dolbear presented the bimonthly manifest which totaled \$51,371.29. Ed Gauthier motioned to approve the manifest as presented. Brian Robischeau seconded. **Vote 3-0 All in Favor.**

NEW BUSINESS:

- **Door Signs:** Leah Gage presented two options for office door signs for the Town offices. She has noticed people are unsure which office/department they need when they come in to conduct business, since the office doors are unmarked. Rich Zacher suggested purchasing one sign as a test to see if such signs will fit the Town's need, and if not, the sign can be returned. Ed Gauthier made a motion to authorize Mrs. Gage to order one sign from either vendor presented. Rich Zacher seconded the motion. **Vote 3-0 All in Favor.**

- **Flags:** Ed Gauthier proposed the purchase of a dozen American flags (with hardware) to be hung from the 12 telephone poles between the intersection of Lyford Rd (across the street from the Town House) to the pole in front of the road salt shed. He would like to see them hung from Memorial Day – Veterans’ Day. The cost would be \$878 and does not include installation. Rich Zacher and Brian Robischeau believed the money would be better spent to repair our roads. Mr. Gauthier, seeing no support for the expenditure, dropped the suggestion. **No motions were made, or votes taken.**
- **Library and Meals on Wheels:** Rich Zacher asked Joanne Dolbear to send the library and Meals on Wheels letters stating that at Town Meeting their requests for funding were not fully approved, allowing \$16,000 of the requested \$18,000 for the library, and \$500 of the \$1000 requested for Meals on Wheels. Payment of the amounts granted will be sent to the two entities with their letters. **No motions were made, or votes taken.**
- **Town Office Expansion:** Rich Zacher proposed holding three meetings to take input about the proposed expansion of the Town Offices. After some discussion about scheduling the meetings, the following dates were chosen: April 24 at 9 am, April 25 at 6 pm and April 27 at 10 am. All input meetings are open to the public. Input is also welcome via email, or by speaking to the Selectmen. Notices will be posted on the kiosk and website, as well as in the next newsletter, which is due to be sent by April 9. If needed, a committee may be formed in the future to handle the matter.

The next Selectmen’s meeting will be held on April 2, 2024 6:00 pm at the Brookfield Town Offices.

Meeting adjourned 7:39 pm by Richard Zacher.

These minutes respectfully submitted by Administrative Assistant Leah Gage

Minutes Approved on (date):

Richard Zacher: _____

Ed Gauthier: _____

Brian Robischeau: _____