

STOCKBRIDGE SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, May 28, 2020
6:30 p.m.
CTSB Zoom Meeting

Present:

Terry Flynn, Chuck Cardillo, Roxanne McCaffrey and Mark Webber

Call to Order:

Terry called the meeting to order.

Agenda:

Mark gave the following updates: he stated that a new seasonal employee has been hired for summer mowing. Chris Marsden did an inspection of the Town cemetery fence columns and a number have deteriorated. He has contacted Chester Stone Quarry to get pricing on replacement of those. Other concerns are a number of fallen and broken stones and some of the driveway conditions. Joe and Rich Attwood are doing an inventory with prioritization. There is quite a bit of funding in the cemetery trust to help with this process.

Terry also mentioned issues with the lower driveway owned by Naumkeag.

Terry noted that both cemeteries should have someone to have constant maintenance and this position needs to be clarified. Roxanne added that there might need to be discussion with the mower to help manage/eliminate future damage.

Next was discussion on the Red Lion Inn intersection. Terry noted that many residents have questioned the process and Terry said that fundamentally the Town has the ability to decide on funding such projects at Town Meeting, and the Select Board chooses the alternatives to pursue and place on the Warrant and certainly, the Board welcomes input.

The other point that often came up was the strong desire for a round-a-bout but at last year's town meeting was the vote for further design and survey/ engineering options, not a vote for a round-a-bout.

Roxanne suggested working on just the Red Lion Inn intersection at this meeting. Roxanne brought up VHB's different design concepts: Focus 1, being the Red Lion Inn intersection, had five concepts presented. Concept 1-4 incorporated painting and narrowing of the intersection. Concept 2 was all painting and concept 3 added ADA compliant crosswalks. Concept 4 adds rubble paving surfaces. Focus 5 was the round-a-bout itself which has issues with the taking of land on three corners, the removal of the dog and cat fountain and would cost the most. Chuck felt that Concept 2 with painting would be a good test and if it works to move on to Concept 4 with more permanency. Both maintain the bike lanes. Terry noted that the Town will be working with Mass DOT and VHB to implement the concepts and during the process more options may arise that stay within the concepts. Mark added that this concept is a zero-cost trial. Buck Smith questioned stops vs yields at each intersection and he felt it was a key component. Terry said that Van intended on keeping the three stop signs as they are now. Buck questioned the West Bound stop as it remains a confusing aspect that needs to be dealt with. Terry said that this stop used to be a normal right of way and the additional stop helped flow

going South but added indecision in the intersection. Kate Fletcher said that years ago there was a letter to the editor stating that the solid cross walk paint is slippery and to asked that Van about this. Kate also questioned the safety of the crosswalk if the stop sign in question was to be removed and emphasized the need to slow traffic. Buck added to Kate's suggestion on slowing traffic, that concept 3 does shorten the crosswalk across South Street and expressed possibly consider moving the curve closed to the center island making it safer. Terry made a motion that working with VHB and DOT, the Board take the necessary steps to implement essential elements from VHB alternative #2 at the Red Lion Inn intersection, including bike lanes through the intersection. Chuck seconded; all were in favor: Roxanne I, Terry I, Chuck I.

Next was to appoint a member of the Board of Selectmen to the Stockbridge Bowl Association. Terry made a motion to appoint Roxanne to be a representative on the Stockbridge Bowl Association. Chuck seconded: all were in favor: Chuck I, Roxanne I, Terry I.

Next on the agenda was a discussion on controversial docks on the Stockbridge Bowl. Mark noted that if you live on the Bowl and wish to put in a non-permanent dock you apply DEP. Once approved they must be recorded at the registry and that they abide by Town rules and regulations. The seems to be a disconnect in the process where the Town doesn't know about it until after approved and they show up. The concern is with property that has two docks presently and there is a third application. Checking Town bylaws, they direct the Harbor Master to enforce all rules and regulations, but the bylaws do not speak to docks. Therefore, after speaking to Ned Baldwin, he noted that the two docks currently there have been there for some time. Mark is waiting to hear back from DEP on process but currently on this case Gary Kleinerman should be involved to talk to the applicant and concerned neighbors. Kate Fletcher noted on page 26 in the Zoning Bylaws under the table of uses, (f) of foot notes speaks to docks. Kate read it aloud. Mark concluded that Ned and Gary should work through this.

The next item was the FY21 budget discussion. Mark noted that at the last meeting the Operating Budget (article 4) was approved. Mark noted that the five special articles reviewed the previous meeting had not changed. Mark had suggested moving \$1 million or \$750,000 free cash into general stabilization as a "safety net". On this item the split of how to do it needed to be decided. He also stated that he would like to get it wrapped up and formally present to FinCom and invite them to a joint Select Board meeting to discuss. Finance was previously in agreement on the operating budget. Mark briefly reviewed the items: a \$145,000 transfer from free cash for a highway truck; \$25,000 free cash transfer for a part-time planning assistants from BRPC for the Planning Board; a 1 million dollar free cash (or \$750,000/\$250,000 split) transfer to stabilization and \$150,000 transfer from free cash for the Averic Road bridge repair project. The five spending items as reviewed at the previous meeting of May 21, 2020 were agreed upon by the Board.

Next was a discussion on the venue for the Annual Town Meeting and Terry had proposed the high school track. Both Chuck and Roxanne agreed that this would be a good choice. The capacity at spacing of 10 feet would be approximately 300 people. Details will be coordinated.

Terry made a motion to contact the Berkshire Hills Regional School District to set a venue for the Town Meeting scheduled on August 3rd. Chuck seconded; all were in favor: Terry I, Chuck I, Roxanne I. Mark noted that Great Barrington was looking into this venue as well.

Mark stated that a suggestion from the Board of Health was to suspend or eliminate the annual mosquito control program. Some other surrounding towns have the program as well. The Town Cherry sheet receipt pays approximately \$26,000 per year. Terry suggested asking residents for public input on the subject. There is no time limit on making this decision. Roxanne raised concern for residents of Pinewoods being surrounded by water as well as other areas. Mark said he would contact the program. Roxanne said that Dr. Kenny brought it up as a money saving option.

Next on the agenda was discussion on the proposed settlement by DEP and Stockbridge Bowl but the item will be tabled.

Next was Parks and Recreation discussion. Mark gave an overview that we are in a different time, parks are currently closed and, at some point, we will look to open them up. In speaking with the other towns everyone wants to do it the right way and it is not a straight forward way. There are guidelines from the Governor specific to parks and how to do enforce the conditions are in question. Mark turned it over to Steve from Parks and Rec. Steve said that they wanted to focus on the beach. Their position is that with the right qualified lifeguards present they can comply with the guidelines set forth by the State, but the life guards will not enforce the rules. Jim at Tri Town agree that it is up to the people themselves to follow the posted rules. The beach is currently crowded. They have 4-5 lifeguards who are well seasoned. Their thought is to get the life guards hired and open the beach in the next couple of weeks. They have much to do to be ready to open but would like to hire lifeguards and get ready to open. Mark said the Great Barrington with Lake Mansfield and a much larger use, is hiring two life guards. They have closed half of the parking lot, taken down swings, roped off picnic tables, etc. Steve said that Lee and Lenox do not usually open until school is done. As a committee they feel that it is their responsibility to give the Town opportunity to use the resources they have provided they follow they follow the safety guidelines. Chuck asked who would enforce if there is an overcrowding. Steve said that they are giving the lifeguards the Board of Health number and that they may need to block off more parking. They had not yet decided on allowing the launching of kayaks. He felt that they had a number of options to limit the crowd. Roxanne asked what they would do if they end up in an out of control situation. Nicole Fairaux from Parks and Rec said that they could move to swim at your own risk, limit parking, but there needs to be personal responsibility at play. Steve said that an option would be to put someone at the entrance to help with parking and safety guidelines. He also said that they usually work with the Police Department and train the use of the radio that goes to dispatch. Nicole Fairaux from Parks and Rec said that they had not discussed closing the beach if it gets over-crowded but they could remove their presence and make it a swim at your own risk; close most of the parking. She added that personal responsibility needs to be at play as people need access to the water. Roxanne said that they need options available. Steve said if the lifeguards do not feel comfortable, they would not want this. Once a year the police instruct the lifeguards on how to

use the radio for dispatch. Flexibility and close monitoring are key but there is a lot they do not know. Steve said that their preference is two lifeguards on per week day and three on weekends. Terry voiced his concern that no one is monitoring the regulations and suggested that one lifeguard is responsible for monitoring. Steve said that they are there to monitor the rules: 12 feet apart if stationary, 6 feet apart otherwise and face coverings, bathroom occupancy of one and closing the second stalls. If people refuse, that is when they call for back-up. Nicole said that the lifeguards are focused on the beach and swimmers and to limit confrontation. There will be lots of signage. Terry said that in this environment it may be very easy to be lax. Nicole felt it would not be a perfect system and that you cannot ask people to wear masks on a hot day and if people do not feel safe at the beach they can choose not to go to the beach. Steve said that the lifeguards do have all of their cell phone numbers and one of them are there at least once a week for status reports. Terry questioned the 10 people at a gathering limit and Steve said that it was 10 in a group distanced at 12 feet. Mark said that the Board of Health tests the water weekly and that is their role, the State has their guidelines and Parks and Rec has stewardship over the property. Chuck asked if they had an opening date and Steve said once they have lifeguards hired, signage up, roping off the picnic and play areas and sanitizing supplies they could open. Nick said he would remove the swings and Nicole felt that they might remove the picnic tables as they plan to replace them. Mark said that the lifeguard Cori checks had been done and they will next go to Karen. Nick questioned COVID funds and Mark replied that they are reimbursements and no upfront funds available. Steve said that they would touch base with Chris on cleaning materials. Nick felt that they could open the skate park now and coordinate trail openings with the Trustee's opening of Monument Mountain. Nick said that Hugh Paige has been extremely helpful and great to work with.

Next discussion was on downtown businesses. Mark said that Barbara Zanetti, the Chamber chair sent a letter of a number of items to help facilitate the downtown businesses. The Board sent a letter to the landlords of local businesses and Roxanne read the letter as follows:

Stockbridge, and indeed the world, is experiencing a significantly changed environment due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The current crisis has placed significant stress on both sides of the landlord-tenant equation. Landlords and tenants have suddenly found their operations interrupted, cash flow jeopardized, business continuity interrupted, and have had their ability to meet their obligations severely strained. To the extent practical, all parties should seek the mutually shared goal to outlast the crisis impact in a manner that allows as quick a recovery as possible.

We have local business owners that are modifying their enterprise models in an attempt to promote cash flow to the extent possible while maintaining compliance with the Commonwealth's guidelines and restrictions. These adaptations will need to continue as the Commonwealth moves forward in re-opening the economy.

It is in the best interests of landlords, commercial tenants as well as the Town of Stockbridge, for landlords, where economically feasible, to negotiate and possibly amend lease agreements until a time certain to enable our local businesses to weather the economic downturn. Empty store fronts and failed business ventures are harmful to all.

In addition, it is in the best interest of the Town of Stockbridge and our community as a whole, to emerge from this difficult time as a vibrant, attractive place to visit and spend time. The Town has the responsibility to ensure the maintenance of public property and grounds as well as our infrastructure. Local businesses and landlords should endeavor to maintain and enhance the appearance of their businesses and

commercial properties. Between Town government and our commercial participants, we should do what we can to recover our economic base as quickly as possible.

Our entire community needs to work together for Stockbridge to come out of this emergency intact and hopefully stronger as a result.

The Board of Selectmen encourages you to do your part to prove our community is healthy, resilient and cooperative in times of need.

Sincerely,

Mark said that the other items speak of opening the public restrooms in Town Hall and this needs to be worked out with Chris and getting the Information booth running; trash removal and speak to highway, and to consider a temporary modification of downtown restrictions of use by businesses; such as extending out into the sidewalks, use tents, outdoor dining. Input on a case by case basis from businesses, written input from the business owners on their thought and then the Board can react and meet with the members.

Terry asked that maybe at the next meeting they could look more into the industrial park and broadband and WIFI issues as a follow-up to Laura's information. The next meeting is scheduled for June 11th and if need be, they could add one on the 4th.

Steve asked about the bridge work on route 183 concerning an abutter's notice from March. Mark said that it was for National Grid utilities. The order has been given for work on the Interlaken bridge to be done by David Roach.

Mark added that currently there is \$1,331,000 in stabilization.

Adjournment:

With no further business, Terry adjourned the meeting.