

**TOWN OF SPRINGFIELD  
SELECTBOARD HALL – 96 MAIN STREET – THIRD FLOOR  
REGULAR SELECTBOARD MEETING  
MONDAY, December 18, 2023**

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**DRAFT MINUTES**

**A. CALL MEETING TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND ROLL CALL**

Chair, Kristi Morris, called the meeting to order at 6:04 pm. Pledge of Allegiance was recited, and Roll Call was taken.

**Selectboard Members:** Chair Kristi Morris, Vice Chair Michael Martin, Walter Martone, and Heather Frahm were present in-person. Everett Hammond joined via Zoom.

**Administration:** Town Manager Jeff Mobus, Water System Superintendent Roy Farrar, and Wastewater Treatment Facility Superintendent Nate Fraser were present in-person. Fire Chief Paul Stagner joined via Zoom.

**Budget Advisory Committee (BAC) Members:** Doug Johnston, Scott Richardson, and John Bond were present in-person. Jim Fog, Tara Chase, and Tre Ayer were present via Zoom.

**School Board Liaison:** Steve Karaffa was not in attendance due to School Board commitment.

**B. MINUTES**

1. Regular Selectboard Meeting – December 11, 2023
2. Budget Workshop Meeting – December 11, 2023

**MOTION: Walter Martone moved to approve the minutes of the Regular Selectboard Meeting of December 11, 2023, and the minutes of the Budget Workshop Meeting of December 11, 2023, as printed and distributed.**

**Seconded by: Heather Frahm**

**Vote: 4-0, 1 recused, affirmative, recognizing Everett Hammond as recused.**

**C. ANY REQUESTED ADDITIONS TO THIS AGENDA**

No additions to this agenda at the time of the meeting.

**D. NEW BUSINESS**

**ITEM #1** Appoint Selectboard Liaison to the School Board.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus presented the “Appoint Selectboard liaison to the School Board” item included in the meeting packet. Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed that due to Crissy Webster's resignation, the liaison position to the School Board is vacant. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that he believes it would be beneficial to fill this position, especially during the budget season.

Walter Martone commented that the meetings for the School Board have been on the same nights as the Selectboard meetings and he inquired when there would be opportunity for a Selectboard member to participate in the School Board meetings without missing a Selectboard meeting. Further discussion ensued that the liaison could coordinate with Steve Karaffa to catch up on the meetings or watch the previous recorded meetings available through SAPA TV. Walter Martone noted that his concern was not having the Selectboard liaison presence at the time of the meetings.

Further discussion ensued that the School Board’s regular meetings are supposed to be on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Mondays of each month and the Selectboard meetings are the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Mondays, noting that during budget season more meetings are being scheduled.

Walter Martone noted that he spoke with Steve Karaffa regarding the change in the School Board meeting schedules and Steve Karaffa would be working with them to get this changed.

**MOTION: Walter Martone moved to appoint Heather Frahm as School Board liaison from the Selectboard.**

**Seconded by: Michael Martin**

**Vote: 5-0, unanimous**

**ITEM #2** Discuss priority list application for Water Project I.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus presented the “Discuss priority list application for Water Project I” item included in the meeting packet. Town Manager Jeff Mobus provided a long-term debt list at the time of the meeting to the participants, to show how much we are paying each year and how that amount is scheduled to go down currently, and the future projects coming out with the estimates of Project I. Town Manager Jeff Mobus continued that Project J currently does not have an estimated amount as we do not have a funding package for this project yet and the wastewater compost facility.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed that when the Town receives funding from the State, there is a two-part process. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that the Town needs to apply to be on the priority list, which saves our place for funding, noting that these applications are not committing the Town to accept any debt. Town Manager Jeff Mobus continued that this application is for the funding package for Water Project I (Clinton Street from Bridge Street to South Street, Bridge Street, Seavers Brook, and Mill Road). Town Manager Jeff Mobus noted that the actual application will be discussed later in this meeting. Town Manager Jeff Mobus further added that the Town and Board have already approved the funding for this project.

**MOTION: Michael Martin moved to approve the funding package for Water Project I that was previously voted on and authorize the Town Manager to sign it.**

**Seconded by: Walter Martone**

Walter Martone commented that the project title on page 3 of the project summary appears to be a format that they are not supposed to use according to the directions on the form. Town Manager Jeff Mobus responded that the engineer fills this out and has worked on the funding packages for multiple projects in the past and he would confirm with the engineer on this.

Walter Martone inquired about the next page regarding lead control for 90 points, and inquired if the system was also dealing with inadequate water quantity and if that would give us more points. Town Manager Jeff Mobus responded that it is not the same degree of an issue as the lead.

Everett Hammond watermain for Riverside Park and where the funding for this would fit in. Town Manager Jeff Mobus responded that we have not applied for funding for that project, and it is a different project.

Further discussion ensued to clarify that the long-term debt list, that the column that says Town is the Town's obligation of payments for that bond and the second column that says water and wastewater is what they are paying, which is not coming out of the Town's budget, it is coming out of the water wastewater budget. Additional discussion ensued that the stormwater drainage is a Town issue not the water wastewater users.

**Vote: 5-0, unanimous**

**ITEM #3** Act on service line inventory loan application.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus presented the "Act on service line inventory loan application" item included in the meeting packet. Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed that the State is requiring all water systems in Vermont to conduct a lead inventory on every connection. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that this is expensive, but the Town is eligible for a very generous funding package for the project. Town Manager Jeff Mobus continued that the Town is eligible to receive a loan of up to \$328,558, with the first \$100,000 forgiven and the remainder being 50% forgiven. Town Manager Jeff Mobus further added that our contract with Dufresne Group is that they will assist us with this and our contract with them is \$90,000 which means that the entire inventorying project will be forgiven and will not have any long-term debt associated with it. Town Manager Jeff Mobus noted that we do not have enough staffing to do this inventory in-house and we only received a 30% response rate to the request for water users to take pictures of their service feed.

Everett Hammond inquired about the base map that this information would be put on, noting that Lebanon, NH and Claremont, NH have really good GIS maps for their inventories, and we should look into adding a good base map to this project. Further discussion ensued that Public Works has gotten PubWorks software to track their inventories, and there may be a GIS map tool with that.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus responded that he would inquire what Dufresne Group would have available and research the base map options.

**MOTION: Walter Martone moved to approve the service line inventory loan application for \$90,000.**

**Seconded by: Michael Martin**

Further discussion ensued that there are opportunities to amend the requested amount in the future in regard to potentially adding the mapping program if it is an eligible expense and if it is needed.

**Vote: 5-0, unanimous**

**ITEM #4** Discuss priority list application for twenty-year review of sewer collection system and compost.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus presented the “Discuss priority list application for twenty-year review of sewer collection system and compost” item included in the meeting packet. Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed that this is another Priority List Application, this is for the 20 Year Review of the Sewer Collection System and Compost Facility Upgrade. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that this application is just to get us in line for funding and he expects to bring the application to the Board in the near future. Town Manager Jeff Mobus further added that the Board toured the facility several weeks ago and discussed options for the biosolid treatment and reducing the PFAs. Town Manager Jeff Mobus continued that they are looking at a lot of different options including regionalization.

**MOTION: Walter Martone moved to authorize the Town Manager to approve the priority list application for twenty-year review of sewer and collection system and compost facility.**

**Seconded by: Heather Frahm**

Further discussion ensued that the potential upgrades to the compost facility we can look into regionalization and working with septic pumpers as a potential

revenue generator to offset some of the costs for the Wastewater treatment plant.

**Vote: 5-0, unanimous**

**ITEM #5** Act on State Revolving Loan Fund application for Water Project I.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus presented the “Act on State Revolving Loan Fund application for Water Project I” item included in the meeting packet. Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed that this is the actual application for the loan for Water Project I. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that this is the project that the Town authorized a \$3.4 million bond at the March 2023 Town Meeting. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that this is for the work that is expected to start next summer and be completed during the summer of 2025. Town Manager Jeff Mobus continued that the funding package includes \$1,000,000 in lead subsidy, with the remainder being paid over 40 years with no interest.

**MOTION: Michael Martin moved to approve the up to \$3.4 million bond at the March 2023 Town Meeting for the revolving loan fund application for Water Project I.**

**Seconded by: Everett Hammond**

Chair Kristi Morris noted this project was from Bridge Street to the Desert Storm Bridge, up Bridge Street, Seavers Brook Road, and Mill Road in North Springfield. Further discussion ensued that the new water projects a large part of doing them is for fire protection and economic development.

**Vote: 5-0, unanimous**

**ITEM #6** Discuss priority list application for Water Project J.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus presented the “Discuss priority list application for Water Project J” item included in the meeting packet. Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed this Priority List Application is for the last stage of the Water

Project, which will replace the water lines under Main Street and River Street. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that we hope to bring this project to the voters for bonding authority at the March 2025 Town Meeting and this application will get us in line for funding. Town Manager Jeff Mobus described Water Project J is from the Dessert Storm Bridge to the VFW and would likely be less expensive than Water Project I since it is a more localized project.

**MOTION: Michael Martin moved to approve the addition of Water Project J to the priority list application process.**

**Seconded by: Heather Frahm**

Michael Martin noted that the project title on page 3 should be confirmed as was mentioned with Water Project I priority list application earlier in the meeting.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus noted that these waterlines were put in in 1905 and are no longer reliable as they are undersized. Walter Martone noted that FW Webb gave to the Art and Historical Society some old pipes they discovered in a project they worked on.

Further discussion ensued that Water Project J is eligible for subsidies.

Scott Richardson noted that the lines along Main Street would not support a major fire downtown. Chair Kristi Morris noted that there are still old trolley tracks under the street.

Further discussion ensued that the project is added to the priority list, then the initial funding package is sought, after which it gets presented to the voters for a townwide vote and the project is likely to take around 3 years to become ready for construction.

**Vote: 5-0, unanimous**

**ITEM #7** Act on engineering agreement for Water Project I.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus presented the “Act on engineering agreement for Water Project I” item included in the meeting packet. Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed that our engineering firm for all water projects is Aldrich and

Elliott and their current agreement for Water Project I was for the preliminary engineering and easement work. Town Manager Jeff Mobus continued that this is an amendment to the contract to add engineering services throughout the remainder of the project. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that the amount of the amendment is \$412,600 and he recommends that the Board accept the amendment and authorize me to sign the agreement. Town Manager Jeff Mobus noted that these funds are already in the Project I bond budget.

**MOTION: Michael Martin moved to approve the engineering agreement for Water Project I that adds in an amended \$412,600 to the original \$37,100 for a total of adjusted agreement of \$449,700 and authorize the Town Manager to sign it.**

**Seconded by: Walter Martone**

Further discussion ensued that we did an RFQ (request for qualifications) for all of the engineering and the big projects for we already had, and the wastewater treatment plant are with Aldrich and Elliott, the new water and stormwater is with Dufresne Group, and all of the civil engineering (bridges, roads, and culverts) is going through the consortium with Hammond Engineering, Waysville, and two other engineers.

**Vote: 5-0, unanimous**

Further discussion ensued that Mill Road has old 2" galvanized pipes that have been patched a number of times. Water System Superintendent Roy Farrar added that they will be putting in 8" lines across the road approximately 400 feet, then reducing to 4" to the end. Additional discussion ensued that this project would be done before the Clinton Street Road.

Doug Johnston commented that Pine Ridge Road had residents that installed there one undersized line and there have been discussions about the Town taking the line over and he inquired if this project would address that line also. Water System Superintendent Roy Farrar responded that this project is going up to 400 feet past the apartment buildings and will hopefully pick up at the ductile iron lines and will not include that Street.



## **E. FINANCIAL REPORTS**

FY2024 Warrants to December 15, 2023 -copies on website.

Town Manager, Jeff Mobus stated that any questions regarding these warrants should be directed to the Finance Director, Cathy Sohngen.

## **F. FUTURE AGENDA ITEM PROPOSALS**

Everett Hammond requested that they follow up on a good GIS map for the Town similar to what the Regional Planning Commission has.

Micheal Martin requested that they keep the Vermont 250<sup>th</sup> celebration on their radar.

Heather Frahm requested they look into developing a group or committee to look into long-term capital planning for the Town to look at what some of our long-term commitments and funding options could be for the Strategic Plan. Further discussion ensued that our Budget Advisory Committee has responsibilities defined in the Town Charter and the committee Heather Frahm is suggesting is an ad-hoc committee.

## **G. COMMITTEE REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Town Manager Jeff Mobus announced that the Trails and Rural Economy Committee submitted their closeout paperwork on their VORAC grant, they came under budget for the grant and the State agreed to cover the expenses of their stronger and more durable kiosks that were installed.

Chair Kristi Morris commented that the Transportation Advisory Committee and the Mount Ascutney Regional Commission had a joint meeting with the Airport Commission at the airport. Chair Kristi Morris added that VTrans had representatives there to discuss what is going on with the airport for enhancements, including paving and easements.

## **H. OTHER MINUTES & CORRESPONDENCE**

Chair Morris read aloud the list of Other Minutes and Correspondence and noted these are all available online.

1. Springfield Airport Commission - Minutes of October 26, 2023
2. Springfield Airport Commission-Minutes of November 16, 2023
3. Springfield Inclusion Committee-Minutes of November 28, 2023

**I. CITIZENS' COMMENTS**

Wes Marshall of SAPA TV commented that the School Board meets on Mondays at 6:30 pm at the High School library.

Chair Kristi Morris wished everyone a safe and happy holiday.

**J. ADJOURN**

**MOTION: Michael Martin moved to adjourn the meeting.**

**Seconded by: Heather Frahm**

**Vote: 5-0, unanimous**

The meeting adjourned at 7:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Carrie M. Kellow, Recording Secretary