

Town of Royalton
Selectboard Meeting Minutes DRAFT
9/27/2022 6:30 PM
Virtual / In-person Meeting

Royalton Selectboard: John Dumville, Jerry Barcelow, David Barker, Tim Murphy,

Town Staff & Committee Members: Victoria Paquin (Town Administrator), Rita Hull (Treasurer), Loretta Stalnaker (Police Chief), Jim Hewitt (Rec Chair), Peter Anderson (Planning Commission)

Public: Jo Levasseur, Keith Baranow

Meeting called to order @ 6:30 PM

Approve the Agenda: John moved to approve the agenda with additions of a request for a letter of support, a request from the rec committee, and a request for an alcohol permit. David seconded and the motion carried.

Public Comments: Peter Anderson inquired about the progress on the ATV ordinance and noted it was not on the agenda. The board acknowledged that the issue will not be addressed this evening.

Recreation Committee: Jim Hewitt asked for approval to have a roof installed on the timber frame that was built at the Carpenter Field. The quote to have the roof installed was \$4,000 which is about \$1,000 more than what the committee initially expected to spend. Discussion continued regarding the necessity of bidding the project and whether additional quotes were needed. Jim was requested to obtain at least two more quotes for the work. Jerry moved that up to \$4,000 be spent from the community betterment fund for the installation of the roof, with the contractor to be determined by Jim and Victoria. David seconded and the motion carried.

Town Administrator:

Victoria reports that the RFP for the rehabilitation of the Bridge St. Bridge has been published. There has been some initial interest, but also some concern from contractors that there is not an engineering report. Victoria clarified that the expectation was to remedy the deficiencies noted in the VTrans inspection report, and that the bridge is structurally sound, so engineering was not necessarily required. There was some discussion about whether engineering should be completed and what that would entail. Victoria will send a copy of the RFP to the board.

Financial Reports were presented to the board. It is still very early in the fiscal year, but so far everything looks to be in good order. The transfer station is performing well, and is covering the normal operating costs with their revenue.

The First Congregational Church has requested a letter of support from the Selectboard to include with their historic preservation grant application. There is a draining issue that is causing some dry rot and wet conditions in the Church's crawlspace. Jerry moved to write a letter of support. David seconded and the motion carried.

Upper Pass Beer Company has filed for an alcohol permit due to relocating the tasting room. There was some discussion regarding the details that are included on the application. The Department of Liquor Control has recently moved to an online format and there have been some difficulties with that process. The clarity of the application that the board receives should improve as those issues are resolved. John moved to approve the alcohol permit for Upper Pass Beer. Jerry seconded and the motion carried.

Highway Department: Another member of the highway department crew has submitted their letter of resignation. There was some discussion regarding the assistant foreman position that was advertised. The board generally feels that what we need right now are two crew members and that a bigger discussion should be had regarding town governance structure. It was noted that we are going to begin budgeting for FY 24 and should be considering organizational needs as far as staffing and structure. There was continued discussion regarding the current state of the labor market.

Approve Warrants: John moved to approve the warrants as presented. Jerry seconded and the motion carried.

Approve Minutes: Jerry moved to approve the minutes of the September 13th meeting. John seconded and the motion carried.

Jerry moved to approve the minutes of the September 16th meeting. John seconded and the motion carried.

Other Business: Jerry asked for an update on the strategic planning public meeting. Tim gave an overview of the meeting including public input and the outcome. There will be additional public meetings upcoming.

Executive Session (Personnel): The board entered executive session at 7:29 PM to discuss personnel issues. Executive session concluded at 7:58 PM.

Jerry moved to authorized Loretta to increase her officer's wage as discussed, effective as of September 25th. David seconded and the motion carried.

Adjourned: 7:59 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Victoria Paquin
Royalton Town Administrator

ATTACHMENT: LETTER FROM CASCADNAC VALLEY WHEELERS

August 23, 2022

To the members of the Town of Royalton Selectboard:

First and foremost, thank you for your time and efforts that have resulted from the potential shared town public highway use for ATV's. We appreciate all the courtesy and hope to always have good lines of communication with the Town, Selectboard members, our neighbors, and entire community.

We feel the process went well overall and gave a chance for our community to say and hear various concerns from many points of view. As a club, we hear the same discussions happening all over the State and see local governments generally responding similar to Royalton. Based on the current VASA trail maps of the entire State, there appears to be 59 municipalities that have some allowance of shared town highway use on at least a portion of class IV and class III town highways, which is about 24% of Vermont's combined total of 251 towns, villages, cities, and gores. As a club and part of VASA, we have learned a lot from the successes and learning situations with what other municipalities are doing. While provided responses to each community member concern would be difficult, I wish to keep this letter quick with our club's final request for shared town public highway use for ATV's.

While we believe most criteria referenced in community member concerns can be controlled with the proposed ordinance and the help of law enforcement (Royalton LE, and Windsor County Sheriffs at VASA's cost), there are two points we as a club want to urge the Selectboard to consider increasing public safety and protect our public town highways. One, reduce speed limits as necessary across the town. Speeding has been repeatedly discussed as a concern where some residents don't feel safe walking on their public town highways or posted speed limits exceed safe travel. While the maximum

speed limit for ATVs is in the draft ordinance as 20 MPH and less than current limits, lessening other regular use speed limits may have some merits for all residents. Two, consider adopting an ordinance regarding Class IV highway usage including; post roads prohibiting wheeled traffic between December 15 and April 15th (for snowmobiling season) if not longer at the discretion of the Selectboard, and limit logging operations from using public town highways to skid or forward logs (or include them in a case-by-case allowance to permit and bond the use to ensure the Class IV public town highways are returned to satisfactory conditions). Certainly, exceptions may be included for landowners trying to access their remote lands but again should be addressed in case-by-case allowances.

We feel the ATV Committee was able to deliver an ordinance with good regulatory and operational content, and understand the critical remaining part of the proposed ordinance are the locations of proposed shared use on the public town highways. As a committee, there was much discussion regarding balance of how much shared use and where the shared use shall occur. There was also much discussion of our potential private trails to shorten the amount of shared town highway we needed for a viable riding network with the long-term goal of connecting to other neighboring towns. We as a club brought a list of common town highways to the final ATV Committee meeting in hopes of having a discussion about the shared use of those public town highways, one by one if needed. However, as it became clear that no consensus was to occur with the ATV Committee, the whole list was turned over to the Selectboard. In the interest of keeping the proposal abbreviated to what currently makes sense to us as a club, proposed roads as follows make a loop on the south to west area of town and access the backside of South Royalton Village with two separate roads in the north central area that run along multiple private properties that have given permission for private trails as part of this shared public highway trial.

Current list of roads for proposed shared use of public town highway with ATV:

- i i. Otto Merrill Road from Back River Road to Oxbow Road
- ii ii. Back River Road from Otto Merrill Road to Johnson Hill Road
- iii iii. Oxbow Road from 2062 Oxbow Road to Pleasant St.
- iv iv. Pleasant St. from Oxbow Road/South St. to Rainbow St.
- v v. Rainbow St. from Pleasant St. to 108 Rainbow St.
- vi vi. Seawall Brook Road from Royalton Hill Road to North Road
- vii vii. Rousseau Road (East) from North Road to Davis Road
- viii viii. Davis Road from Johnson Hill Road to Royalton Turnpike
- ix ix. Royalton Turnpike from Davis Road (North Intersection) to Sewall Brook Road
- x x. Gee Hill Road from Route 14 to Rix Road
- xi xi. Happy Hollow Road from Deer Haven Lane to Rix Road

*Explicitly does not include North Road, Back River Road beyond Johnson Hill Road headed north, any portions of Royalton Village, South Royalton Village around the Green, or any shared use of a State Highway, and other sections not named for quick reference.

As stated before, as a club we will need to make an application to VTrans to have a crossing at Route 14/Gee Hill Intersection where the snowmobile club has a current crossing permitted by VTrans.

As a club, we would like to defer review of private trail locations with the Selectboard and Town at this time. We have had landowners receive criticism for their allowed use by their neighbors and would like to keep this discussion with the Selectboard specific to public town highways at this time. Please understand we have obtained written or verbal permission of 14 separate private properties solely in the areas of roads requested in the above provided list.

Again, we wish to thank you for your time and careful considerations with this potential ordinance.

Sincerely,

Ian MacKenzie

President, Cascadnac Valley Wheelers