

Town of Pomfret Selectboard
Approved Meeting Minutes
January 18, 2023

Present: Emily Grube, John Peters, Benjamin Brickner, Steve Chamberlin, Jon Harrington

Public: Aaron Rubin (Standard), John Moore (Planning Commission), Cathy Peters, Kristen Esty, Nancy Matthews, Scott Pearce, Karen Osnoe, Ellen DesMeules (Treasurer), Neil Lamson (Lister), Cynthia Hewitt (Selectboard Assistant)

1. Emily called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.
2. Public Comment – None.
3. Agenda Review – None.
4. Road Foreman Report – Jim was not in attendance.
 - a. Certificate of Highway Mileage – Jon questioned whether two sections of town roads that are depicted as Class 3 roads on the Vtrans map are possibly being maintained by the town as Class 4 roads. These are Johnson Road and a portion of the Old King’s Highway. Emily stated that no residents have asked for winter maintenance. Also, signs are up warning tourists the roads are not maintained/passable during the winter. Jon will search the land records for clarity. In the meantime, John moved and Ben seconded approval of the annual highway mileage certificate. The motion carried 3-2 (Emily, John and Ben in favor; Steve and Jon opposed).
 - b. FY 2024 Highway Budget – Steve commented he did not appreciate the threatening tone of a recent email. Questions still remain around how much money to set aside for paving, and whether the salt budget should remain at \$75,000. Gross pay was increased to \$280,000 and the FY 2024 COLA is anticipated to be 6.1% based on the methodology adopted by the Selectboard last June. The Board decided to leave the amount set aside for paving at \$200,000. After discussion the salt budget was left at \$75,000. Ben stated that if we use 60% of the available surplus, the increase in taxes to be raised will be kept at about 5.6%.
 - c. Law Enforcement – It is agreed that more law enforcement presence is needed in town. Further negotiations and discussion with Sheriff-elect Palmer will be undertaken; our current contract runs through June 30, 2023.
5. Items for Discussion or Vote
 - a. Past Due Payments Approval Process – this item was decided in April meeting and it was agreed that the existing delegation to the chair to unilaterally approve time-sensitive and overdue payments (subject to later board review) should suffice.
 - b. Notices of Zoning Violation – Karen has two violations for which she sent certified letters. She will pursue if no response within 7 days.
 - c. Delinquent Property Taxes – Karen is ready to initiate tax sales on five properties; she is using Stitzel Page & Fletcher to do so.
 - d. Use of ARPA Funds – Emily will contact Hunter Ulf for design assistance re: handicapped access at Town Office. Immediate needs are generators at the Town Garage and N. Pomfret Fire House. Quotes to be presented at the next meeting. John has purchased a Google Chrome device that is working as well as the Apple TV/TV

combination. The Town Hall needs a major electric overhaul. John will get some electrician quotes.

- e. Annual Meeting Format – The Legislature is expected to pass a bill allowing Australian balloting for Town Meeting. The board will hold a special meeting to determine the annual meeting format and complete the warning. This meeting is tentatively scheduled on 01/24/23 but may be held sooner if needed. If Australian balloting is used, candidates for office will need to petition and get at least 8 signatures of registered Pomfret voters in order to have their names appear on the ballot.
 - f. Budget Narrative – The proposed draft follows the same format as the past 3 years. Ben moved and Steve seconded approval of the narrative as presented. Unanimous.
 - g. Warrants – John moved and Steve seconded payment of the following warrants:

23069	\$ 9,987.96	Payroll
23070	21,452.13	A/P
23072	228.01	Property tax refund
23073	22,852.70	A/P

Unanimous.
 - h. Approval of 12/21/2022 Minutes – Jon noted a typo. Ben moved and John second approval. Unanimous.
6. Meeting Wrap Up
- a. Correspondence – None.
 - b. Review of Assignments: Emily contact Hunter Ulf, Send list of equipment to Nancy, Check with Ellen re: Electronic Payment; Ben – Check with VLCT re: advisory questions on the warning; Stitzel Page re: 7-day tax sale letters.
 - c. Agenda for next meeting (Feb. 1): Jenn Conley re: So. Pomfret Scoping Study recommendations; driveway access permits; open culverts replacement engineering work proposals.
7. Adjournment – Steve moved and John seconded that the meeting be adjourned. Unanimous. The meeting was adjourned at 10:08 pm.