

Town of Pomfret Selectboard
Approved Meeting Minutes
February 15, 2023

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

Public: Tom Gubbins, Laird Bradley, Bob Eydt, Bill Eydt, Peter Raymond, Jack Pearsons, Jim Potter (Road Foreman), Rebecca Mitchell, Neil Lamson (Lister), Karen Osnoe (ZBA), Andrew Oatway, Brad Ruderman, Steven Oatway, Cathy Peters, John Moore (Planning Commission), Regina Lawrence, Cynthia Hewitt (Selectboard Assistant)

1. Call to Order – Emily called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm.
2. Public Comment – None.
3. Agenda Review – John moved and Steve seconded adding road posting and candidates forum. Unanimous.
4. Road Foreman’s Report and Highway Items
 - a. Eydt Estate Driveway Access (continued) – Mr. Ruderman described the results of the 02/08/2023 site visit. The southerly sightline is 160 feet as-is; if the ash tree on the Gubbins property and straddling the town right-of-way were removed, the southerly sightline would be 230 feet. Should the new driveway follow the existing agricultural access, the southerly sightline would be about 300 feet as-is, but the grade would be 21% grade unless a switchback were included. The maximum allowable grade per the town’s Subdivision Regulations is 16%, though the Planning Commission could waive that limitation up to 17%. Jon suggested cutting back the embankment on the Oatway property within the town right-of-way to further increase the southerly sight distance. Emily noted this may require the Oatways’ approval since the town is limited in what work can be done in the right-of-way without landowner permission. Mr. Gubbins expressed a desire to maintain as much of his open field as possible. Mr. Raymond offered to provide new photos and/or drawings if helpful to the board. The board indicated they now have all information necessary to deliberate and reach a decision. Steve moved and John seconded that the hearing be closed. Unanimous. The board will deliberate and render a decision in the required timeframe.
 - b. Culvert Replacement Bids – Jon Harrington recused himself, as his firm is a bidder. Five bids were received; after eliminating the outlying bids, the three remaining bid were from East Engineering, Dubois & King, and Harrington Civil Engineers. After discussion, Ben moved and Steve seconded that East Engineering’s bid be approved. Unanimous (Jon Harrington recused).
 - c. Road Posting – John moved and Steve seconded that Jim post the roads at this time due to unseasonably warm weather. Unanimous.
 - d. Grant Applications – Emily will bring the structures grant application to the next meeting; Jon has submitted a project to FEMA for consideration. The board will hold off on a paving grant application until the FY 2024 budget is decided as the budget includes a paving appropriation without which grant funding would not be sufficient. For Flood Resilient Communities Fund funding, the board will consider a stabilization project for the bank between the North Pomfret fire station and church.

- e. Road Foreman's Report
 - a. Truck #3 was returned and the check engine light came back on. It has been returned to Clark where the dozer nozzle was replaced.
 - b. Art's truck is back with no problems.
- 5. Items for Discussion or Vote
 - a. Delinquent Tax Warrant – No discussion needed. Per Stitzel Page, this document needs to be approved only by the Town Treasurer. Ben forwarded Stitzel Page's comments on the draft warrant to Ellen for her consideration.
 - b. Delinquent Tax Matters
 - i. Ben suggested a form letter be sent automatically to all delinquent taxpayers immediately after the Treasurer sends the delinquent tax warrant to the Delinquent Tax Collector each February. Stitzel Page has prepared a draft letter that informs delinquent payers of the amount due, options available for payment assistance, and other information necessary for the town to take additional collection steps if necessary. Karen and the board agreed that a single letter is more efficient than the multiple notice process the town now uses. Karen and Ben will coordinate with Ellen to ensure that efforts aren't duplicated.
 - ii. Karen reports that the taxpayer who made a substantial payment last year of a multiyear delinquency and agreed to remain current on their taxes has failed to do so and is delinquent again. Even though this account is now only one year delinquent, because it is a recurring issue, Ben moved and John seconded that Karen be authorized to work with Stitzel, Page & Fletcher to initiate a tax sale on this Parcel 4608. Unanimous.
 - c. Zoning Matters – Karen will prepare a letter to Artistree detailing their current zoning matters and outlining steps needed for them to obtain the necessary permits in a timely fashion. The board feels that Artistree has had ample time to take these steps and may be unwilling to extend temporary/one-time permits again this year if no progress is made toward permanent permitting. Ben will review the letter to determine if Stitzel Page's advice would be useful. The Caper Street owner will apply for a lot line adjustment, which may cure their ongoing setback violation. The Broad Brook owner acknowledged receipt of their notice of violation but has yet to respond substantively.
 - d. ARPA Funds
 - i. Town Hall – Hunter Ulf and Emily had a site visit at the Town Hall to inspect the kitchen and bathrooms. If propane stoves are installed in the kitchen they would require fire suppression hoods. A second means of egress would also be needed, which cannot be through another space (e.g, the kitchen). Due to occupancy guidelines at least two bathrooms are needed. Hunter feels a solar installation worthwhile and can help with RFPs. The board discussed whether the Town Hall should have a full kitchen or a more limited "catering" kitchen. Hunter will attend a future meeting to answer questions and discuss options. John Moore suggested first determining how the town wishes to use the Town Hall in the future and matching upgrade plans to meet those uses. Historic Preservation funds may be available as well.
 - ii. Generators – John moved and Ben seconded authorizing Emily to sign purchase orders for two Kohler generators, one for the Town Garage (\$11,305) and one

for the North Pomfret Fire Station (\$10,489). Emily will seek two quotes for a generator at the Teago Fire Station as well. Unanimous.

- e. Large Event Permit – Ben moved and Steve seconded approval of the Woodstock Chamber of Commerce large event permit for a pasta dinner at Saskadena Six on June 3, 2023. Unanimous.
 - f. Mail-in Ballots – John moved and Ben seconded approval of mail-in ballots for town meeting. Unanimous.
 - g. Candidates Forum – Ben recused himself as he is a candidate in a contested race. The board felt it was not the board’s role to organize a candidates’ forum. Another citizens group may do so if it wishes.
 - h. Warrants – Steve moved and Ben seconded payment for the following warrants:

23080	Payroll	\$ 10,526.72
23083	A/P	31,503.15
23084	Payroll	1,290.23
23085	A/P (school payment)	950,203.50
23086	A/P (tax refunds)	4,820.65

Unanimous.
6. Meeting Wrap Up
- a. Correspondence – Pomfret’s share of the National Opioids Settlement payment is \$550.
 - b. Assignments – Emily: Structures Grant, Ulf Meeting; Ben: Karen’s letter
 - c. Agenda for Next Meeting – South Pomfret Scoping Study Recommendations, Eydt Estate deliberative session.
7. Adjournment – Steve moved and John seconded that the meeting be adjourned. Unanimous. The meeting was adjourned at 9:32 pm.