

**Cavendish Select Board Meeting, Monday, October 21st, 2024, at 6:30 pm**  
**Location: Town Office Meeting Room: 37 High Street Cavendish, Vermont and via Zoom**

**Present:** Bob Glidden (Chairman), George Timko, Shannon Devereux, Dave Norton, Rick Chambers (Town Manager), Jen Leak (Recording Secretary) and Sarah Devereux (OVTV).

**Absent:** Mike Ripley

- **Call the meeting to order**

Bob Glidden, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

- **Approval of Minutes from September 9th & September 26th, 2024**

*Dave Norton moved/Shannon seconded a motion to approve the minutes from September 9th & September 26th, 2024, as written. All voted in favor.*

- **Adjust Agenda**

Rick said that he had one adjustment and would like to add item 3 a. Discussion on Better Roads Grant

- **Hear Citizens**

John Arrison was present and said that he is the current House Representative for Cavendish and Weathersfield. He thanked everyone for the privilege of serving and said he will not be running for another term. He said he has worked as an electrician for the Town of Cavendish for the past 3 Town Managers and has always been impressed with the efficiency of how the Town works.

- **New Business**

1. **Town Clerk to Provide Information on the upcoming General Election**

Diane McNamara, Town Clerk, was present. She said that the general election is Tuesday, November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024 at the Proctorsville Fire Station, from 10 am to 7 pm. She said that the Secretary of State's office did a statewide mailing of absentee ballots to all registered voters. Diane said that anyone who has not received an absentee ballot can call the Town Office or come to the polls on election day. Diane said that if you don't bring the ballot you were mailed with you to the polls, you can sign an affidavit of no vote cast and get a new ballot.

Diane said that the Board of Civil Authority voted to process absentee ballots early on Wednesday, October 30<sup>th</sup>, from 9:00-noon and 1:00-until finished. She said that the last day to request a Justice of the Peace to deliver a ballot is November 2<sup>nd</sup>, and the last day to request an absentee ballot is November 4<sup>th</sup> until 5:00 pm in the Town Clerk's office.

Diane said that a new Vermont law does not allow firearms in polling places, and individuals with firearms will need to leave them in their vehicle. She said that campaigners can be outside the polling place as long as they are not impeding traffic. She reminded voters that campaign materials, such as buttons, literature or clothing, are not allowed inside the polling place.

Diane said that the local candidates for Justice of the Peace are on the back side of the ballot. She said that write in votes for candidates are welcome if someone is willing to serve in that position, but please don't write in joke names since the election workers need to hand count the write in votes which takes a lot of time.

Diane said that she has been asked if she is worried about violence at this election and she has replied that she isn't at all worried.

John asked if a ballot received after November 5<sup>th</sup> would be counted. Diane said that it would not. She added that WCAX posted the deadline for returning a ballot to the Town Clerk's office is 7 pm on November 5<sup>th</sup> which is not correct. She said that all ballots need to be received at the polling place by 7 pm on November 5<sup>th</sup>.

George asked if people need to sign their ballot. Diane said that they need to sign the affidavit envelope an absentee ballot is enclosed in. She added that the outer absentee ballot mailing envelopes are opened to make sure that the affidavit envelope is signed, and if not we try to contact the voters so they can fix that.

## **2. Municipal Energy Resilience Grant Update**

Rick said that this grant has been submitted. He said that a mini-grant was used to assess ADA accessibility for the town office. He said that any buildings submitted for a MERP grant need to be ADA compliant which the town office is not. Rick said that he submitted the grant for upgrades in lighting and insulation at the town office; new doors, windows, insulation, lighting, heat pumps and electrical panel at the wastewater plant; and new lights, heat pumps and electrical panel at the water filtration plant. He said that he asked for hardship status to get the funding up front rather than submitting for reimbursement after the work is done. He added that there is no Town matching funds required. John Arrison commented that there have been more applications received for this program than can be funded.

## **3. Flood Resilience Study Update**

Rick said that he has been working with MARC to get this study funded after the first grant was denied. He said that an RFP has been put out and he hopes to have more details in November. He added that this study would come up with a comprehensive flood resiliency plan and would not include implementation of that plan. He said that the study would be completed by December 2025.

Rick said that a FEMA Hazard Mitigation grant for Greven Field has been submitted. George asked if there would be any dredging of the river in that area to help reduce flooding. Rick said that he hoped that would be identified as an issue.

### **3.a. Discussion of Better Roads Grant**

Rick said that Logan from MARC requested this item be added tonight. He said that this would cover work which needs to be done and would be very helpful. He added that some of this work has been done but needs to be documented.

Logan was present and said this is a state grant to update the town's Road Erosion Inventory and the state requires it to be done every 7 years. He said that the total project cost would be \$10,820 and the town share would be \$2,164, so the town would be eligible to apply for reimbursement of \$8,656. He said that MARC would do the work visiting the 541 identified segments of roads and determining whether the storm drainage capability is adequate. Rick added this work needs to be done anyways. Logan agreed and said there is money available now which other towns aren't applying for.

George asked if the town needs to put the money up front. Logan said that was correct. George asked if Rick would be looking into this and presenting it for approval at the next Board meeting. Rick said that he had a letter of intent but not a grant agreement for signature tonight.

Logan suggested applying sooner rather than later as there was not enough money for all towns to be approved. Rick asked about using "in kind" labor as the state match. Logan said that the work was mostly documentation for this project, which he would do, but the town could pay an employee to do it.

Rick added that he has known this needed to be done but has not had the time or resources to do it. He said that once the inventory is done, the town needs to complete 15% of the road segments per year. Logan said that Cavendish has not done this inventory since 2018 and the work which has been done needs to be documented.

***George Timko moved/Dave Norton seconded a motion to give intent to move forward with the Better Roads grant application. All voted in favor.***

#### **4. Approval of New Road Name**

Rick said that a new road name needs to be approved per 911 rules if a shared driveway has three or more houses on it. He said that the proposed road will be off of Prior Road where a new house will be built on the driveway that 119 and 115 Prior Rd share. He said that the three owners have suggested the name Sunset Lane, which the 911 board has approved. George asked if it was a private road. Rick said that it would be and the owners would be responsible for the upkeep and road sign. Rick added that he does inform the emergency services about new private roads.

***George Timko moved/Shannon Devereux seconded a motion to approve the name Sunset Lane. All voted in favor.***

#### **5. November Regular Select Board Meeting Time and Date Discussion**

Rick said that the second Monday in November is Veterans Day and the town office is closed. The Board agreed to move the regular Select Board meeting to the following Monday November 18<sup>th</sup>.

#### **6. Discussion on Remaining ARPA Funds**

Rick said that we have spent \$9,312.00 of the ARPA funds and there are still a few projects that are uncertain including the office accessibility renovations, the water meters replacement (rfp's are due this Friday), and culvert replacements which still need hydraulic studies so the rfp's haven't been put out yet. He said that the remaining ARPA funds needs to be obligated by December 31<sup>st</sup> of this year. Rick said that he should have a better accounting of the remaining funds at the November meeting. He said that he suggests putting the remaining money into the general fund to offset general expenses, which could be put towards specific projects later, and that would satisfy the ARPA requirements.

Betty McEnaney was present and said she is speaking for Bruce McEnaney, cemetery sexton, who is away. She said that she spent several hours in Cavendish Village cemetery and was surprised how many stones are damaged. She said that she suggested putting some ARPA money towards cemetery stone repairs. She added that the perpetual care funds and town budget do not cover stone repairs.

George said that he wasn't sure that would qualify for use of ARPA funds. Rick said that a resolution to put the ARPA money into the general fund would allow the town to use it as the Board sees fit. George asked if all the ARPA money still needs to be used by 2026. Rick said that he believed the resolution would satisfy both the obligation and spending of the funds.

#### **7. Town Managers Contract**

Rick said that he had a copy of the Town Manager's contract the Board voted to accept at the last meeting. He said that he wanted to thank the townspeople and he has enjoyed his time here and looks forward to continuing. The Select Board members and Rick signed the contract.

- **Old Business**

- 1. Dangerous/Derelict Building Update**

Rick said that the Depot Street building has been taken down. He said that he heard back from the landowner of 1323 Main Street and they intend to take the building down.

## **2. Proctor Cemetery Access**

Rick said that he has met with the landowner and the access path is cleared and mowed. He said that there is no sign, so out of town people may not know where it is, but the path is clear and maintained.

Duane Warren was present. He said that he does maintain the path it although it is not his job to do so. He said that he has also mowed the cemetery, and the cemetery commission has done nothing. Margo Caulfield was present and disagreed. Margo said the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders go in the fall to rake and trim that cemetery and have for the last 3 years. She added that the students and other people comment on the junk vehicles in that area. Bob said that this meeting is only to talk about the access.

George asked if a vehicle could be driven up to the cemetery. Margo said it could not. Duane said that no one has been denied access to that property.

### **• Managers Report**

Rick said that he is still working with FEMA and was told today they want to finish our projects within next the two weeks. He said that he didn't believe it would be totally completed but he thought all the projects would be submitted for review.

Rick said that the town office has been working to get agreements for overdue water/sewer bills. He said that most accounts have made payments or payment agreements, but he would be disconnecting services for those who have not. He asked anyone who has an overdue account to get in touch with him.

Rick said that a group of students from Dartmouth has been working at Greven field removing invasive plant species, cleaning ditches and identifying plants there. He thanked Margo for coordinating this. Margo said that they cleaned a lot of invasive species out of the ditches. She said that she believed it would help reduce flooding and allow the water to spread out.

### **• Other Business**

Dave Norton – none.

Shannon Devereux – Shannon asked if the Board had discussed the lack of cell service between the villages and near the school. Rick said that he hadn't heard anything. Margo said that there are Comcast hotspots along the roads. Shannon said that there is little coverage between Downers Four Corners to Proctorsville so someone in trouble cannot call 911.

George Timko – George asked if there will be lines painted on the newly paved sections of Twentymile Stream and Whitesville Roads. Rick said that he will contact the state and could also ask other contractors.

Bob Glidden – none.

### **• Adjourn**

*Dave Norton moved/Shannon Devereux seconded a motion to adjourn at 7:32 pm. All voted in favor.*

Minutes Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_