

Approved Minutes
MAIDSTONE SELECTBOARD MEETING

Monday, April 3, 2023

7.00 pm

Hybrid Meeting, both in person at Town Hall and by Zoom Video Conference

Members Present in Town Hall (in-person): Scott Lovell, Chair; Brad McVetty, Bruno McKenzie

Town Officials and Staff Present via Zoom: Town Clerk and Lister Amy Pear; Treasurer, Delinquent Tax Collector, Lister, Zoning Board and Planning Commission member Bob Champagne-Willis; Zoning Board and Planning Commission member Bruce Barker; Zoning Board and Planning Commission Chair Chris von Alt; Lister, Auditor, and Health Officer Sandra Gray; Administrative Assistant Mary von Alt

Also Present via Zoom: Bob and Laurie Snowman, Roger and Lynn Emery, Mike and Gayle Otis, Jan Barker, June Lockert, Andy Champagne-Willis, Lin Mixer, Lloyd Tippitt, Jim Bennett, Chris Carazzo, Sam and Carol Gorham, Ed Tully, Stephanie Randall

Scott Lovell called the meeting to order at 7.00pm.

SELECTBOARD:

- Bruno made a motion to nominate Scott Lovell to be the new Chair of the Selectboard for the next year; Brad seconded the motion. Scott did not participate in the vote. Brad and Bruno voted in favor of the motion.
- Bruno made a motion that Brad be the new Vice Chair of the Selectboard for the next year; Scott seconded the motion. Brad did not participate in the vote. Bruno and Scott voted in favor of the motion.
- Rules of Procedure Rev 1 Draft:
 - The Selectboard discussed the sections in need of review in the Rules of Procedure Rev 1 Draft and made the following decisions (*choices decided upon are in bold letters*):
 - Section C #6: A member may speak or make a motion **only after** being recognized by the Chair. Motions to close or limit debate **will** be entertained.
 - Section C #9: These rules may be amended by a **two-thirds** vote of the body, and must be readopted annually.
 - Section D #1: Those who wish to be added to the meeting agenda shall contact **any Selectboard member, the Town Clerk, or the Selectboard Administrative Assistant** to request inclusion on the agenda. The Chair shall determine the final content of the agenda.
 - Section F #2: *Replaced the current paragraph with:* **During discussion of agenda items, before any action is taken by the body at the meeting, there may be time opened for public comment. During such time, a meeting attendee may speak one time about a topic, after being acknowledged by the Chair. The Chair may decide to allow a member of the public to speak a second time, but not until others have first been given the opportunity to comment.**
 - Section F #5: Eliminated this paragraph as it is included in Section F #2.
 - Brad made a motion to adopt the Selectboard Rules of Procedure as amended; Bruno seconded the motion. All voted in favor of the motion.
- Choice of newspaper for posting:
 - After a brief discussion of the law requiring that meeting notices be posted in newspapers of general circulation in the Town, the Selectboard decided to post such notices in the Coos County Democrat and use the Caledonian Record if deemed necessary. Brad made a motion that we use the Coos County Democrat as the newspaper for the Town's postings; Bruno seconded the motion. All voted in favor.
- Appoint Town Council:
 - Bob Champagne-Willis pointed out that the name of the suggested (and current) Town Council needed to be updated from Tarrant, Gillies, and Richardson to Tarrant, Gillies, and Shems.

- Bruno made a motion to use Tarrant, Gillies, and Shems for Town Council; Brad seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Chairman Scott Lovell reminded everyone about the Rules for Participation, based on the Rules of Procedure.

APPROVE MINUTES:

- Brad made a motion to approve the Revised Minutes for the February 6, 2023 Selectboard meeting; Bruno seconded the motion. All voted in favor.
- Brad noted that the last paragraph under New Business on page three of the March 6, 2023 Draft Minutes actually belonged under Other Business. Mary said she would make that change. Brad made a motion to accept the March 6, 2023 minutes as amended; Bruno seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

ZONING ADMINISTRATOR VACANCY:

- Bruno made a motion to nominate Mike Otis as the new Zoning Administrator; Brad seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

ANNUAL APPOINTMENTS:

- Administrative Assistant to the Selectboard, one year term:
 - Brad made a motion to appoint Mary von Alt; Bruno seconded the motion. All voted in favor.
- Administrative Assistant to the Zoning Board and Planning Commission, one year term:
 - Bruno made a motion to appoint Mary von Alt; Brad seconded the motion. All voted in favor.
- Emergency Management Coordinator, one year term :
 - Brad made a motion to appoint Bill Sanborn; Bruno seconded the motion. All voted in favor.
- NVDA Representative, one year term:
 - This position is currently vacant and will remain so for the time being.
- NEKWMD Representative, one year term:
 - Brad made a motion to appoint Paulette Routhier; Bruno seconded the motion. All voted in favor.
- NEK Broadband Representative, one year term:
 - Bruno made a motion to appoint Jack Donnelly; Brad seconded the motion. All voted in favor.
- Road Commissioner, one year term:
 - Bruno made a motion to appoint Brad; Scott seconded the motion. Brad did not participate in the vote. Bruno and Scott voted in favor.
- Town Agent, one year term:
 - Brad made a motion to appoint Jim Mazzonna; Bruno seconded the motion. All voted in favor.
- Tree Warden, one year term:
 - Bruno made a motion to appoint Bruce Hobaugh; Brad seconded the motion. All voted in favor.
- Zoning Board of Adjustment: Bruce Barker's appointment ends in 2023; reappoint Bruce to a three year term:
 - Bruno made a motion to appoint Bruce Barker; Brad seconded the motion. All voted in favor.
- Planning Commission: Bruce Barker's appointment ends in 2023; reappoint Bruce to a three year term:
 - Bruno made a motion to appoint Bruce Barker; Brad seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

REPORT FROM THE ROAD COMMISSIONER:

- Brad presented the following paperwork for review and signature as needed by the Selectboard:
 - Town Highway Posting Authorization: This paper must be filed in the Town Office.
 - The Town Clerk asked if the Lake Road also needed to be posted at the end of the restricted section, the intersection of the Lake Road and Westside Lake Road. She voiced concern that people engaged in ongoing construction projects at the Lake might be unaware of the current posting. Brad said he had spoken with one person about the restriction. Bruno said that experienced CDL drivers

are familiar with Mud Season postings. This is the first year signature by the Selectboard has been required on this document, said Brad.

- Annual Financial Plan - Town Highways: Brad has already filled this out and sent it to the State. Basically it says that the Town is raising over \$300/mile, which is the minimum that needs to be raised; Maidstone is way over that, he said. This form needs signature by the Selectboard.
- Certification of Compliance for Town Road and Bridge Standards and Network Inventory:
 - The Selectboard must sign, attesting that Maidstone has adopted the newest Town Road and Bridge Standards and has an up to date network inventory, which we do, said Brad.
- Certificate of Highway Mileage 2023:
 - This reports our annual highway mileage to the State and reports any new highways added. Maidstone did not add any highways in the past year. The Town's current highway mileage listed by the State is correct:
 - Class 2: 5.93 miles; Class 3: 9.91 miles; State Highway: 8.425; TOTAL MILES OF HIGHWAY: 24.265 miles
- Current Town Officers List: The Town Clerk will fill this out with the new appointments made at this meeting, and will return it to the Vermont Agency of Transportation.

REPORT FROM THE TOWN TREASURER:

- Bob submitted the Budget to Actual Report for the first three months of the year. He noted that the legal expenses and the advertising expenses look very high, but those are offset by deposits listed under Miscellaneous Income, which is where the monies received from the Wiedeman tax sale to cover most of those expenses are recorded. Software expenses will likely go over budget this year, due to the higher than usual NEMRC expenses and a QuickBooks update.
- Bob reminded everyone that property taxes are due on April 15th; he will be at his office from 9.00 AM until 12:00 PM that day if anyone wishes to bring their property tax payment to Town Hall at that time. There still is about \$290,000 in taxes to come in.
- The Selectboard Warrant is on the Signing Desk. Bob also added a TA 65 Request for Reimbursement, required by the State, that needs to be signed by all three Selectboard members for reimbursement for the work done on Maidstone Lake Road.
- Legislative Update:
 - There are several bills going through this new Legislature under new leadership of which the Town should be aware:
 - H.145, now known as Act 3, has passed the Legislature. This provides technical assistance to small communities to access State and Federal grants for small communities.
 - H.471 has crossed from the House to the Senate for consideration. This bill makes technical changes to Vermont tax laws; specifically this deals with the property tax credit for homesteads. This extends the deadline for claiming tax credits related to homesteads into the next fiscal year. It will entail changes to the language on our tax bills, in order to explain the homestead tax credit. Bob will be happy to help taxpayers with this.
 - H.480 has crossed from the House to the Senate; it dramatically changes the whole reappraisal process in Vermont, taking it out of local control and placing it with the Department of Taxes. If it becomes law, Maidstone would no longer pay for reappraisals. There is much pushback on this, as it is very controversial. Bob said that the chances are that this will become a study, rather than be enacted yet.
 - S.60 has crossed from the Senate to the House. This allows for municipalities to adopt the one percent sales and/or meals and/or room tax, known as a Local Option Tax. As property tax bills rise, this Local Option Tax is being explored as a means to offset property tax bills. At this point, there is legislation for a one percent add-on Local Option Tax that requires a town to have a charter. S.60 would only require local approval by the Townspeople and the Selectboard.
 - S.55 allows for the option of remote only meetings to not sunset in 2024 as current law stipulates, but continue. This will probably be very big in the next legislative session.

- S.100 makes several changes to zoning; it has crossed to the House. There are quite a few changes to zoning in this bill, so must be watched. It would require different rules and regulations regarding accessory housing and also would change who can challenge a Zoning Administrator's decisions.
- H.492 is the property tax yield bill, and has crossed to the Senate. Two aspects of that yield will affect our homestead education tax and set the non-homestead property tax.
- These will be acted upon shortly; Bob may have more information at the next Selectboard meeting. Representative Terri Williams has been very helpful.

REPORT FROM THE DELINQUENT TAX COLLECTOR:

The list of delinquent taxpayers is down to three, totaling just a little over \$2,300 in delinquent taxes at this moment. The list does not include any expected challenges for the Town. This list will change once the April 15th deadline has passed.

REPORT FROM THE TOWN CLERK:

- Certification of Vote: Maidstone's Certification of the Vote at Town meeting has now been given to the Selectboard Chair and the Treasurer. This is the first year that Maidstone has done this, said Amy. By Vermont Statute (24 V.S.A. § 1167), this Certification must be given to the Chair of the Selectboard and the Town Treasurer when the Town votes from the floor at a Town meeting to raise a tax.
- The Local Emergency Operations Grant has come through from the Federal government. This grant is for putting a backup generator and emergency radio equipment at the Town Hall, so that the Town Hall can be used as an Emergency Operations Center. The grant total is \$29,000; as it is a 50/50 match, the Federal government will supply \$14,500, and the Town must match that with its own \$14,500. The Town must decide if it wants to use that amount from the ARPA funds. Brad asked if prices had been received for the generator and the radio equipment; Amy responded that two quotes had been obtained for the generator, and one quote for the radio equipment, as she recalls. The very short turnaround time (two weeks) for submittal of this grant made it difficult to obtain the quotes. Brad noted that the grant says "expiration 10/20/23", and Scott questioned if the equipment had to be installed by then. Amy said yes, and acknowledged that it is a very tight window within which it may not be possible to accomplish the job. The Town Treasurer said the Town has just shy of \$57,000 in the ARPA funds. The only other project that ARPA funds may be used for at this point is the purchase of the equipment trailer, estimated to cost around \$14,000 or \$15,000. Bruno made a motion to take \$14,500 out of the ARPA funds and put it towards the emergency sub grant; Brad seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

In response to Bruno's question about pricing on generators, Amy said that they had reached out to 5 or 6 electricians in the area, but only a couple responded. The major problem she anticipates is getting the propane installed and hooked up in this time period, because none of the propane companies wanted to talk to Amy and Bill about this, in view of the anticipated low amount of propane needed. Bruno said he will contact Rymes or Superior Gas to see what they can do about providing the services needed. Amy and Bruno briefly discussed the size of generator needed, with Bruno advocating for a 15,000 - 17,000 watt generator.

- The Town office has been busy post-election with elected officials' oaths and fulfilling reporting requirements. Information/decisions from this organizational meeting must be reported to VTRANS, VLCT, NEK Waste Management, and NVDA.
- Canine licensing has been "fast and furious".
- Jack Donnelly requested that the Town send out information to the Townspeople regarding NEK Broadband, which Amy has done.
- The Town Clerk and Assistant Town Clerk sent the Selectboard questions that have been received by the Town about the Town cemeteries. The Selectboard serves as the Town's Cemetery Commission and has authority to set the rules. A discussion ensued about the availability and size of plots, the interests of the current person looking at purchasing plots, how many caskets and how many cremains can be put in an 8 x 10 plot, room needed for gravestones, etc. Lloyd Tippitt joined the discussion, offering information regarding the practices at cemeteries where he works. Scott said he thought two caskets should be allowed per plot and a dozen cremains, with which Brad agreed. Brad suggested that the Town needs an information sheet recording the rules for the cemeteries. Amy said she has also received questions about

any size limitations for headstones; Brad and Scott did not think there should be any. The next question discussed was when and how cornerstones are installed, once a person has purchased a plot.

- Roger Emery joined the discussion. He has served as sexton at the Lancaster cemeteries for 7 years. He spoke about Lancaster's rules concerning the size of plots, number of caskets and cremains allowed, the requirement that corner markers be purchased by the individual/family after a plot is purchased, and the installation of corner markers by the Town to ensure that graves are in line, markers are in the right place, and valuable cemetery land is used properly. He suggested that the Town of Maidstone might want to consider taking charge of the installation of corner markers as well. Brad described Maidstone practices until now, then he and Scott agreed that Maidstone could adopt the practices Roger had described.
- Mary asked if anyone had knowledge about green burials, and if that were something Maidstone might consider. Roger said Lancaster has received some inquiries about green burials, which are legal in New Hampshire as they are in Vermont. He discussed the challenging issues involved, the increase in space that might be required, the paperwork associated, and the increased importance of corner markers. The Selectboard decided they would stick with the burial vault system, rather than accepting green burials.
- Amy said she had taken notes of the Selectboard's comments and would prepare a draft information sheet for the Selectboard to review, amend, and approve. All agreed that such a document would be very helpful to have for the Town Office and for the Cemetery Commission.

REPORT FROM THE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COORDINATOR AND FIRE WARDEN:

Bill Sanborn, the Emergency Management Coordinator and Fire Warden, could not attend this meeting, therefore this Report will be tabled until next month's meeting.

REVIEW OF TOWN POLICIES:

- In response to Bruno's question, Mary gave an overview of the draft policies, copies of which she had given the Selectboard members at the March meeting. Those comments are included in the text below. Each policy is now in the same format, which includes a cover sheet on which any changes/revisions to the existing policy are listed; if revisions are suggested, the policy name now includes "Rev 1", or a subsequent appropriate number if the policy has been revised before.
- The Class 4 Road Policy has not been revised.
- The Sexual Harassment Policy, Rev 1:
 - Following the VLCT lawyer's advice, the policy is revised to use gender neutral terminology.
- The Code of Ethics:
 - No changes are suggested.
- Town Road Maintenance Policy:
 - Brad suggested and the Selectboard agreed that under "Approximate Timing", the phrase "but prior to the weekend before the July 4th holiday" should be eliminated from the sentence, "A second grading of heavily used Town roads shall be done when road conditions warrant it."
 - Amy reminded the Selectboard about the road study that is scheduled to be conducted this summer. Brad clarified that the intent of the study is to assess speeds at which cars are traveling to provide data for the Selectboard when considering speed limit changes.
 - Roger Emery said that he thinks that Brad is doing a great job on the roads, but he thinks there is a conflict of interest when the same person is responsible for deciding when the roads need work and for doing the work. He said he is not questioning Brad's integrity, but somewhere there has to be a separation between who does the work and who calls for the work to be done.
 - Bruno pointed out that the public has input into when the work is done through their complaints to the Selectboard, which are relayed to Brad.
 - Scott said, "So noted", and the discussion concluded.
- Late-Filed Homestead Declarations Policy:
 - The Selectboard decided not to charge the penalty of 8% of the education tax on property that is allowed by the State for failing to declare a Homestead if the Non-Homestead tax rate is lower than the Homestead tax rate.

- The Purchasing Policy:
 - The Town Clerk asked the Selectboard to consider adding a clause that would allow the Town Clerk or Town Treasurer to consult a lawyer when necessary; sometimes, the timeframe within which these officials must act does not allow delay until a Selectboard meeting.
 - The topic of revising dollar limits in the Purchasing Policy came up at the February 6th Selectboard meeting; such limits vary widely between Vermont towns. Mary will research and provide examples to the Selectboard of such limits.
 - The Selectboard decided to table consideration of this policy for now.
- The Conflict of Interest Policy:
 - Quite a few revisions are suggested to this policy, in addition to simply updating the format, based on comparison to the VLCT Model Conflict of Interest Policy as well as on email conversations with VLCT lawyers. One revision is the elimination of phrasing stating that the Selectboard has the authority to force an elected or appointed official to recuse themselves due to a conflict of interest; according to Vermont Statute, that authority does not exist. Townspeople have the option of not re-electing a Town Official if they feel the Official did not recuse themselves when that should have been done. The Selectboard has the option of removal of an appointed official who does not recuse themselves when the Selectboard feels they should have, following Vermont law governing such removal. Three items were added to "Prohibited Conduct". There is much to consider in this revised policy.
 - The Selectboard decided to table consideration of this policy for now.
- Mary said there are more policies than on this list. Both the Town Clerk and the Town Treasurer are reviewing policies within their scope of responsibility, to ensure that the policies are up to date and reflect how the Town operates. They may suggest revisions, which Mary will type in draft format for the Selectboard to review. The process may take some time.
- Laurie Snowman asked when the policies had been given to the Selectboard for review, and, given that they said they were not prepared to act on these policies at this meeting, if they would be prepared to act at the next meeting. Bruno said this is a volunteer job and some people work 7 days a week. Scott said he hoped they would be prepared at the next meeting, but it was possible they would not. It could go on for a month or two, as Mary had suggested.
- Scott summed up by saying that the Selectboard approved the policies and changes discussed at this meeting with the exception of the two that were tabled, the Purchasing Policy and the Conflict of Interest Policy. Mary will prepare official copies of the approved policies and put them on the Signing Desk. The tabled policies will be on the next meeting agenda with possibly some more policies.

NEW BUSINESS:

- **Bruno said he wanted to call the town attorney and ask him some questions about the issue of nonconforming lots and lots that don't have road frontage**, because there are some lots, especially on the Bear Hill Road, mainly in the Forest District, that require 900 or 800 feet of road frontage. He said that when he was the Temporary Zoning Administrator he ran into some issues with that, and thinks it needs to be resolved ASAP. He said that once you subdivide such a lot, it becomes a conforming lot, but is not sure about that. Scott asked if we couldn't contact VLCT about that; Bruno said he tried to talk to the VLCT lawyer the other day, but he couldn't quite understand what the lawyer was talking about.

Bob Snowman asked why it wouldn't be up to the Zoning Administrator to go to the attorney to ask these questions, instead of Bruno. Bruno explained that he had wanted to bring this up at the last meeting as the Temporary Zoning Administrator but could not, as it was not on the agenda. Bruno suggested that he and Mike Otis, the newly appointed Zoning Administrator, work on this together this Thursday. Brad made a motion for Mike Otis to make the phone call to the lawyer to find out about the nonconforming lots; Scott seconded the motion and asked if there were any discussion.

Mary said she was not quite sure what questions Bruno has, but it sounds like he is talking about a variance or conditional use. She asked how this fits with the Bylaws and the fact that we have a process through which the Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Adjustment handle such issues.

Bruno said that for 4 or 5 months he has been after Chris to ask the question, but nothing had been resolved. That's why he decided to step up and talk to an attorney. Bruno asked if Chris remembered that, to which Chris responded that to his recollection, he has never talked about this with Bruno, or received anything from him, or been asked by Bruno to do something specifically about this topic. What is cited in the Bylaws right now has been discussed at a Planning Commission meeting. Chris said he was sure that the whole Planning Commission would be happy to get together with Bruno and discuss what his concerns are; that is very relevant to the ongoing process of reviewing and updating the Bylaws. Mary said that this topic had been discussed at the meeting at which the attorney's responses to the Planning Commission's questions had been discussed; as a Selectboard member, Bruno is an ex officio member of the Planning Commission and welcome to attend meetings; she did not recall if he had attended that meeting.

Roger Emery said that he has always assumed that the way local government works, every board has its function. In order for local government to work properly, every board has to remain within their authority. To him, because this matter concerns zoning and regulations, it's a function of the Zoning Board and Planning Commission; they should make decisions about it, not the Selectboard. If somebody has an issue with it, that's what the variances are for and all the other processes are already in place. If someone has a problem with nonconforming lots, they need to put in the proper paperwork, and then the Zoning Board and Planning Commission rule on it.

Amy agreed with Roger, and went on to say that if there is a question, it should be raised to the Zoning Administrator to see if he has any answers. If the Zoning Administrator or Zoning Board needs to address something, usually that's when they go to the Selectboard and explain exactly what their questions are; that's when the Selectboard decides whether to allow them to go to the attorney or not.

Scott said the way he recalls it is that nobody has come up with an answer, but people have said to the Selectboard, "You're the boss. You tell us what to do." He knows that there are a lot of questions on Bear Hill Road about this road frontage, and he just wants to get them answered. He thinks that if Mike wants to jump right in there and take care of it, that's fine.

Bruno said what he is "trying to explain is if a nonconforming building, once you apply for a permit and change the structure of the building, it becomes a conforming building. Am I right, Chris?" Chris responded, "I don't think you can talk about things in such generalities. There are a lot of specifics to each one." He added that, "I think the best thing to do with this is, if there is a question up on Bear Hill that we want to get resolved, there are two places to do it. There can be a specific instance where somebody wants to do something with their land, and you can put in and request a variance to do that. We can look at what we have and analyze it from that perspective. Or we can look at it from a longer term perspective and say what does the Town want to do in that specific area, so everybody else is treated fairly and it isn't on a lot by lot basis. It may be that the Planning Commission or Zoning Board is not able to make a favorable decision. But we may need to change the way things are in order to be able to adjust things so that people can do what they want to do with the land in the Town, because that is how they want to have the land regulated now. To address something like this, we need to write it down on a piece of paper and deal with it. What do you specifically want to do? What is the specific problem that we are trying to address? And make sure that there is not something there that allows you to do what you want to do. We have talked about various aspects of the way the zoning laws are written right now, but we have to look at each specific case. That's why you appeal, you make an application."

Bruno said that is one of the things he is trying to resolve right now. "We need to find out what law the bylaws and state laws are on a nonconforming lot. Do we have to go by the bylaws or do we need a variance to go through it? There are a lot of lots up there that don't have 900 feet or 800 feet of road frontage, but they've been there way before the bylaws came out, so does that mean that technically they don't need the 900 feet or 800 feet of road frontage, or do they need to go through a variance? Because as of right now, there's a guy, Devin, up on Bear Hill that built a camp up there on the mountain, okay. It's landlocked, but Diane Daley has given him a 50 foot right-of-way. Well, that piece of land was landlocked way before bylaws took effect back in 1977, I assume, right? Where does that stand? Are you going to make him tear the camp down because it doesn't meet the bylaws, even though it's a nonconforming lot? Or are you going to give him a variance after he gets his 50 foot right-of-way? Because in the State Statute it states that you need a 50 foot right-of-way to do anything on your lot, but the Town Bylaw says you need

900 feet of road frontage. That's what I am trying to get through to find out. These nonconforming lots, do they have to go by the Bylaws or stick with the State Statute or do they have to go with the Bylaws, even though they are nonconforming lots?"

Chris said, "Bylaws have to be at least as restrictive as the State laws are. If the State laws are less restrictive, then the Town Bylaws, I believe, still stand. The hard part is that we have to go back and look at what you are specifically talking about. The Planning Commission helps to rewrite the Bylaws on a long term basis, and it tries to rewrite the Town Plan, which reflects what the citizens of the Town want to do. In order for the Zoning Board of Adjustment to act, something has to be referred to them in order for them to do something about it. There has to be an application made or there has to be a violation that is identified by the Zoning Administrator that refers some action to the Zoning Board of Adjustment. The Zoning Board of Adjustment cannot just go out and do something; we have a quasi-judicial function. So it's the Zoning Administrator who would have to say there's a violation, or someone has submitted an application, and they make a judgement as to whether or not that can be approved based on what's in the bylaws, or a variance has to be looked at. There is a process that has to go there. I can't say to you what we are going to do or not going to do; we are going to apply what the bylaws say and evaluate it, and that's what will happen."

Bruno said, "That's what I am trying to resolve. I'm trying to resolve what is a nonconforming lot and what laws do they have?"

Mary suggested that this is a topic for the Planning Commission meeting scheduled for April 19th.

Jim Bennett said, "I just want to say that Bear Hill Road has a lot of conflict of interest. And I also want to say that the Zoning Committee and the Planning Commission have a lot of conflict of interest. And something has to be resolved on all of this."

Laurie Snowman suggested that Bruno as a Selectboard member should step back and let the process play out. Bruno said he is happy if the Planning Commission will handle this. Chris reminded him that by Statute, Selectboard members are ex officio, non voting members of the Planning Commission and Zoning Board (Bob Champagne-Willis reminded Chris that the ex officio member status just applies to the Planning Commission), allowed to attend and participate in meetings. Their input is valued and important. This issue and what Bruno has observed going on in the Town will be on the agenda for the next Planning Commission meeting; the Selectboard can attend, and we can focus on trying to resolve this issue and learn about what Bruno wants to do. "Anything written down beforehand, any specific areas that you would like to be looked at, would be helpful, so that the Planning Commission can prepare," said Chris. Mary asked Bruno to send his questions to be included on the agenda. Bruno said it's basically about nonconforming lots and whether it has to go by the Bylaws or the State laws.

- **Discuss and act upon requests to authorize training:** Bob has become aware that VLCT offers training in financial management. They offer three trainings a quarter for \$50.00. Bob took the training on fund accounting in March, for which he paid \$20.00 himself, as there was no time to ask for authorization from the Selectboard. He is requesting authorization to take the three trainings offered in April, May, and June for \$50.00, and is requesting reimbursement for the training in March. In addition, Bob is asking for authorization for the Town Clerk and the Treasurer to attend the Spring training offered by VMCTA (Vermont Municipal Clerks' and Treasurers' Association) in person, in Fairlee, at the end of April; registration is \$35/ person, plus there will be travel expenses. Brad made a motion to allow the training and have the Town pay for it; Bruno seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

OTHER BUSINESS:

- Bruno asked if Scott could get reimbursed for travel expenses incurred when he drove Bruno and himself to the Selectboard Essentials training this past weekend. The response was "Yes"; he just needs to fill out a reimbursement form available in the Town Office.
- Scott noticed that the Town does not have an American flag on display outside, and thinks that we should have a flag and lighting on it. Amy said this has come up in the past; an individual had offered to donate a flagpole, but that offer has been rescinded. Brad said the Town does have a flagpole outside; Bob said he is not sure that pole is safe, based on the huge crack he heard when he shook the pole. Brad suggested that

the American flag and the Vermont flag that are inside the Town Hall should be displayed outside. Scott said he will look into it.

- Brad said sunflower seeds have been received by schools in Vermont with which towns can show their support for Ukraine. His wife, Cheryl, gave him seed packets and a pamphlet that explains the program. He is giving those to the Town Clerk, to make them available for anyone who is interested in planting sunflowers.

The business of the meeting concluded, Brad made a motion that we adjourn; Bruno seconded it. All voted in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 9:11 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary von Alt

DRAFT