

CORNWALL SELECT BOARD

Regular Meeting

Location: via Zoom and at Town Hall

November 15, 2022

MEMBERS PRESENT: Tanya Byker, Ben Marks, Brian Kemp, John Roberts, Don Burns

ALSO PRESENT: Steven Rheame, Sue Johnson, Paul Vaczy (Chair, Salisbury SB)

Recording of meeting—Zoom is having technical issues and is unable to record at this point.

The meeting was called to order at 7:10 pm

QUORUM—established

AGENDA—John R. MOVED / Brian K. SECONDED to approve the agenda as amended, moving the Pubic Comments forward in order to allow Paul Vaczy's comments to begin sooner. **Motion passed**—5 in favor, 0 opposed.

General Fund and Highway Orders—circulated for signing.

Reconciled Bank Statement—reviewed

MINUTES

- **November 1, 2022**—John R. MOVED / Don B. SECONDED a motion to approve the minutes as presented. **Motion passed**—4 in favor, 1 abstention (Brian, due to absence Nov. 1); 0 opposed.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

- **Salisbury/Cornwall Covered Bridge** (*Paul Vaczy, Brian K.*)—Discussion of request to State engineer Jamie McCarthy for a jointly requested cost estimate for a metal version of a covered bridge.
 - In order to know the cost of all options, the Select Boards of Cornwall and Salisbury' are investigating the possibility of a steel famed bridge with sheet metal roof and sides made to look like a wooden covered bridge.
 - Primary reason: to lessen fire threat.
 - Major concern: Prospect of a steel rather than wood bridge might be upsetting to residents of both towns as the local votes jointly identified a preference for a covered bridge and that is what is expected.
 - All proposed ridges were to have a 75-year lifespan, so no difference in that regard. Initial cost of material might be more, but construction should be quicker, and maintenance and fire insurance expenses might be less for the metal version, thus saving money in the longer term. A cost estimate comparison for a metal bridge with these characteristics has been requested from State's engineer.
 - Paul noted that Salisbury had received their insurance payout with a stipulation that any unspent funds were to be returned. Ben indicated that Cornwall's payout had no such stipulation. He will look into it.
 - Tanya questioned what the structure would actually look like. The Board requested a visual mock-up in addition to the cost estimate.

- Brian emphasized the importance transparency and the need for public acceptance of changes proposed such as this metal vs wood construction. John noted that regarding the original talk of a steel bridge, he had not envisioned the steel roof and sides as replicating a covered bridge.
- It was acknowledged that a steel version, however well replicating a covered bridge would not be likely to have the same public 'draw' as would a wooden version, something Cornwall residents wanted.
- Brian indicated that once numbers were available, McCarthy could have drawings made that would show what the bridge could be expected to look like. These could be on the website and available at the Town Hall. Public push-back could be extensive unless people are persuaded of the advantages of a steel version.
- Ben reminded all that people had always been told they would have a voice in the choice. The original decision had been based on the need to get the construction on the 2025 time-slot. A mock-up for the Town website would be great. The public needs to be able to get a sense of what is under consideration and a chance to voice their concerns and opinions.
- Brian indicated that McCarthy had a consultant in mind.
- John wondered if the Cornwall-side approach could be increased by 50' to 100' of additional road-view. Brian had considered the same issue but felt there was sufficient time to consider that when the site plan is done.
- Talks with McCarthy indicated additionally that:
 - the road would be shut down for a minimum of 45 days;
 - current inflation likely to affect actual cost vs cost estimate and the final as-built cost is another couple of years out;
 - width could be reduced from 18' to 14' which could help reduce traffic attempts to do a 2-lane pass through. Lane width has been reduced effectively on other bridges using laminated 2" x 6"s;
 - height damage has been addressed elsewhere by the use of motion-activated height sensors that immediately flash a "too tall" warning to the driver when sensing a truck that will be too tall for safe passage through the bridge.
- Steve R. would like the turn around to be larger. Brian noted that ANR would not likely be enthusiastic about making it bigger; archaeological testing could be involved if expanding the area.
- Tanya: why not make more information, more discussion, about the possibility of fire?
- Paul said his concerns about fire had caused his initial reluctance to support a covered bridge option.
- Ben reminded that the voted plan had provisions for fire suppression. Voters may have been thinking that the problem had been minimized. He would be in favor of getting new numbers for an A/B comparison.

CORRESPONDENCE REVIEW—None

TOWN CLERK / TOWN TREASURER'S REPORT—Sue Johnson

- Voting went well; a 71% turn out of Cornwall registered voters, with no disruptions of the kind seen in other towns.
- Tax money is coming in.

- Sue checked bridge paperwork, could find no mention of refunding unused pay out money.
- The Town Hall will be closed all of Thanksgiving week.
- The Book Fair went excellently, proceeds were roughly \$1,600.

ROAD COMMISSIONER'S REPORT—Brian Kemp and Steven Rheaume

- Trucks are winter prepped and ready to go.
- Ken is still bush-hogging .
- The chipper has been in use as dead trees along road sides brought down, probably will do more next week.
- Two flashing speed signs have been ordered, need to prioritize areas to be monitored.

Recording begun, Zoom back online at approximately 8:10 pm.

OLD BUSINESS

• ***Discussion of Salt Shed Project Management—***

- Ben M. contacted Benj Deppman about being the Attorney for the town to manage contracts (review presented contracts, write any needed contracts) related to salt shed demolition and replacement. If no contracts were needed, then they would not need to avail themselves of Benj's services. However, there usually is a need for some sort of contract work and a need to protect the interests of the town (contractors' insurance coverages, etc).
- John R. made a couple of calls, but has not yet had any luck finding a manager prospect.
- Brian K. was of the opinion—the project having been changed to the point where it is pretty cut, dried, and simplified—that a good contractor could manage without the oversight of a project manager. What is needed at this point is a really good, well-written description of the project work needed so that potential builders can decide if they want to bid on it. He is willing to contact Stu to see if he would be willing to do an RFP. He is also willing to pull together the specs and look into storage options for materials. Steve R. to be involved as well.
- ***Salt Test Data***—Don had offered, previously, to collect data from the ongoing salt testing. He had a call in to Bill Johnson, the Town Health Officer, but not heard back in time for this evening's meeting. Sue said Bill had called her saying he was still waiting for some lab results on the sodium testing.

NEW BUSINESS

- Bob Gerlin, who has served the Town of Cornwall in many capacities, is retiring from his current post as Trustee of Public Funds. Bob has served the Town of Cornwall for many years in many capacities, including Chairing the Selectboard for a number of years during which time he was instrumental in the development of the Lemon Fair Insect Control Committee. He has been a Trustee of Public Funds for a number of years, and could always be counted on to help with elections.

John R. MOVED, Brian K. SECONDED, that the Selectboard acknowledge all the assistance Bob has provided to the town over the years, and express their great appreciation and thanks for his efforts. ***Motion passed unanimously.***

At 8:34, Brian K. left the meeting.

- Steve R. noted that Cornwall has been moved from VTRANS District 5 to District 3 which is headquartered in Mendon. That is where local State highway queries should go.
- Conor Stinson has requested that if anyone knows of someone who would be interested in learning more about what the Planning Commission does and might be interested in being a PC member contact him. The PC is in need of additional members.
- **ARPA Funding Requests—**
 - It was noted that there have not been very many suggestions made for the use of ARPA funds to date. Putting an ARPA tab on the website might encourage more suggestions. Tanya asked that all suggestions be listed and, wherever possible, links to related studies or additional information be made. Ben said he would review the recording of the town's public meeting on ARPA fund spending and present the Board with a list of the ideas put forward then, along with other requests that have been made to the Board in writing.
 - **Bicycle Path—**This topic was raised at the Board's public meeting on ARPA funds, with the suggestion that such a path be incorporated along Route 30. Sue and Ben noted that there had been a Bicycle Path Committee at one time, that Regional Planning had done such a study about 10 years ago and that and the challenges to establishing a bike path in the Route 30 corridor were well-known since that earlier study. The old bike-path group had made some headway during the Route 30 reconstruction, and had been able to get the road shoulders widened to 3 feet on either side. However, the study committee noted in its prior work that a separate path would require easements across private lands and they were not able to get landowners to approve those. This remains a challenge. The plan's bike study is available at the Town Hall for all those wishing to review it.
 - **After School Programs—**Tanya and Ben, both, had spoken with Chris Kramer about the programs. Tanya noted that a gymnastics program was being planned and that a capital investment opportunity presented itself in the purchase of athletic mats.
 - Ben had suggested to Chris that VTRANS be consulted to see what options or suggestions they might have for establishing a route along Route 30 for the children to travel between the school and Town Hall/Library. Chris K. suggested that flags be purchased for the children to carry during the travel times, but that would not necessarily make the foot travel safer.
 - The Friends of Cornwall School (FOCS) has also received 501(c)(3) status and is thus able to apply for grants to fund after-school programming. Ben suggested that applying sooner rather than later would be a good move as it might be possible to use ARPA money for a match for grants requiring matching funds. This would be a good way to expand the coverage of the ARPA money.

ADJOURNMENT

Tanya B. MOVED / John R. SECONDED to adjourn the meeting. **Motion passed—**4 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 absent.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 pm

Submitted by Robin Conway, Substitute Minute-taker