

Select Board
April 22, 2024
Meeting Minutes



Public present: C. DeFalco, T. Cofske, Chief W. Beaudry, J. Freeman, J. Freeman, C. Jambora, D. Fagerstrom, N. Waugh, J. Ballou, S. Phifer, J. Venezia, D. Dupont, R. Corriveau, K. Corriveau, A. Scott, R. Poirier, P. Novinsky, C. McGuire, D. Contois, Z. Lemieux, J. Donovan, M. Berthiaume
Members present: M. Kelly, G. Adams, A. Bercovici, A. Soto, P. Vandal

Chair M. Kelly called the meeting to order at 6:30 P.M. All in attendance stood for the Pledge of Allegiance. M. Kelly announced that the meeting is being recorded.

Present Commendation to Richard Stanton, US Army Private First Class

Veteran's Agent K. Moore read a statement and presented Private First Class R. Stanton with a Commendation from the Select Board ahead of his 100th birthday.

Meeting Minutes

MOTION: G. Adams, to accept the Select Board meeting minutes from the April 8, 2024 meeting.

SECOND: A. Soto

VOTE: ALL IN FAVOR

New Business

Signing of Eagle Scout Commendations: Zachary Brigham, Mark Fedora, Andrew Soderberg

The Board signed Eagle Scout commendations for Z. Brigham, M. Fedora, and A. Soderberg. G. Adams specified that the Court of Honor ceremony for the Eagle Scouts will be held on May 4th at 3:00 P.M.

Hitchcock Free Academy – Request Use of Town Common for Placement of May 11, 2024 Plant Sale Sign

MOTION: A. Soto, to allow Hitchcock Free Academy to use the Town Common for Placement of May 11, 2024 Plant Sale Sign.

SECOND: G. Adams

VOTE: ALL IN FAVOR

Set Location and Time for 2024 Annual Town Meeting to be Held on June 10, 2024

The Board discussed potential locations for Annual Town Meeting. M. Kelly laid out the options as the Brimfield Elementary School cafeteria, the Brimfield Winery, and the New England Motel. P. Vandal asked if the Town had held Annual Town Meeting at the New England Motel before. M. Kelly said he did

not believe so. P. Vandal asked why not hold it at the elementary school, where it is not subject to the weather. M. Kelly said he believed the room only allowed for 150 people and there had been over 200 people at the last couple Annual Town Meetings. G. Adams suggested Tantasqua Regional High School. P. Vandal opposed the idea of taking the Town Meeting out of Town. M. Kelly concurred. G. Adams said he had heard in favor of the high school as an option from people in Town. G. Adams went on to add that he would also like to keep it in Town but that the high school is a viable option. In response to the assertion that the turnout would be lower, G. Adams responded that as Annual Town Meeting has not been held at Tantasqua before, the Board could not say if the turnout would be lower. A. Soto asked if the decision needed to be made at this meeting. Town Clerk D. Fagerstrom replied that the information needed to go on the Town Warrant so a decision needed to be made as soon as possible. A. Soto asked if the Board could put the question on the Town website and let the community decide. G. Adams said the time and day of the meeting should play a part in deciding the location. M. Kelly said if the Board wanted to get feedback from the Town, he would be happy to have it put online and then hold a meeting the next week for the purpose of setting a location. A. Soto said that with something as important as Annual Town Meeting, it is important to make the public a part of deciding where it should be held. M. Kelly said he liked the idea of having the matter as a straw poll through email or on the website. The Board agreed with the idea. M. Kelly said the Board would set a deadline of Friday for responses and schedule a short meeting for Monday to select an option. D. Fagerstrom added that she thought the Board had a couple of weeks but that the Board would want to start getting everything together and secure a spot now. P. Vandal asked if the Board could find out how many people the Brimfield Elementary School cafeteria could hold. No action was taken.

Discuss Bulldozer Rollover

The Board discussed the Highway Department's assistance in a rollover that occurred along Route 20. M. Kelly said the Board was very happy that Brimfield is a town in which people are willing to help one another out but the Board is concerned with the legal and insurance issues of such actions. M. Kelly went on to say there had been a lot of chatter about the incident and the Board decided to discuss the matter rather than let it remain rumors on the street. M. Kelly continued that going forward the Board wanted to discuss how incidents like this were approached, in case there was an accident or anything else. G. Adams echoed M. Kelly's statements, reiterating that in a small community everyone helps each other out, but added that the Town wanted to make sure there would be no blowback from any potential issues. P. Vandal said he thought the Highway Department did a great job and did what they needed to do at the time.

Highway Surveyor Z. Lemieux read the following prepared statement:

"To the Residents and Selectboard of Brimfield,

This statement is in reference to the incident that occurred roadside on Wednesday April 17 2024.

At approximately 08:05 on Wednesday April 17 The Town of Brimfield's fleet mechanic and acting foreman Jim Lovendale, was notified by Soper Construction that their bulldozer had slid off their trailer

along the state layout of Route 20. No injuries or property damage had occurred but assistance was needed to get the equipment up righted in a timely manner.

Upon arrival at the scene, it was determined that no one was hurt. Thus, Jim notified the duty sergeant. He was unavailable and he told him who the patrol officer was.

Ensuring that the scene was safe and informing law enforcement, Jim up righted the bulldozer with ease. The entire process took under 5 minutes.

I was notified while on a different project about this incident. I did not see a problem with the actions taken by Jim, a trusted foreman serving Brimfield for almost 8 years for several reasons.

1. A potential environmental hazard was averted
2. Brimfield Highway has historically assisted other companies along the road sides in our community for example, low bed trailers stuck at the intersection of Route 20 and Holland Road, Northern Tree bucket truck stuck in the mud on Dix Hill, and multiple residents vehicles impeded by winter weather on Monson Rd.
3. The simple task was able to be completed safely and efficiently. If safety was an issue at any time, I have the complete confidence that Jim would not have continued with the task, as this is the standard practice on any of our job sites.
4. Soper Construction has contributed tremendously to the Town of Brimfield on both the professional level as well as volunteering countless hours of labor, materials and equipment over the years maintaining the ball fields.

I would also like to make it known that as a Department Head I was not notified by anyone on this Board that there were any concerns or questions in regards to this matter despite it having been put on this meeting agenda. Instead, I reached out to the Chair of this Board late Thursday afternoon approximately 30 hours after the incident happened.

Safety with in our community is and always will be the most critical element of my department and I am disappointed that our motives would be in question. “

A. Soto said he had received numerous calls. A. Soto went on to say that Z. Lemieux had opened a can of worms. A. Soto asked if the Police Department had been notified. Z. Lemieux said the foreman contacted the on-duty sergeant, who was in class. A. Soto asked if there was a patrol officer on the scene. Z. Lemieux said he believed that it happened so fast the rollover was rectified before the patrol officer arrived. A. Soto asked if the police officer was there at any time. Z. Lemieux said that he was not there and could not say. A. Soto said the incident was a liability issue and that if something did happen, the Town would be liable. A. Soto said the first thing he did after being made aware of the incident was to call the Chief, who was unaware of it. A. Soto said there are consequences, that the Town now has to notify the insurance company about the incident. P. Vandal asked if the Board was going to alert the insurance company about all the other instances where nothing happened. A. Soto replied we all know where you are coming from, you work for Z. Lemieux. Z. Lemieux said P. Vandal does not work for him.

G. Adams told Z. Lemieux not to take it personally, the Board had an obligation to the community to discuss the situation. G. Adams said he had been reading things on social media and wanted an agenda item so the Board could all get on the same page and added that he did not want the Highway Department to stop helping when they could but that it is important the Police Department is notified, proper assessments are made, and the Fire Department show up. A. Bercovici said he has lived in Town for 30 years and that people help each other. A. Bercovici concluded that he approves of helping and has no issues with what happened, but in the future, the Highway Department needs to make sure a cruiser shows up before doing anything.

2024 Annual Flea Market Owner/Operator License

Treasure Hunter 1810, LLC

MOTION: A. Soto, to approve the 2024 Annual Flea Market Owner/Operator License for Treasure Hunter 1810, LLC.

SECOND: A. Bercovici

VOTE: ALL IN FAVOR

ABSTAIN: M. Kelly

2024 Early Sales Vendor Permit

Vincent L. Trant, Jr. (5/13/2024, 7/8/2024, and 9/2/2024)

MOTION: A. Soto, to approve the 2024 Early Sales Vendor Permit for Vincent L. Trant, Jr. (5/13/2024, 7/8/2024, and 9/2/2024).

SECOND: A. Bercovici

VOTE: ALL IN FAVOR

ABSTAIN: M. Kelly

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: A. Soto, to adjourn the meeting.

SECOND: A. Bercovici

VOTE: ALL IN FAVOR

The meeting adjourned at 7:01 P.M.

Respectfully submitted by Christopher DeFalco



Martin J. Kelly, Chairperson

MEETING MATERIALS:

- Posting Updated 4-22-24
- Meeting Minutes April 8th