

Dorset Selectboard
Regular Meeting Minutes
September 20, 2022

Members Present: Megan Thorn, Henry Chandler, Liz Ruffa, Jim Salsgiver

Others Present: Chad Smith, Sebastian Haase, David McAneny, Hal Coolidge, Howard Coolidge, Ken Gilbert, Joann Rooney, Darren Hadlock, JD Sullivan, Rob Gaiotti (TM)

Megan Thorn called the meeting to order at 7:01pm.

August Minutes:

Jim Salsgiver moved and Henry Chandler seconded to approve the minutes of August 16th as presented. Motion passed 4-0.

Planning Commission Interview:

David McAneny was present to interview for an open seat on the Planning Commission. He previously interviewed with the PC and was recommended for appointment. David gave a brief bio and list of qualifications. Discussion ensued about the current bylaw effort and the job of the Planning Commission. David was brought to the area while volunteering for Habitat for Humanity, and settled in the area 3-4 years ago. Henry Chandler moved and Jim Salsgiver seconded to appointment David McAneny to the Planning Commission to fill the remainder of the open term (ending in 2025).

Zoning Board Interviews:

Chad Smith was present to interview for an open seat on the Zoning Board of Adjustment. Chad has lived in Dorset for 30 years, and was previously on the Planning Commission and Selectboard years ago. He works at Bromley and has a deep connection with Dorset. Discussion ensued about the role of the ZBA and the quasi-judicial proceedings etc. Chad has been recommended by the current ZBA members.

Joann Rooney was present via zoom to interview for an open seat on the ZBA as well. Her family has owned a house in Dorset for over 6 years and will be full time very soon. They have spent a lot of time in Dorset over the past 3 years. She enjoys the beauty of the Town and

would look to protect the character of Dorset. She is a retired teacher and has served on volunteer boards in the past.

Bruce Ketcham's application was received, however Bruce was feeling ill and unable to make the interview.

There are currently 2 and soon to be 3 openings on the ZBA board. The Selectboard agreed to have the ZBA interview all candidates and then hold additional interviews in October to hopefully make appointments. The Board thanked the applicants for their time.

Coolidge Lane Trail Discussion:

Rob Gaiotti explained that a request was received by Darren Hadlock to discontinue the 0.10-mile portion of Coolidge Lane that is classified as a legal trail. Darren was present to explain the reasoning that it would allow the residents on the road to better maintain that section of road without "public" use. Darren further explained that the lower part of the road is dangerous in the winter and difficult to maintain. Hal and Howard Coolidge were present and stated that the road has had many improvements over the years and is in much better condition than ever. They stated that they would not like to see things changed. Discussion ensued about the condition, location of the road, and legal trail status of a portion of the road. JD Sullivan noted that at least 5-7 property owners live or have access to lands off Coolidge Lane and any changes should be reviewed by all parties. Henry Chandler noted that it would make sense to reach out to all parties to solicit input before starting any process to reclassify the road. Rob Gaiotti is to reach out to all parties and put the item on the October agenda.

New Town Office Update:

Rob Gaiotti presented a memo with updated pricing and outlined options for the New Town Office Project. As noted, the project that was originally design has been priced out at \$4.2 million (vs. \$3.6 million in 2021). The Town has worked to come up with 3 alternatives that would bring the price down and utilize available resources to keep the project on track. Option 1: Use ARPA funding to cover gap with original building design, costs \$4.2 million; Option 2: reduce size of the building, remove the net zero items, and change finishings. This option gets the price down to around \$3.6 million, but it is a large departure from what was voted on. Option 3: reduce the size of the building, have the town perform in-kind site work, pave the parking area and road later (using highway funding), and use ARPA funding for solar panels. The estimate for this is \$3.8 million, and would utilize funds from FY23/24 and some of the FY22 surplus, plus the \$3.6 million bond. Discussion ensued about the building and making sure that it is net zero with the renewable energy component. Rob Gaiotti noted that the reduction in size does not impact the meeting space or common space in the lobby, it is mainly the office size getting reduced down. Henry Chandler moved and Jim Salsgiver seconded to move forward

with option 3, reducing the size of the building but retaining the net zero aspects, motion passed 4-0.

Old Business:

Sebastian Haase inquired about what additional work can be done to calm speeding on Route 30. Rob Gaiotti noted that permanent speed signs can be installed, additional Sheriff patrols added, and speed studies conducted to determine how to best lower speeds in the Village. Discussion ensued about noise and speeding cars. Sebastian Haase thanked the Board for the work that had been done after the petition was sent to the Board.

Rob Gaiotti presented other old business items and discussion took place about: the EWP project to remove debris from the Battenkill, the status of the FEMA grant for Chanticleer, Green Space in East Dorset, Broadband, and traffic flows in East Dorset. It was noted that the median speed of traffic by East Dorset General Store has been lowered from 47mph down to 43mph, it may be possible to petition the State to lower the speed limit on the road down to 35mph with the right amount of community support.

Finance Report:

Rob Gaiotti gave the monthly financial reports for the Town. FY23 spending is tracking along as it should. Delinquent taxes are up around \$20,000 from the previous year, and 3 properties will go to tax sale in October. The FY22 audit was completed and included in the meeting materials. There is a surplus of around \$99,000 from the previous year that can be used at the Board's discretion. Henry Chandler moved and Liz Ruffa seconded to approve the finance report for September. Motion passed 4-0.

Manager's Report:

Rob Gaiotti gave the monthly updates for TM duties. The Fire District is inching closer to the bidding for the waterline project. The Town will be holding a local concern meeting for the Route 30 Pathway scoping study. The Town Manager needs to be re-appointed as Deputy Health Officer for the Town. Jim Salsgiver moved and Henry Chandler seconded to re-appoint Rob Gaiotti as the Deputy Health Officer. Motion passed 4-0.

Jim Salsgiver moved and Liz Ruffa seconded to adjourn the meeting at 9:38pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rob Gaiotti, Town Manager