

**TOWN OF HIGHGATE**  
**Site Visit to Machia Road @ 5pm**  
**Special Selectboard Meeting @ 5:30pm**

**March 30, 2017**  
**Approved Minutes**

*NOTE: All actions taken are unanimous unless otherwise stated.*

**Site Visit to Machia Road @ 5pm**

Present were: Heidi Britch-Valenta; Patrick Loyer; Lauren Oates – Dept. of Emergency Management; Sharon Bousquet; Steve LaFar; Randy Connelly; Josh LaRocque; *absent – Bruce Butler*

**Special Selectboard Meeting @ 5:30pm**

**A. Call To Order & Pledge of Allegiance**

The meeting was called to order by Sharon Bousquet, Chair, @ 5:38pm, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present were: Heidi Britch-Valenta; Shawn Coleman – NRPC; Lauren Oates – Department of Emergency Management; Sharon Bousquet; Steve LaFar; Randy Connelly; Josh LaRocque; Bruce Butler; Wendi Dusablon; Patrick Loyer; Karen Gagne-Fortin; Ty Choiniere; Brian Spears

**B. Public Comments**

None

**C. Lauren Oates – VT Dept. of Emergency Management**

**1. FEMA application for transfer station slope stabilization**

This project application was submitted to FEMA back in 2013. Sharon read aloud from the project outline for phases 1 & 2. In 2015 FEMA began to request information from us regarding design work. The town has been working with Geo Design. FEMA has proposed a two phase process, and FEMA will pay 75% of all project costs. Our match will be 25%, which can be a cash match or in-kind. Heidi asked that the board focus on item #3 regarding a thorough vendor quote. Sharon read #3 aloud. FEMA will be here next month. Our original application was put together with estimates from Jim Smith. FEMA wants more detail on phase 2 to know that enough of a thorough process has happened at the town level. Phase 1 will be the engineering and design work and phase 2 will be the actual construction taking place. The funding for this is left over funds from Irene, and larger scale projects like ours have been pushed down the road some, which is why this has taken so long. The more information we can provide FEMA with regard to phase 1, the easier it will be for them to say yes. FEMA does not typically do a phased approach, but for our project they want to know there is a plan in place. Lauren spoke to the BCA (benefit cost analysis) and how we have to show that the benefits outweigh or equal the costs. If the town goes ahead with phase 1, we don't really have a concrete guarantee to be funded for phase 2. We could lose 25% with phase 1, because it is not a definite. Josh added that this project needs to happen, and the engineering phase has to happen to move forward, regardless. A firm timeline for this project is also a must! We have funds set aside already for this, \$57,000.00. There was some discussion about renegotiating the contract with Casella to help cover costs also. Bruce asked if Geo Design is the only game in town, or should we be looking elsewhere. They are not, but they have put in a lot of leg work already and have firsthand knowledge of the area involved. To an extent, FEMA has comfort with them, but it is ultimately up to the town. Shawn Coleman was present from NRPC. He is another resource for towns with regard to navigating grants and developing mitigation plans. FEMA won't pay for phase 1 until we have an estimate on phase 2. Sharon would like Geo Design to be at the next meeting, or at least available by phone, to answer some questions and try to get a firmer budget range and explain some of the things to be done. We need to get in a better pricing position

regarding phase 2. Lauren will continue to advocate for the town with FEMA. Lauren and Ben have been a fabulous resource for towns working with FEMA. Bruce asked about state funding. Shawn pointed out that Dustin Degree is the head of the transportation committee for the senate and he is another local resource for this project and the Machia Road project also.

**2. Machia Road slope slide – funding discussion**

Funding for this project is from a different pot of money and this application is not yet completed. This is an *emergency* situation. There was some discussion about the previous project done on the Machia Road and this location is right next to it. A prior Selectboard had discussed actually moving the road away from the bank. Emergency funds would come from VTrans, and the application can be submitted anytime for when funds become available. Pat will pursue looking at the drainage tiles that were previously installed, once the snow melts. The tiles will need to be cleaned, if necessary, so the water can continue to move from one side of the road to the other. The town will continue to work with NRPC and Emergency Management very closely on this project as well.

**3. Misc.**

Shawn Coleman let the board know that FEMA is remapping the Missisquoi River watershed area and flood zone mapping. We are one of the last regions in the state to be completed. There was discussion on flood insurance and the importance of remapping these areas as river and streams move over time.

**D. Rise VT Grant – Parks & Recreation Department**

Ty Choiniere, Karen Gagne-Fortin and Brian Spears were present from the Parks & Recreation Committee. They have researched their original idea of a shuffleboard court and the \$3,000.00 grant will not cover all the costs, and they did not budget for anything additional. They are interested in pursuing some outdoor play equipment around the walking path and ball field area. While the P&R Committee finalized some decisions, the Selectboard went into executive session with Pat Loyer and Heidi Britch-Valenta in the front office for a personnel discussion.

**E. Hiring Committee – Personnel Discussion**

Motion by Sharon Bousquet for the Selectboard, Public Works Director and Town Administrator to enter into executive session @ 6:18pm to discuss personnel, where premature general public knowledge could place the town or the individuals involved at a substantial disadvantage. The motion was seconded by Josh LaRocque – **APPROVED**. Motion by Sharon Bousquet to enter back into the selectboard meeting @ 6:30pm. The motion was seconded by Josh LaRocque – **APPROVED**.

**F. Rise VT Grant – Parks & Recreation Department (continued....)**

They are interested in purchasing two swings and a slide to be placed over by the tee-ball fields. This is a good location for site view for parents who are walking on the path or attending games. This is also a safe location out of the way of foul balls. Motion by Josh LaRocque to approve spending the Rise VT grant of \$3,000.00 plus \$500.00 if needed from the P&R budget to purchase a slide and a swing set for the arena ball field area. The motion was seconded by Randy Connelly – **APPROVED**. Ty asked about the budget that passed at town meeting which included sealing the arena parking lot. Ty will call around to get bids, per the purchasing policy. Josh would like to have it stripped also, if possible, in accordance with ADA compliance. Ty will get the ball rolling on this. It was noted that some firms don't like to bid in our area, but Ty will ask for something in writing that we reached out, but they are declining to bid if this happens. Brian Spears would like to see the parking lot entrance narrowed some so people don't park so close to the road. Pulling out of the parking lot is difficult if people park in this area. There was some discussion on the use of temporary curbing that is currently being used at the park and ride.

**G. Administrator Items – Heidi Britch-Valenta**

**1. Cultural Facilities Grant Update – April 20<sup>th</sup> Site Visit**

There will be a site visit on April 20<sup>th</sup> to look at all the projects at the municipal building. Tim Hardy has agreed to oversee the fire department floor project, but not all the other work being done here. The facilities grant covers many things; roof, ADA compliance issues; fire department floor and

PWD office issues. Heidi is waiting to hear back from Laz Scangas, architect, as he helped us identify the ADA compliance issues and solutions. We are hoping Laz will agree to oversee the other aspects of the grant, other than the fire department floor. Motion by Josh LaRocque to accept Tim Hardy's agreement for the provision of professional services, to oversee the floor project in the fire department for the amount of \$2,000.00, which will come from the \$60,000.00 CIP line item, approved on town meeting day. The motion was seconded by Steve LaFar – **APPROVED**.

**H. Selectboard Items**

- There was some discussion on the PACIF equipment grant and use of it at the arena.
- For the security system at the municipal building and library, we need to update all the contact information. Wendi and Sharon live closest to the municipal building. Passcodes will need to be changed, we are moving towards everyone having their own access code, so as people leave, their passcode can be disabled. Wendi will facilitate getting the new passcodes for everyone.

**I. Executive Session**

Motion by Josh LaRocque to enter back into executive session @ 7:00pm to discuss contracts, where premature general public knowledge could place the town or the individuals involved at a substantial disadvantage. The motion was seconded by Steve LaFar – **APPROVED**. Motion by Sharon Bousquet to exit executive session @ 7:20pm. The motion was seconded by Randy Connelly – **APPROVED**.

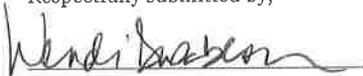
**J. Upcoming Events**

April 4	6pm	Parks & Rec. Mtg. @ arena
April 5	6:30pm	Library Trustees Mtg. @ library
April 6	7pm	Selectboard Mtg.
April 13	6pm	DRB Mtg.
April 18	6pm	Planning Comm. Mtg.
April 20	10:30am	Rural Development Site visit – CF Grant
April 20	7pm	Selectboard Mtg.

**K. Adjournment**

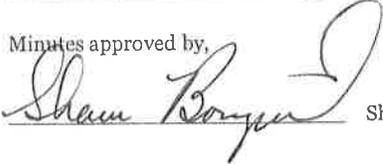
Motion by Sharon Bousquet to adjourn the meeting @ 7:22pm. The motion was seconded by Josh LaRocque – **APPROVED**.

Respectfully submitted by,



Wendi Dusablon, Highgate Town Clerk

Minutes approved by,



Sharon Bousquet - Chair, Highgate Selectboard