

# TOWN OF HIGHGATE

## Selectboard Meeting

Thursday, November 21, 2019 @ 7pm

### Approved Minutes

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

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

The meeting was called to order by Sharon Bousquet, Chair @7:00pm, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Highgate Selectboard Members** – Sharon Bousquet - Chair; Bruce Butler; Richard Flint; Randy Connelly *absent* – Joshua LaRocque - Vice Chair

**Highgate Office Staff** – Wendi Dusablon – Town Clerk & Public Meetings Clerk; Heidi Britch-Valenta – Town Administrator *absent* – Shelley Laroche - Treasurer/DTC

**Public / Other** – Alice (Sue) Cota; Keith Ploof; Butch Brosseau – Public Works Director

#### **B. Public Comment(s)**

- Sue Cota would like the board to consider putting a roof structure over the new ramp and stairs out front. As has been discussed before, the wood portion is very slippery and could be dangerous. Richard would rather see that portion removed in 2020 and cement used for the entire thing. Richard provided a sample rubber mat for us to use and see if that helps. Bruce noted that a canopy or an awning would also look nice. For now we will use the rubber mat and if that works out we will order our own to fit our needs.

#### **C. Public Works Director Updates – Butch Brosseau**

Butch was present for an update. There was discussion on grants and projects Butch sees for the department going forward. His intent is not to eliminate grant projects but to eliminate their time spent on them. He will work with Heidi to see what can be contracted out as part of grants and what can't. Sharon hates to see grants eliminated all together for public works if it can benefit the department and the town, but she understands Butch's position with them being swamped and behind on their work. They will continue to fall further and further behind if they are being pulled into special projects and neglecting their day to day work, like culverts, shoulders, ditching and tree cutting / trimming. Next years to do list includes a lot that didn't get accomplished this year. We have already applied with Regional Planning Commission for Grant in Aid and we have been approved. This will be for the two sections on Rollo Road. The Better Back Roads grant applications are due on December 12<sup>th</sup>. The large project on Mill Hill was a BBR project and that was able to be subbed out, so it is possible. The Frontage Road project is complete, with the exception of the top paving coat. We are ahead of our timeline for that project. Butch will be working with Pike for estimates and they will be deciding on which areas need paving the most. Bruce asked Butch if the department would benefit from contracting out the roadside mowing. Luke was able to get it done this year in between other jobs. Richard wonders if it is time to start thinking about having a fourth crew member. Butch thinks there is enough work, at least for a fourth

person to be part-time. Boy Vanslette has helped us in the past, but he also helps Franklin and Sheldon wants his help too. More people would be qualified to help with the smaller truck, because it does not require a CDL. Butch would like to inquire with Gary Graham and David Cadieux, as they can drive a tandem. The trucks are ready for the winter season and we have a supply of spare parts. Sharon reminded the public to SLOW DOWN and to be aware of town and state road crews out there. Don't try to pass them and please have patience! Sharon also noted our policy is that we do not pay for mailboxes. Butch said that we have 1700 parcels in town, and so far we have been notified of six mailboxes with damage. One was an actual hit, the others were from the weight of the snow. Most folks have been very understanding. Butch also noted that if oncoming vehicles don't pull over, the plow has two choices, hit the car or be forced to move over and sometimes you hit a mailbox. The Selectboard supports the public works crew. They do a damn good job and we all appreciate them – we don't say it enough. Butch appreciates the support. Butch is concerned with the early onset of winter weather again this year that our salt supply will run low quickly. There is a sand pile here behinds the municipal building for Highgate residents to access with buckets. NO TRUCK LOADS PLEASE. Butch is not aware of any commercial loading, but we are aware it has been an issue in the past. Residents are grateful to have access to the sand we offer here, so hopefully some don't ruin it for all the others. Sharon thanked Butch for coming in for this update because she had heard the department was feeling terribly overwhelmed. Butch acknowledged this and noted they all took the afternoon off today when the weather cooperated. The public works department is on call 24/7 and we appreciate all they do. Butch and Sharon would like us to advertise again for part time help. There was discussion on Thak Blvd. because Mr. Tremblay is looking for some resolution. Butch is waiting for Jim Smith to go to the site with him. Butch did go down there during the first storm and didn't have any trouble. He will keep the board informed on this issue.

**D. Town Clerk Updates – Wendi Dusablon**

- Motion by Richard Flint to approve the minutes from November 7, 2019, as written. The motion was seconded by Bruce Butler – **APPROVED**.
- Motion by Randy Connelly to accept the proposed fees for 2020 dog licensing. The motion was seconded by Richard Flint – **APPROVED**. It was noted that the fees are not being raised for 2020, making this the third year with the same fee structure as follows:

<u>On or before April 1, 2020</u>		<u>Fees starting April 2, 2020</u>	
Neutered / Spay	\$13.00 per dog	Neutered / Spay	\$22.00 per dog
Non-Neutered / Spay	\$17.00 per dog	Non-Neutered / Spay	\$26.00 per dog

Dog licensing will begin all over again, starting Thursday, January 2, 2020. On time licensing is on or before April 1, 2020. On an additional note, the dog and cat rabies vaccination clinic will be held at the Highgate Fire Station on Saturday, March 21, 2020 from 10am – noon. More information will be shared publicly and mailed to current licensed dog owners in early 2020.

- There is only one Selectboard meeting scheduled for December, which will be on Thursday, December 5<sup>th</sup> @ 7pm. Shelley would like to get a budgeting session on the calendar. The board decided on Tuesday, December 10<sup>th</sup> @ 6pm for budgeting. Wendi will warn this meeting.

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

- DMV will get back to us with recommendations for weight restrictions on Machia Rd.
- We have not received the finalized designs yet for the Machia Rd. slide repair.

**F. Selectboard Items**

- Motion by Richard Flint to sign the acceptance letter for the B25 / Machia Road Bridge project. It is complete, with the exception of minor landscaping, to be done in the spring. The motion was seconded by Randy Connelly – **APPROVED.**
- Motion by Richard Flint to sign the check warrants. The motion was seconded by Randy Connelly – **APPROVED.**
- GW Tatro put in a bid to repair the drainage system at the Transfer Station that they installed several years ago. This was discussed at the last meeting. Bruce and Richard both had questions about funding. The Town of Highgate will pay GW Tatro for the work upon completion, and Casella will reimburse us, as agreed upon with Casella. Motion by Bruce Butler to sign the contract with GW Tatro. The motion was seconded by Richard Flint – **APPROVED.**
- There is a draft of an updated traffic ordinance in the drop box and in the packet. We have not added new roads to it for a few years. Ed Adrian suggested we consolidate it, because the old version has several amendments to it. Our numbers are not matching up with the state and there are a few mysteries with road name changes. We are also waiting to hear on the reclassification of Hanna Road. Please bring any further edits to Heidi's attention.
- The final piece of the communications tower is in. We just need to get them here to install it.
- We received two bids on the insulation work that were opened, read aloud and documented at the last Selectboard meeting. Kilbury Construction (working with Cliff Parah) and Millbrook Building and Remodeling both submitted sealed bids by the deadline. Laz Scangas, architect, has reviewed them for compliance with the RFP. The bid from Kilbury / Parah was not a complete bid, so Laz is recommending Millbrook. The Millbrook bid came in at \$39,500.00 with two alternatives: #1 add alternative \$5,350.00 and #2 add alternative \$12,350.00. There was discussion on funding for this project. It was noted that we have funds from the overage with Swanton Village from last year, so we have the green light to expend those funds. There were questions on the alternatives to the Millbrook bids, so the board would like clarification from them directly. Motion by Bruce Butler to accept Millbrook's base bid of \$39,500.00 with the contingency to review their two alternates with one of their principle people. The motion was seconded by Richard Flint – **APPROVED.** Heidi will arrange for Dave from Millbrook to do a site visit on Monday, November 25, 2019 @ 4pm with Bruce and Richard present. Bruce also asked about the warranty work on the roof and any contingencies regarding the insulation work.
- Sharon announced that the Recreation Department will be sponsoring a holiday light / decorating contest. They are looking for older Highgate residents to be their judges. If you would like to be a judge, please reach out to Sue Cota. The judges will ride around by bus to see the displays. Pre-registration is required through the Rec.

Department so they can have a route to follow. First place will win a \$250.00 Visa gift card and they are looking to add other prizes as well. More info to follow from the Recreation Department. This will take place the weekend before Christmas.

- More holiday events happening in town are: Whooville in Highgate at the Library on Dec. 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup>; Santa Day @ the Fire Dept. on Dec. 15<sup>th</sup> from 10am – 2pm; Skate with Santa at the Arena – date to be announced – they are still waiting to see when Santa will be available 😊.
- There was discussion about getting a tree in the park to decorate and involving people of all ages. Keith Ploof said the lights and decorations were stored at the library and should still be there from prior years. Get the word out, we are looking for a tree to be donated to put in the town park.

### **G. Upcoming Events**

Nov. 28 + 29		Thanksgiving Holiday – <b>OFFICES CLOSED</b>
Dec. 2	5:30	Recreation Commission Mtg.
Dec. 2	5:30	Welcome Center Mtg.
Dec. 3	6:00	Village Core Master Plan Mtg.
Dec. 4	6 :30	Library Trustee Mtg. @ library
Dec. 5	7:00	Selectboard Mtg. w/ final ADA hearing
Dec. 6 + 7		Whooville in Highgate @ Highgate Library & Community Center
Dec. 12	6:00	DRB Mtg.
Dec. 15	10am – 2pm	Santa Day @ Highgate Vol. Fire Dept.

**Note: beginning in January 2020, Selectboard meetings will begin @ 6:30pm**

Motion by Sharon Bousquet to exit the regular Selectboard Meeting @ 8:01pm. The motion was seconded by Richard Flint – **APPROVED.**

### **H. Executive Session**

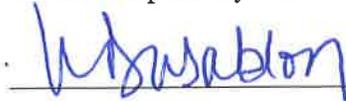
Motion by Sharon Bousquet to enter into executive session @ 8:01pm with Heidi Britch-Valenta for contracts, personnel and legal, where premature general public knowledge would place the town and/or the individuals involved at a substantial disadvantage. The motion was seconded by Richard Flint – **APPROVED.**

Motion by Richard Flint to exit executive session @ 8:20pm. The motion was seconded by Bruce Butler – **APPROVED.**

### **I. Adjournment**

Motion by Sharon Bousquet to adjourn the meeting @ 8:20pm. The motion was seconded by Randy Connelly – **APPROVED.**

Minutes respectfully submitted by:



Wendi Dusablon – Town Clerk & Public Meetings Clerk

Minutes approved by:



Sharon Bousquet – Chair, Highgate Selectboard