

**Stowe Selectboard, Liquor Commission & Water/Sewer Commission Meeting
Monday September 19, 2022**

Present:

Selectboard Members: William Adams, Lisa Hagerty (via Zoom), Jo Sabel Courtney, Nick Donza, Paco Aumand

In Person attendees: Rachel Mann, Jon Olin, Larry Lackey, Rick Rothammer, Paul Sakash, Emily Rosenbaum, Carrie Simmons, Bill Davis, Dona Davis, Val Davis

There were 12 participant on Zoom

Call to Order

Chair Billy Adams called the meeting to order at 5:00pm.

Approve the Agenda

On a motion by Mr. Paco Aumand, seconded by Ms. Jo Sabel Courtney, the Board approved the agenda, pulling item A-5 (Computer Security Enhancements) and making it item B-1A.

Executive Session

On a motion by Mr. Nick Donza, seconded by Ms. Courtney, the Board went into Executive Session to discuss personnel at 5:01pm. They invited Mr. Larry Lackey and Mr. Richard Marron to join them.

The Board came out of Executive Session at 5:32pm.

Consent Agenda

1. 9/6/22 Selectboard Minutes
2. 109 Main Street Development Agreement (Sewer Main Replacement)
3. VLCT Voting Delegate
4. VT Art Prize Recognition for Rec Path Mural
5. PULLED
6. Interim E-911 Coordinator
7. Liquor Consent Items

On a motion by Mr. Aumand, seconded by Ms. Courtney, the Board approved the Consent Agenda with pulling item A-5 to business.

Computer Security Enhancements

The Town of Stowe recently had a cyber security incident on August 30, 2022, with suspicious activity surrounding a townofstovevt.gov email account. The Town's insurance carrier was notified of the event and a cybersecurity firm was retained to perform a forensic analysis of the compromised email account and the entire email system. Through that analysis, an additional 9 accounts were identified that had suspicious activity. Passwords were reset, and the Town implemented Multi-Factor Authentication on all stovevt.gov accounts. In the interest of being proactive with cybersecurity, the Town's IT Director and IT contractor recommend implementing two new network and system monitoring services. These services will provide insight into network and system usage patterns and provide early warning of irregular or suspicious activity. The cost of these services is \$2,065.80 per month, which was not accounted for in the FY'23 budget.

Town Manager Charles Safford explained that the Town has bank routing information related to tax payments as well as personal information of employees, all of which are at risk in the event of a cyber attack. Mr. Safford also noted that this would be an amendment to the existing IT contract. Mr. Aumand questioned if this service should be put out to bid due to the cost, however Mr. Safford explained that

this is not something that lends itself to a standard bid with price being the primary consideration, such as when you bid a vehicle. The additional cyber security services are best tied to our existing IT service contract because in the event of a compromised IT system, the Town would lean very heavily on our IT system, the town would lean very heavily on our IT contractor to limit, mitigate, and investigate any security threat against our systems. If the Town did solicit proposals for IT services, it would be based on professional qualifications, not price, as the primary basis of award.

On a motion by Mr. Aumand, seconded by Ms. Courtney, the Board instructed the Town Manager to issue a memo for the record justifying the expense in the confines of the Town Purchasing Policy prior to awarding the *Simpleroute Professional Services Project Service Proposal* and to transfer \$18,000 from the administrative contingency into the IT budget to cover service the cost through the remainder of FY'23.

Working Communities Challenge Update

Ms. Emily Rosenbaum, director of Working Communities Challenge of Lamoille County, gave an update on her program and the work they have accomplished since the Town of Stowe became a core partner. Ms. Rosenbaum explained that the overall goal of the WCC is to address systemic barriers to employment within the regional community. She explained that they chose three main areas of focus – transportation, housing and resource navigation. On transportation, Ms. Rosenbaum has been serving as president of Rural Community Transit Board as they bring on a new Executive Director, and have been helping to push for micro transit, which has more flexibility, as well as focusing on underserved areas such as Johnson to expand transit in to.

The WCC has been working with numerous entities around the county to address housing issues and barriers, including supporting Lamoille Housing Partnership, working with Planning Commissions on zoning and short-term-rental management. Currently they are working with the Stowe Planning Commission to create a STR survey that will look at concerns and how best to make sure that the housing in the community serves the people of the county, without specifically looking to shut down STRs. Ms. Rosenbaum noted that there are many partners looking into this across the State.

Ms. Rosenbaum also puts out a weekly newsletter to community leaders as well as maintaining a website that has highlights resources, seminars and other key information for the county. There is also an ongoing effort to hire a Mobile Rural Resource Navigator who would be able to help those looking for assistance connect to the appropriate services. Ms. Rosenbaum noted that there is currently 16 months left on the WCC grant and they are looking at sustainability and how best to continue this work after the grant ends.

Public Information Meeting: Scoping Studies for Replacement of Luce Hill Road Bridge and for a Bicycle and Pedestrian Connection Between Chase Park and Mountain Road

Mr. Jon Olin of Hoyle-Tanner Consultants came before the Board to hold a public information meeting regarding their project area surrounding Luce Hill Road Bridge and a connection for pedestrians and bicyclists between Chase Park and Mountain Road. He noted these are two separate projects but are closely tied together, and the hope will be that as VTrans takes on the Luce Hill/Mountain Road intersection improvements they will incorporate these projects as well. VTrans is currently just beginning the scoping of the intersection project, where the preferred alternative is a traffic signal with controlled pedestrian crossing.

Mr. Olin explained that the current bridge was built in 1952 and has concrete abutments with spread footings. The major concern with the Bridge is related to scouring, as the bridge is narrow and requires the river to create a contraction or “pinch point”, accelerating its velocity and causing the scouring under the bridge. The project is further complicated as the Recreation Path currently goes under the bridge, and water utility lines currently also utilize the bridge structure. At the time of its construction the river level

was 11' higher than it currently is due to the scouring. The Board discussed changes to the Recreation Path under the bridge, including widening and flattening to improve sight lines.

While looking at widening the span of the bridge, the Town would also like to include a bike land and sidewalks to allow for safer pedestrian access between Chase Park and the Mountain Road Village. This is in accordance with the Mountain Road Village Masterplan, which encourages pedestrian circulation in that area. It was noted that there is also a plan to extend the sidewalk up Mountain Road to Cottage Club Road once the Luce Hill Road intersection work is complete.

The Board also discussed the traffic management plan during any bridge construction, which could include a temporary bridge, restricted lanes or a full closure and detour.

Stowe Area Association Partnership & Collaboration For Sustainable Success

Ms. Carrie Simmons, Executive Director of Stowe Area Association, presented to the Board about working with the Town on Sustainable Tourism in Stowe. Ms. Simmons indicated that SAA is currently looking at how best to maintain the goals of being a four-season destination town with a strong reputation while managing the impacts of over tourism. She said that SAA is creating a Smart Growth Task Force to look at how they can contribute to areas of local concern such as housing, transportation and workforce development. She also spoke to the importance of the SAA Visitor Center which serves as the "front door" of Stowe for visitors, prospective residents and business owner resources. They also focus on the evolving nature of tourism and what visitor experience have changes post-pandemic. The Board asked about next steps in the Sustainable Success model, which Ms. Simmons indicated would be a Destination Stewardship Plan.

Lamoille County FiberNet Update

Stephen Friedman, Stowe's representative to the Lamoille FiberNet Communication Union District (CUD) presented to the Board an update on their progress in their goal to provide high speed fiber internet to all unserved and underserved addresses in the community. He first addressed the ends of talks with Google Fiber, which they had hoped would serve as a partner to providing internet service throughout the county. Mr. Friedman explained that as talks had progressed it became clear that the number of households to be served was incorrect based on early consultant numbers, and also that a large amount (13-15%) of the addresses would require underground conduit, which is more expensive to install than aerial cables. He noted that the percent of conduit needed was 3x higher than the average for the State.

Mr. Friedman explained that the plan for the CUD now is to go back to focusing on a business plan for building out infrastructure to areas with the highest concentration of underserved addresses and then look at options for an Internet Service Provider to operate on the network they would build and own. Mr. Val Davis, Executive Director of the CUD noted that they currently have purchased 120 miles of fiber to be installed. It is anticipated at this time that work would be focused in other towns such as Eden and Belvidere to start with. Stowe currently has approximately 500 addresses that are deemed underserved at this time.

Mr. Rick Rothammer of Stowe Cable noted that in Stowe they have focused on connecting 40 miles or about 1,000 new addresses in the last year and plan to expand into Nebraska Valley area next year. They expressed concern about the lack of business model or ISP for the CUD. Mr. Davis noted that the State has chosen to give their funding to the CUDs in a public ownership model rather than private businesses and that their focus is on affordability for low-income Vermonters.

Manager's Report

Mr. Safford explained that Tom Hubbs on behalf of the Stowe Rotary has requested the use of the Mayo Field parking lot for the Wheels for Warmth fundraiser on October 27 & 28th. He also noted that the Library is currently offering a survey of the community as they work to develop their next Strategic Plan.

Selectboard Meeting 9/19/22

The Board briefly discussed upcoming topics on future meetings, including the Planning Commission returning with the interim zoning related to cannabis on October 11th. It was also noted that Homestead Tax Credit reform is being discussed in the legislature and would be a topic for future discussion to keep the Board informed should they choose to offer support or an opinion.

There being no further business, Chair Adams adjourned the meeting at 8:16pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Abigail Sweetser.

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