

**Stowe Selectboard, Liquor Commission & Water/Sewer Commission Meeting  
Monday March 13, 2023**

Present:

Selectboard Members: William Adams, Jo Sabel Courtney, Nick Donza, Lisa Hagerty, Paco Aumand  
In Person attendees: Kestrel Owens, Tom Hand, Chris Keil, Jackie Pratt, Monique LaJeunesse, Sarah Juzek, Marina Meerburg, Mary Black, Susan Connerty, Greg Moris  
There were 17 participants on Zoom

**Call to Order**

Chair Billy Adams called the meeting to order at 5:00pm. He thanked the Board and Town for the confidence they had in him to serve as Chair for the last two years. He noted that the Board would now be getting back to their historical order for determining Chair from the 3-year term seats.

**Approve the Agenda**

On a motion by Ms. Lisa Hagerty, seconded by Ms. Jo Sabel Courtney, the Board approved the agenda, pulling items A-3 (EMS/Fire Consultant Award) and A-5 (Liquor Consent Items) for discussion.

**Annual Board Organization**

**Election of Officers**

Section 153-403 of the Stowe Town Charter, states, in part, "Forthwith after their election and qualification, the Selectboard shall organize and elect a chair, a vice-chair, and clerk by a majority vote of the entire Selectboard..." Chair Adams then turned the meeting over to Town Manager Charles Safford to conduct the election of the Chair.

On a motion by Mr. Paco Aumand, seconded by Ms. Jo Sable Courtney, the Board appointed Ms. Lisa Hagerty to serve as Chair.

Chair Hagerty took a moment to thank outgoing Chair Adams for his service, and thanked Mr. Aumand and Ms. Courtney for their continued service to the Town of Stowe as they recently won the reappointment.

On a motion by Mr. Aumand, seconded by Ms. Courtney, the Board appointed Mr. Billy Adams to serve as Vice-Chair.

On a motion by Ms. Courtney, seconded by Mr. Nick Donza, the Board appointed Ms. Abigail Bourgeois to serve as Clerk.

**Executive Session**

On a motion by Mr. Adams, seconded by Mr. Donza, the Board went into Executive Session at 5:07pm to discuss personnel.

On a motion by Mr. Donza, seconded by Mr. Adams, the Board came out of Executive Session at 5:32pm.

### **Consent Agenda**

1. Designation of Newspaper for Legal Ads
2. Minutes of 2/13/23 & 2/27/23
3. PULLED
4. Special Event Applications
5. PULLED
6. SED Tree Crew Vehicle Financing

On a motion by Mr. Adams, seconded by Ms. Courtney, the Board approved the Consent Agenda without item A-3 and A-5.

### **EMS/Fire Consultant Award**

The Town requested proposals for an EMS/Fire study to assess and advise on organizational structure options, staffing requirements and cost. The Town of Stowe received five responses, which were reviewed by the Fire, Police and Police Chief (Emergency Management Director) who felt that AP Triton was the most qualified firm, with a proposal cost of \$37,416. It was noted that originally the Capital Project was budgeted for \$35,000. Town Manager Mr. Charles Safford noted that the RFP was for a qualification-based selection process where factors other than cost may be considered. He also noted that getting buy-in from the chiefs was important and finding a consultant they all supported. AP Triton has recently worked in Vermont with Fire/EMS agencies and we were able to review an example of their work product that was similar to what the Town of Stowe is seeking.

On a motion by Mr. Aumand, seconded by Mr. Adams, the Board awarded the contract for the EMS/Fire study to AP Triton for \$37,416 and amend the Capital Fund appropriation to an equivalent amount.

### **Liquor Consent Items**

The Town of Stowe has received a number of Liquor Permits, including Art Gallery Permits, Festival Permit, First Class, Second Class, Third Class and Tobacco Annual Licenses. Chair Hagerty asked to pull out two Outdoor Consumption Permits for OLS Hotels & Resorts LLC (d.b.a. Town & Country) at 876 Mountain Road. She noted that they specifically requested Outdoor Consumption Permits until 2:00am. It was felt that the Board would like to speak with the owner applying for the OCP until 2:00am and would invite them to the March 27<sup>th</sup> meeting.

On a motion by Mr. Donza, seconded by Ms. Courtney, the Board approved the Liquor Consent Applications excluding 207545 (OLS Hotels & Resorts @ 876 Mountain Road) and 20756 (OLS Hotel & Resorts @ 876 Mountain Road) Outside Consumption Permits.

### **Public Informational Meeting – Moscow Road/Village Reconstruction Scoping Study**

The Town of Stowe has worked with consultants Hoyle Tanner on a scoping study for the Moscow Road/Village Reconstruction project, which is now substantially complete. This was an approved Capital Project in FY'23, with a focus on speeding and restoring a sense of place in Moscow. The consultants presented three alternatives for the next phase of the project, which will include design and permitting, likely as part of the FY'25 Capital Plan. In general, three alternatives were presented: a Low Build Alternative which would include a mill, shim & overlay on the existing pavement width, and traffic calming islands at each end of the project (cost estimate \$650,000); the Mid Build Alternative would widen the road to 28' includes the calming islands, and reconstruction of the River Road/Moscow Road intersection to be a T intersection, which creates some green space (cost estimate \$3M); the High Build Alternative would include all of the previous improvements but also include some curbing and drainage improvements, as well as lighting and street trees full length and some additional landscaping

development (cost estimate \$3.95M). It was also noted that some features could be chosen “cafeteria style” such as including the lighting at an additional cost to the Mid Build option.

The consultants discussed the islands at the entryways to the project as a way to slow down traffic and change driver behavior to alert them they are entering a village. They also noted that a T intersection for River Road/Moscow Road would create a stopped condition, slowing traffic and providing better sight lines. The resulting space created by turning the Y into a T intersection would allow for a greenspace. Residents of the area gave their input on the ideas presented, with a general consensus that they support the T intersection, as well as making sure the subbase for Moscow Road is done correctly so that the road lasts. There was no objection to the islands for traffic calming, but some wanted further traffic calming measures such as additional landscaping, speed tables, and flashing speed signs. There was concern over the widening of the road to include a 4' shoulder for biking/pedestrians, as that could create a sense that people can go faster, and reducing speed is the number one priority for this project. Mr. John Black stated that while he was in support of the T Intersection, he was not interested in giving the Town any of his land in front of the brick wall and had concerns about drainage there. Other drainage concerns were brought up regarding the intersection with Shaw Hill. Focusing on the macro elements of the project, it was the consensus of the Selectboard based on input from the audience to try to keep the project within the right-of-way as much as reasonably possible, keep the road narrow rather than widen it, not to add a sidewalk, to include the T intersection at River Road & Moscow Road, and to further evaluate the drainage and road sub-surface to ensure the road last in an acceptable condition. Details will be further developed during the preliminary design phase.

### **Public Informational Meeting – Luce Hill Road Bridge and Sidewalk Scoping Studies**

The Town of Stowe has worked with consultants Hoyle Tanner to complete Scoping Studies on both the Luce Hill Road Bridge and Sidewalks along Luce Hill Road connecting Mountain Road and Chase Park. Additionally, the State has approved a project for the future to redesign the intersection of Luce Hill Road and Mountain Road to a T intersection. These are currently being treated as three separate projects. It was noted that the Town desires the sidewalk and has concerns about the condition of Luce Hill Road Bridge due to scouring of the abutments. There is hope that this study will help move the bridge up on the State Bridge Replacement Program.

The consultants presented the alternatives for the sidewalk first, noting that there are currently two options, Alternative 1 includes curbing and sidewalk along the northern side of Luce Hill Road. This requires a closed drainage system and has a cost estimate of \$740,000. Alternative 2 includes an 8' greenspace between the road and sidewalk and would not require drainage. This alternative would have required significant Right of Way acquisitions, but has an estimated cost of \$590,000. Ms. Barbara Baraw raised concerns about the impacts of a sidewalk along the St. John's Church property, which will be -evaluated in future development phases. Mr. Shepard noted that the green swale does not require drainage, the ongoing maintenance costs to replant each spring should be considered. While there was some support for the green swale, overall, the preferred alternative was the curbing and sidewalk with drainage without the greenbelt.

The consultants then presented alternatives for the Luce Hill Road Bridge. The current bridge was built in 1952 and has a width of 24' rail to rail, less than the State minimum of 28', and a length of 64'. The bridge also includes a section of the Rec Path which currently curves under the bridge. There is also a water line that goes along the bridge and will need to be maintained through replacement. Currently the bridge has significant cracks and scouring in the abutments due to being too narrow for the river, which could not be addressed by rehabilitation, therefore a full bridge replacement is required. A replacement bridge would be 105' long to give more width to the river and would be wider to include bike and pedestrian access. The Board then discussed alternatives for traffic maintenance while bridge construction is underway, with three alternatives – Alternative 1 being to do a phased closure, however it was determined that the bridge is too narrow, and abutments are not stable enough for this option.

Alternative 2 would be to install a temporary 1-lane bridge, which would have a cost of \$450,000. Alternative 3 would be to close the road and have a temporary off-site detour and utilize Accelerated Bridge Construction techniques. Finally, the Board discussed alternative bridge construction types, with Alternative 3A being a steel girder bridge with a concrete deck, Alternative 3B being a steel girder bridge with concrete deck and some aesthetic treatments such as concrete liners and staining. These aesthetic treatments are estimated to increase the cost by 5%. Both 3A and 3B are considered economical to build and maintain. Alternative 3C would be a prefabricated truss bridge, which increases costs significantly for construction and would have higher maintenance costs due to the need for annual washing and coating of the trusses. Alternative 3D would be to include a timber covering over a steel girder bridge. This would increase the width of the bridge to accommodate the timber columns, as well as increased maintenance cost. Alternatives 3C and 3D are likely not to qualify for State and Federal funding. The overall consensus was to go with Alternative 3B. It was discussed if a covered walking bridge, similar to what is on the Mountain Road near the intersection with Main Street, would be an option, but it would not likely qualify for federal funding. It was also noted that the Rec Path will need to be rerouted or closed during construction. The Selectboard indicated they were open to both options depending on the method of construction and the time it is projected to take along with the season(s). Public Works will work to better understand the implications of a road closure vs. temporary bridge and bring that back to the Board at a later date, but the Selectboard indicated they were open to the idea of a road closure if it could be done in the off-season during early spring.

#### **Manager's Report**

Mr. Safford discussed with the Board the idea of moving the Selectboard Meetings from the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Monday nights to the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday nights of each month. Packets would still be prepared on Fridays, giving the Board more time to review them in advance of the meetings. Staff will modify the Selectboard Meeting Policy with a plan to transition to Wednesday meetings in May.

Mr. Safford also made the Board aware of a recent "open letter to the Selectboard" posted on Front Porch Forum asking the Board to consider including Town business on Australian Ballot rather than floor vote at Annual Meeting. This topic will be discussed in full at a future Selectboard meeting in the spring.

It was also noted that the Mayo Farm Bus Stop has been discontinued on the Mountain Road shuttle, due to lack of usage and parking concerns with spring mud season. There will be discussions at a later date if this stop should be continued next year and what, if any, improvements can be done to the parking lot.

On a motion by Mr. Aumand, seconded by Mr. Adams, the Board went into Executive Session at 8:59pm to discuss personnel, Contracts and Real Estate.

The Board came out of Executive Session at 9:30pm.

On a motion by Ms. Courtney, seconded by Mr. Adams, the Board appointed Colleen McGovern to a vacant seat on the Conservation Commission effective immediately. The Board also appointed Kay Barrett to serve on the Conservation Commission for a three-year term effective May 1, 2023.

There being no further business, Chair Hagerty adjourned the meeting at 9:32pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Abigail Bourgeois.