

Town of Lincoln, Vermont
Select Board Meeting Minutes
Lincoln Town Office
December 19, 2017, 7:00 p.m.

In attendance: Bill Finger, Chair, Paul Forlenza, Will Sipse, Oakley Smith, Ann Kensek, David Cavoretto, Bill Masterson, Sophie Sauvé of Dubois and King, Josh Donabedian from Regional Planning, Thayer, Danelle, and Bella Osborne. Absent: James Needham.

MOTION by Bill Finger, second by Paul Forlenza, to approve meeting agenda.
MOTION PASSED 4-0-1.

Corrections and additions to meeting of December 18 meeting: None.

MOTION by Bill Finger, second by Will Sipse, to approve minutes of the December 5 meeting as written.
MOTION PASSED 4-0-1.

Public Comment:

- Bill Masterson has asked to have access to Colby Hill for approximately two weeks to clear wind-damaged timber for use in construction of a farm stand.
- It was suggested that a release be drawn up to absolve the town of liability.
- It also was suggested that Mr. Masterson present a certificate of insurance.

MOTION by Paul Forlenza, second by Oakley Smith, to allow Bill Masterson to go onto town forest land on Colby Hill to remove wind-damaged trees, contingent on release and insurance certificate.
MOTION PASSED 4-0-1.

Lincoln Gap Road Winter Access Study discussion by Sophie Sauvé of DuBois & King:

- Goals of the study are to deter drivers from using the Gap Road when it is closed.
- Consideration was given for management and safety of recreational users of the Gap Road and the snow plow, which turns around at the point of road closure.
- According to Mr. Donabedian, the Regional Planning Commission allocates \$40,000 to municipalities to do feasibility studies.
- Lincoln Gap Road is a mountain pass in the Green Mountains of Vermont that connects the Town of Lincoln to the west and the Town of Warren to the east. The road crosses the Lincoln Mountain section of the Green Mountain National Forest (GMNF), between Addison County, part of the Lake Champlain Valley on the west, and Washington County, part of Central Vermont to the east. The portion of Lincoln Gap Road which is in Lincoln is approximately 3.89 miles.
- Lincoln Gap Road has the steepest paved mile in the United States, with gradients around 24% for approximately a mile of the road and an average total grade of about 15%. As a Class 2 road, it is partially paved, with about two miles unpaved on the west side towards Lincoln. The road cannot be plowed safely in its entirety due to very steep grades, narrow width, sharp turns up and down the mountain, and significant changes in elevation. As a

- 47 consequence, part of the road is closed from both the Lincoln and Warren sides from
 48 mid-October to mid-May each year.
- 49 • A problem exists on Lincoln Gap Road with motorists who continue past the “Road
 50 Closed” signs during winter road closure months and become stuck or are involved in
 51 accidents and need assistance. These motorists not only put themselves in danger, but
 52 also endanger the lives of emergency workers who are called upon to help.
 - 53 • Consideration will be given to potential winter parking areas for recreation users.
 - 54 • Land ownerships along the road must be taken into consideration.
 - 55 • Safety is a primary concern for winter recreation use.
 - 56 • GMNF is concerned about environmental impact of land use.
 - 57 • Obstacles for rescue vehicles also must be addressed.
 - 58 • Lincoln Emergency Management team, road crew, state police, Agency of
 59 Transportation, VAST, Catamount Trail Association, Green Mountain Club, and private
 60 landowners need to be consulted about potential parking areas.
 - 61 • Expected users of the Gap Road are snow travelers, snow machine users, jack jumpers,
 62 and partiers who start bonfires.
 - 63 • Issues to be addressed are how to reduce vehicle-plow traffic, increase in traffic density,
 64 ease of maintenance and access to parking, ease of implementation of construction of
 65 parking area, cutting environmental impact.
 - 66 • The area is an intact habitat block, and larger species need to be considered.
 - 67 • Possible parking areas include (1) before the snow plow turnaround, (2) an area before
 68 the Forest Service road, and (3) an area before the 13% gradients. Two of the areas
 69 require crossing private land.
 - 70 • For the second and third possible parking areas, the plow route would have to be
 71 extended.
 - 72 • The steepest area for the plow to clear a new parking area would be 7%.
 - 73 • The least expensive option is a parking area before the plow turnaround, but the area
 74 allows for not more than a pull-over space.
 - 75 • No-build is an option but does not address safety issues.
 - 76 • An alternative is consideration of ways to deter motorists who do not plan to recreate on
 77 the Gap Road.
 - 78 • Another option is to clarify the road closure on the town website, outline penalties for
 79 crossing the closure signage, and designate alternate routes to get to Lincoln.
 - 80 • There was a question about whether Lincoln Emergency Response recommended not
 81 blockading the road in any fashion.
 - 82 • Dave Cavoretto suggested putting two piles of gravel in the road, which would not allow
 83 access to emergency vehicles except for four-wheeler vehicles.
 - 84 • Mr. Donabedian suggested that Dugway Road has signage indicating that cars on one
 85 side of the road will be towed. Lincoln, however, does not have a police department to
 86 enforce parking prohibitions.
 - 87 • The plow driver has experienced difficulties plowing when cars are parked on the Gap
 88 Road.
 - 89 • It was suggested that since most of the road is on GMNF land, the Forest Service should
 90 be requested to provide parking.
 - 91 • Next step is to meet with the town of Warren to discuss strategies and include GMNF

92 officials and adjacent landowners.

93 • A clause exists that releases landowners from liability for injuries incurred by recreation
94 users.

95 • Mr. Osborne commented that he has a contract to purchase land on the Gap Road and
96 asked about the possibility of constructing a driveway from the unplowed area to access
97 his land. He also offered to construct a parking area and plow turnaround on the land he
98 intends to purchase, closing to occur after the town approves year-round access to the
99 land.

100 • A question arose about who would shoulder the expense of additional plowing and
101 clearing an area for parking.

102 • The cost for every additional mile of plowing is estimated at \$6400 a year.

103 • Further study on the issues regarding the Gap Road will be reported after the first of the
104 year.

105

106 Dave Cavoretto gave the highway report.

107 • New road closed signs have been installed.

108 • Piles of gravel will work better than Jersey barriers.

109

110 MOTION by Paul Forlenza, second by Oakley Smith, to authorize the highway department to
111 put gravel piles where the plow turns around on the Gap Road. Discussion: Dave will arrange
112 with the Warren road crew to place gravel on the Warren side on the same day.

113 MOTION PASSED 4-0-1.

114

115 Dave Cavoretto presented a report on grader and truck replacement.

116 • The grader has almost 6,000 hours on it and needs new tires.

117 • The \$12,000 brake job has been ineffective because a hydraulic valve is malfunctioning.

118 • The current grader has a \$100,000 trade-in value.

119 • The budget allows \$22,000 for grader repairs and maintenance.

120 • The attachments on the existing grader can be used on the new grader.

121 • It was suggested to put the grader out for bid in order to give further consideration to
122 purchase of a new grader.

123 • Mr. Cavoretto has made several keys for the reconstructed Old Town shed.

124 • \$380 was spent for plow truck repairs.

125 • Terrastar truck needs front brake pads.

126

127 Bill Finger presented the letter from Telling & Associates, CPA, regarding audit of financial
128 statements of governmental activities, each major fund, and the aggregate remaining fund
129 information for the town.

130 • Frustration was expressed at the density of the prose in the letter.

131 • A Telling representative will be invited to the next meeting to explain the details of the
132 letter.

133

134 Oakley Smith presented check warrants.

135

136 MOTION by Oakley Smith, second by Bill Finger, to approve Payroll Account check warrant

137 18/25 in the amount of \$4,105.83 and Payroll Account check warrant 18/24 in the amount of
 138 \$3,495.64. Highlights: none.
 139 MOTION PASSED 4-0-1.

140

141 MOTION by Oakley Smith, second by Paul Forlenza, to approve Accounts Payable check
 142 warrant 18/41 in the amount of \$101,325.09. Highlights: All appropriations were paid as part of
 143 the check run. The Heffernan Brothers aggregate Atkins Road subcontract was paid. Other
 144 expenses include Freightliner parts, signs from Corrections, and health insurance.
 145 MOTION PASSED 4-0-1.

146

147 Capital Equipment Fund discussion:

- 148 • Questions continued about purchase of a \$380,000 grader.
- 149 • Due diligence was recommended regarding the purchase.

150

151 Paul Forlenza presented highlights of the budget report for General Fund Proposed FY 2019.

- 152 • Insurance liability has been included.
- 153 • Bookkeeper and Administrative Assistant have been combined for a total of 30 hours.
- 154 • Planning consultant costs have increased significantly.
- 155 • Highway Department costs have decreased because of eliminating one position.
- 156 • Equipment maintenance costs for FY18 are unusually high but should decrease in FY19.
- 157 • It was suggested that the road crew inventory all their current equipment.
- 158 • Several items in the budget need to be followed up and specified.
- 159 • It was suggested that the terms “garage” and “storage shed” be used instead of Old Town
 160 Shed.
- 161 • Highway projects have not been defined, and no moneys have been allocated for road
 162 improvements on Quaker Street and Gove Hill.
- 163 • When General Fund and Highway Fund are combined, the budget is slightly less than 1%
 164 from last year.
- 165 • Tax rate for General Fund of \$380,336 is 17 cents, up a cent from previous year’s
 166 approval.
- 167 • So far the FY19 budget is at level funding with refinements to be made.

168

169 It was decided to change January’s meetings to the second and fourth Tuesdays, January 9 and
 170 23.

171

172 Planning Commission met regarding the Town Plan.

- 173 • Planning Commission held a public hearing on December 7 regarding the Town Plan.
 174 There were no major changes considered.
- 175 • Several minor tweakings will be made by the PC, and the revised plan will be approved
 176 by the PC and sent forward to the Select Board for a second hearing and final approval.
- 177 • At the January 9 meeting, the Select Board will review the Town Plan.
- 178 • A public meeting will be warned to follow the next Select Board meeting and will be
 179 posted in the Addison Independent.

180

181 MOTION by Paul Forlenza, seconded by Will Sipsey, to schedule the hearing on the new Town

182 Plan for the regular Select Board meeting on January 9, to be advertised in the December 21
183 issue of the *Addison Independent*.

184 MOTION PASSED 4-0-1.

185

186 Paul Forlenza announced that he plans to run for reelection to the Select Board.

187

188 Regular meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

189

190 Respectfully submitted,

191 Ellie Bryant