

Town of Lincoln  
Selectboard Regular Meeting  
July 2, 2024

{Draft} Meeting Minutes

[https://us06web.zoom.us/rec/share/UIkMwn7bMgY191rGp66TzyCNuXdr0RXd8lNGNRpBnx0ZxoczNOVEo3VqKZCeT6l.bmcIbLcbX\\_6eR5qS](https://us06web.zoom.us/rec/share/UIkMwn7bMgY191rGp66TzyCNuXdr0RXd8lNGNRpBnx0ZxoczNOVEo3VqKZCeT6l.bmcIbLcbX_6eR5qS)

Vote format: YES/NO/Vacant, Absent, Abstention, Recusal

Called to order at 6:33 PM by Tim McGowan, Chair

Present: Tim McGowan, Joe Martell, Victor Atkins (Amanda Allen and Conor McDonough absent)

Other town officials present: Kristyn Brady, Selectboard Assistant; Van Talmage, Treasurer; Lisa Nading, Conservation Commission

Guests: Chris Mattrick, U.S. Forest Service District Ranger

Public present: Peter Kamitses, Amy Masefield (Zoom), Gregor Masefield (Zoom), Chris Johnson (Zoom)

Public Comment

Agenda

**MOTION** by Tim, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Joe to approve the agenda with the following changes: Add the appointment of a 250th Anniversary Liaison to Appointments & Employment; remove approval of payroll warrant; remove executive session.

**PASSED** 3/0/2 (absent)

Updates and Reports

Forest Service Partnership Update

- Chris Mattrick introduced himself and described the grant agreement between Lincoln and the Forest Service to improve the Lincoln Gap parking area. The latest update is that plans will be made available in August. Project costs have gone up, so the plan will be designed in phases, with pressing safety issues taken care of first before the current \$160,000 grant times out. This was Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funding. The town will award the contract and submit the invoices to the USFS to pay the contractor. The Forest Service will conduct the bid, the town will choose a contractor, and the Service can advise.
- Chris gave some history on certain Class 4 roads that previous Boards have said they might declassify so the Forest Service can take over maintenance. The benefit would be that federal dollars would then be able to go toward road improvements. Victor expressed concerns about the impact on surrounding landowners. Chris said there is no pressure but if the town was ever interested in turning roads over, they would be interested in a conversation. The USFS can't do the road improvements unless it's their road.

- Chris would like to work with the town to collaboratively deal with illegal dumping at the Cobb Hill pit. Some have suggested moving the gate, but the USFS can't gate a town road – there would need to be a public process. There was discussion of putting culvert fill in somewhere to limit access to anyone but walk-in target shooters. Over five years ago, the Forest Service and state fish and game department looked at putting an official shooting range there but backed off after feedback from local residents about potential noise and traffic.
- Chris shared that the Cobb Hill pit was created in the 1980s to extract gravel, and based on some resident feedback, Chris went back and double-checked that the town did, in fact, close out the permit appropriately.
- Chris asked about the old wooden National Forest signs in town – other towns have removed theirs, but if the town sees value in them Chris might look into replacing them. Decommissioned signs that aren't completely rotten can be donated to the historical society, but not auctioned off. The Board will put discussion on a future agenda and get back to Chris.
- Van Talmage confirmed that the federal Payment in Lieu of Taxes payment for \$36,663 did come in for the 10,951 acres of Forest Service land in Lincoln that can't be taxed.
- Chris shared that Forest Service law enforcement keeps tabs on campers to ensure no one is staying beyond the 14-day limit.
- Tim publicly thanked Chris for the recent cleanup at the Cobb pit.

#### Conservation Commission Update

- Lisa Nading outlined the plan for the commission's first-ever Perennial Pollinator Party, scheduled for Saturday July 27, 2024, from 10-12, with a rain date of August 4, 2024. She was seeking official permission from the Selectboard to hold the event in front of the pollinator garden at Town Office and to create a chalk mural in the parking lot. There will be an educational speaker and activities for kids. All agreed that it sounds like a fun event.
- The commission is also talking about having gardening supplies for kids available to be checked out at the Lincoln Library.
- Lisa also shared the commission's desire to put up a mini-library box in the pollinator garden to attract more community gathering. They would use the mini-library to house pamphlets about the plants in the garden and why they are beneficial for pollinator species, like bees and butterflies.
- Someone has offered to donate a bird bath for the pollinator garden, as well. It would need to be placed carefully, keeping in mind the snow that piles up there in the winter.
- Tim asked about the commission's role at Willard's Woods and shared the feedback from a town resident that the gate there is not accessible for a mobility scooter. There is a provision from the land donation that motorized vehicle use is prohibited, but motorized wheelchairs shouldn't be categorized that way. Lisa said the commission will look into the options for replacing or adapting the gate to make this public land resource more accessible to all.
- Decisions related to this update will be warned and voted on in the next meeting.

#### Highway Update

- Will and Wayne have been grading and ditching.
- The Highway Department has switched hay vendors to save money – from \$5/bale to \$3/bale.
- Few applications have come in for the highway maintenance worker job. Joe spoke to Bob Munson, a past highway department employee, about being a backup for winter plowing. Tim thought that he would need to apply for the job. The new Town Administrator may have thoughts on the appropriate process.
- Tim and Joe will work on the highway department uniforms with the Cintas rep.
- The grant-funded Gove Hill ditching project starts next week, and we still don't have any flaggers. Victor asked if we could put signs up ahead of time and warn that the road would be

close to through traffic for the week. Joe will ask Wayne how far ahead of time we'd need to post signs.

- Joe would like to be notified at the same time as Will when there are right-of-way permits or driveway permits that need to be reviewed by the Highway Supervisor.

#### Treasurer Update

- PILT money came in. Van will close the books on fiscal year 2024 with Assistant Treasurer Larry Masterson sometime next week.
- There will be about a \$140,000 surplus in the general fund – this is mostly from the \$46,000 in ARPA funding that went toward employee retention, no Town Administrator hired as budgeted last year, a months-long vacancy in the Selectboard Assistant role, and lower legal fees than budgeted. There will also be a surplus of approximately \$40,000 in the highway fund. Plans for these surpluses will be discussed in a future meeting.
- The state has set the education tax rate. Next, NEMRC distributes the tax rates for the property tax bills. Kristyn will put setting the homestead and non-homestead rates on the agenda for the July 16 meeting, and if they're not ready, the Selectboard will set the rate on August 6.

#### Selectboard Assistant Update - emailed to the Board after the meeting

- Badges for the constables have been ordered and will come in after 6 weeks.
- Kristyn initiated a contract for the Highway Supervisor's phone and wireless plan.
- Kristyn followed up with Green Mountain Access to secure the email permissions that IT-contractor VC3 needs to begin the Microsoft 365 installation project.
- With support from Bill Finger on what traffic signs were needed, Kristyn placed an order for signs to help complete the Highway Safety Improvement Program grant deliverables, make updates related to the 2023 traffic ordinance, and conduct general maintenance. The HSIP grant will pay for almost half the cost.
- Kristyn worked with bookkeeper Ashley Smith to ensure that the cost of living increase and health insurance contribution rate increase passed by the Selectboard were reflected in the first payroll of the new fiscal year.
- Kristyn completed website updates required to comply with the Open Meeting Law amendment (Act 133) passed by the legislature.

#### Current Business and Authorizations

##### Right-of-Way Work Permit

- Peter Kamitses applied for a right-of-way work permit to improve conditions on Green Road North, a Class 4 road not maintained by the Highway Department. Previously installed waterbars would be replaced with culverts on the hill leading up to the property owned by Kamitses and Jovial King. The work would be done by Chris Acker of Acker Excavating in Bristol, who supplied a certificate of liability insurance with the town listed as an additional insured. Highway Supervisor Will Mathis reviewed the application and proposed work area.
- Waterbars were working well for four years, but last summer's storms broke them down and it's back to the state it was in before the work was done. The Class 3 section of the road was also affected and fixed.
- Neighbors were not notified of the application directly but saw the meeting warned on Front Porch Forum. Amy, Gregor, and Chris were able to join via Zoom to provide feedback.
- Gregor was concerned that going beyond waterbars, a Class 4 solution, changes the character of the road. He and Amy would like to see studies to ensure it is done right. Peter and the Board agreed. Peter asked if a culvert of a similar diameter as the waterbars would change the volume of water all that much. Gregor responded that the volume coming off the hill would be substantial

and they wouldn't feel comfortable moving forward with culverts without environmental review and engineering. He would be happy with waterbars, which Chris Acker has tons of experience installing.

**MOTION** by Tim, 2nd by Joe to conduct a site visit with neighbors formally invited ahead of a final decision on the right-of-way work permit for Green Road North.

- Gregor shared that Alan Huizenga from Green Mountain Engineering is familiar with the issue and might be helpful. [It was confirmed that this company has closed its doors.]
- Chris will be out of town July 11-25, so Kristyn will propose site visit dates/times after that.
- Chris also shared that there will be a fair amount of ditching on his side of the road, so he also just wants to make sure it's done right.

**PASSED** 3/0/2

#### Trailer Endorsement

- Will Mathis needs to apply and test for a trailer endorsement on his commercial driver's license in order to be most effective in his role.

**MOTION** by Tim, 2nd by Joe to approve the cost of the trailer endorsement for Highway Supervisor Will Mathis.

**PASSED** 3/0/2

#### Access Permit #24-046

- Applicant: Allison Graham
- Physical location: 259 County Road
- Description: Access to 1.54-acre property and building site.

**MOTION** by Tim, 2nd by Victor to approve Access Permit #24-046.

**PASSED** 3/0/2

#### Accounts Payable Warrant

**MOTION** by Tim, 2nd by Joe to approve **AP 25-01 for \$24,272.59.**

Includes \$10,650 to Sargents Tree Service for storm cleanup; \$5,310 for calcium chloride; and \$4,425 for fuel.

**PASSED** 3/0/2

#### Previous Meeting Minutes

Approval of previous meeting minutes was tabled, given that Tim McGowan would need to abstain, leaving a lack of a quorum.

#### New Business

- Discussion of a plan for using the general fund surplus was tabled until Conor and Amanda can join.
- There was discussion of the Board's top priorities for the Town Administrator when she starts on July 22. Tim said that human resources and hiring is his top priority for Trish, then getting her arms around our accounting processes. The remainder of the discussion was tabled until Conor and Amanda can join.

- Tim shared that Brian Bates would like to have a 5K run/walk through Willard's Woods and the town to raise money for Lincoln Sports. Tim will bring this up when the Conservation Commission comes in to present on July 16.
- Joe will talk to Jim Brown about his complaint that the road is encroaching on their leach field.

### Appointments & Employment

#### 250th Anniversary Liaison

**MOTION** by Tim, 2nd by Joe to appoint Lucinda Cockrell as Lincoln's liaison to the Vermont 250th Anniversary Commission.

**PASSED** 3/0/2

#### Hiring

- Van Talmage has submitted his letter of resignation and will depart his role as Town Treasurer in August.
- Tim would like to have Trish Waugh involved in the hiring process for Town Treasurer, a PT assessor, and a new auditing firm. In the meantime, there can be some research done on what firms other towns are using. Tim will call Monkton and Starksboro. Kristyn will look at town reports for firms that have been used.

**MOTION** by Tim, 2nd by Joe to adjourn.

**PASSED** 3/0/2

Respectfully submitted: Kristyn Brady