

**Town of Boscawen
Circle Committee
MEETING MINUTES
Monday, August 10, 2020 at 7:00 PM**

Members Present: John Keegan, Chairman, Jeff Abbe, Julie Fournier, Beverly Drouin
Others Present: Paul Dickey, Select Board Member and Kearsten O'Brien, Technical Assistant

Chair Keegan opened the public meeting at 7:00 P.M.

Chair Keegan read off the Covid-19 Public Meeting Notice of Telephonic Meetings, which reads as follows: In light of the state of emergency declared by the Governor on March 13, 2020, and to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, the chair has determined that an emergency exists and that accordingly, until further notice, (a) members of the board may attend all board meetings telephonically, without the physical presence of a quorum; and (b) members of the public who wish to participate in hearings may, on request, participate telephonically or submit comments in writing to be included in the record of the hearing.

Old Business:

Review of July 6, 2020 Minutes: Accepted as written. Ms. Fournier made the motion and Ms. Drouin seconds. All in favor, the motion passes.

New Business:

Discuss Funding Challenges: Chair Keegan updated the outcomes of the proposals submitted to date. Pete & Gerry's only approved \$500 due to their major focus on egg distribution to food banks and food pantries. Mr. Fortier, of Pete & Gerry's, suggested following-up with local food pantries and Merrimack County Conservation District (MCCD) to ensure local food pantries regularly receive eggs. Contacts have made.

Franklin Savings Bank (FSB) rejected our proposal. Chair Keegan called Renee Baldini, FSB's Program Administrator, who did not provide much detail about the review process. She suggested contacting the Bank's Community Support Program for funding support. This resulted in the \$2,000 donation.

Update on water related issues: There is an outstanding issue concerning holding the Town harmless for project related excavation. The manner in which we proceed will have to be determined by the Select Board. Chair Keegan will attend their August 13th meeting to discuss the matter. Members raised several questions about the nature of the water related costs. Essentially, the costs are for materials. The Precinct, in addition to no cost water, is donating \$2,300 towards installation materials and fees. The project has to cover \$1,200 dollars of materials related to connecting to the Precinct much as a home owner would. The remaining materials, pipe, tracer wire, trencher rental, valves and connectors, irrigation heads, etc. amount to \$8.800 in the current budget. Reductions might be realized working with MCCD.

Update on discussion with NHDOT: Chair Keegan reviewed the contents of his 8/4/20 email to Alan Hardy copied to committee members. Briefly, the route for the irrigation line is approved and must be buried at least 24” with a tracer line above. The Town will own the line. The town will apply to NHDOT for an excavation permit, post a \$10,000 bond and identify Thomson Lawn Care as the subcontractor installing the line and irrigation system. The stone walls are approved as requested. The center of the circle can have either an American Flag or the cluster of dwarf trees.

Funding, outreach and project phasing discussion: Discussion followed concerning the choice between flag and vegetation. Related to these choices cost became the focus. Most favored the flag but concern about upfront costs and maintenance tempered their thinking. Members observed that, to date, fundraising has yielded only a fraction of the money requested to implement the current work plan. Given this, we have to consider reducing our plan and/or phasing our work based on the money available. Concurrently, the Town is facing budget short falls. For example, the \$500 from the beautification fund is not available in 2020. Funds available are: FSB’s \$2,000, Pete & Jerry’s \$500, Woodbury Fund’s \$1,000 totaling \$3,500 with another \$500 possible from the Agricultural Commission. In addition, Chair Keegan has been contacted about a possible \$4,000 donation from a Concord source. Here the discussion moved to how best to phase the project in doable steps with the funds in hand. The stone walls might be doable with an additional \$4,000 donation. Completing the walls would show the public progress and could build enthusiasm to complete the project in small ‘bites’ over a longer timeframe. The next phase might be the flag, or the center planting and so on as funds permit. Concurrently, the Committee could produce pictures and stories for social media, news vines, newspapers and other media outlets. A specific idea is creating two sketches one of the completed circle. One with the flagpole at the center and another of the planting in the center. People would be asked to choose their preferred design more or less following the model of the Conservation Commission with their naming of the town forest.

Discussion turned to how best reach a broad audience with our fund raising. People have a broad array of options for managing their money. Traditional methods such as cash, and checks have been joined by credit cards and a range of electronic options. The Town currently receives cash, checks and possibly credit cards. Mr. Dickey will clarify the credit card acceptance, or not, with Mr. Hardy. Questions about an array of electronic pay options were raised, including ‘Go Fund Me’. One member recalled an earlier attempt to use ‘Go Fund Me’ with a Community Garden donation that was unsuccessful. In addition, the Town, based on Municipal Association advice, does not work with ‘Go Fund Me’.

Mr. Dickey asked that Chair Keegan attend the Select Board meeting on August 13th to update all the Select Board members on the changes discussed in the project’s time line and finances as the Select Board considers future plans. These changes could extend the project beyond the September 2021 completion target date and/or necessitate scaling back the work.

The member work plan for the next month is:

- Ms. Fournier and Mr. Keegan will work on fund raising.
- Ms. Drouin will contact Wes Neibling to ask if he has time to build the 3 walls before snow flies. She will explain our current financial limitations. Also, communicate that NHDOT terminates their projects by November 15th. We are on a state right-of-way so those rules will apply to this project. Ms. Drouin will also contact the town treasurer to better understand a range/limitations of funding models like 'Go Fund Me'.
- Mr. Abbe will contact Angela Swayers to ask if she would sketch two versions for the circle, one with the flag at the center and another with vegetation at the center. Ms. Drouin's working sketch will help guide her work.

Next Meeting: September 21.2020 @ 7:00pm

Adjournment: Motion to adjourn by Ms. Fournier; seconded by Mr. Abbe. All in favor. None opposed.