

**APPROVED MINUTES
TOWN OF RYEGATE
PO BOX 332
RYEGATE, VERMONT 05042**

SELECT BOARD MINUTES

April 12, 2021

By Zoom & Phone

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Chairman Darryl Perkins. Other members present by Zoom: Steven Crandall and Darryl Perkins *Andrew Smith.* Also present by Zoom: Elizabeth Page, Cheryl Slayton, Patricia Crocker, Nelson Elder, Richard Fraser, Peter Musty, Lou Brugliera, Gerry Esposito Jr., Michael McLellan, Allana Page, Marsha Nelson and by Phone: William Hetu.

Minutes of the March 22nd meeting were read and approved on a motion from Steve seconded by Andy after “troll arms” were corrected to “control arms” are being replaced on a road crew vehicle.

Public Comment was delayed until all who wished to attend the meeting were “present.”

Treasurer’s Report: Cheryl reported that both Darryl and Andy had viewed the bills and signed the orders during the afternoon. Neither saw questions or concerns for her. The Clerk of the Board has received notice that the Zoom Program dues will be automatically renewed unless the Town opts out of continuing with the program. The Board directed the Clerk to renew it for a fee of \$158.89.

Road Report: Nelson has contacted five more plumbers about installing a tank less water heater and only one responded. The crew has been stinging the roads with the grader. The grant from NVDA may *will* be used to fix up Blue Mountain Road formerly known as Cochran Drive.

Nelson will be meeting with Doug Morton. Summer culverts are ordered. McCullough Crushing is open as of today. Nelson talked about paving money and how best to use it. He discussed paving plans in some depth. The plans are for East Road and a 550 foot dog leg up Symes Pond Road, a section starting at the Town Office continuing south to just past Home Acres Farm if there is grant assistance. Andy asked if the Town can use Covid funds where would it pave. Nelson replied Steele Hill to Chief’s four corners to the western side of Witherspoon. There is also an area on Cowie Hill to Hall Road that needs repair.

Several minutes of discussion were held on the Meader Trail. Carl Bayer asked the Select Board to mark the trail. He has tried to walk there but the Franklins want him to go a different way. He said the Franklins may be right but he would like to know for sure. Carl said he can’t go

back. Andy said if it's necessary to know exactly where the trail is, it may be necessary to hire a surveyor. Peter Musty believes the Select Board said they would put up a sign designating the Meader Road and he received a letter from the Board specifying Meader Trail is the same all the way through to Bayley-Hazen from the Hall Road, the only difference being that designated by the State that goes through the Franklin's as Untraveled. Musty said lots of roads in Ryegate are classified as untraveled but the Town has worked on them and people live on them. That trail accesses his property Peter said. A lot of people have tried to go through that trail and have been confronted. He feels the Town has mis-represented the trail and his right of way. He thinks the Select Board needs to have it surveyed and may eventually have Covid funding to do so. The Board needs to send someone out to see why there is so much controversy and confrontation of people going on. Other people were present to tell of confrontations they have encountered while trying to use the trail. Michael McLellan was confronted. Peter's friends and family have been kept from accessing his right of way. There are pictures of a rock being thrown at Peter on his land. Jerry Esposito Jr was approached aggressively twice by a person at the end of the road. He suggested it be surveyed. Lou Brugliera described his concern over the aggression against Peter. Lou used to always walk on the trail to see wildlife and turtles but he won't go there now. Peter is being blocked from using his 60 foot right of way so he needs an alternative. He bought the land at a tax sale when Gene Perkins was the Moderator and announced that access to the land went with the tax sale. Peter feels a promise made to him wasn't kept to change and correct the situation. Darryl asked Peter if the town hired a surveyor what did he expect concerning repair of the road. Peter expects a culvert to be replaced but hasn't requested any other repair. Peter could haul some gravel. McLellan offered to organize a work group to clear a path for walking. Andy said most town roads are not surveyed but it might be appropriate to get a surveyor to help figure it out. There would be no guarantee of travel ability. After some further discussion on gates being allowed on trails but not being locked, Andy moved to hire a surveyor who is knowledgeable and to send along a sheriff to travel and inspect the unused portion of the western end of Meader Road. Steve asked for safety precautions and seconded the motion that carried by a voice vote from all three Select Board members. Andy will contact a surveyor. The Town will notify landowners that the Town is hiring a surveyor and the information will be open to the public. Peter wants it in writing that when/if he sells his property the new owners need to know that the road can be improved.

At the Town Office in the afternoon Darryl, as Select Board Chairman, signed the LEMP Emergency Plan, the Vermont State Police Contract for the year and the Caledonia County Sheriff Contract.

It was reported that the potential buyer for 1276 Creamery Road passed for now. There have been two workdays planned for there : April 9th and April 17th. The Fire Marshall is willing to gut it into a shell and use it for training but that doesn't appeal to the Town Aesthetics. Andy thinks a possible plan could be to clean it up and offer it for sale and if the town can't get a buyer it may have to be demolished. The lot could be sold at a good price with electric, water and sewer available.

Liz reported Green Up Bags are available at the office, as are pinwheels preventing child abuse to put around town. She is not charging a late fee on dogs until after April 15th and is considering sending out letters. There will be a tax sale at the office on the 25th of May at 2:00 PM with more information to follow. The two properties are under: Hope Koski and Marshall Laundry and Tina Germain.

Public Comment: It was decided to continue Select Board meetings on Zoom in May. Steve thinks it's best to wait awhile as Covid is still hovering in Ryegate. Andy may have some problem getting to the office in the afternoon to view bills. It was decided to keep the status quo of lawn mowing for various town lawns as the Board is happy with last year's contractors.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 pm on a motion from Steve seconded by Andy that carried. The meeting was signed off to the welcoming sound of peepers.

Marsha Nelson, Clerk for the Select Board