

NAPPROVED MINUTES
TOWN OF RYEGATE
PO BOX 332
RYEGATE, VERMONT 05042

SELECT BOARD MINUTES

June 12, 2023

Town Office & Zoom

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Chairman Andrew Smith. Other members present: Regina Hazel and Darryl Perkins. Also present: Nigel Friend-Pike Industries, Tim Cramer-Blacktop, EJ Blondie-Hutchinson Inc, Richard Colby, Dan LaCoss, Jerry Esposito, William Elder, Lauren & Andrew Nelson, William & Jennifer Nelson, Matthew Troiano, Marsha & Fremont Nelson, Steve Genereaux, Darcy Nelson, Cindy & John De Santis, Bruce Beauvais, Werner & Waltraud Schmidt, Nancy Perkins, Carl Bayer, David Punt, Sheila Smith, Jeffrey Haslett, Dan & Linda Leonard, Tyler Pokinos, Alison Low, Cheryl Slayton, Nelson Elder and Elizabeth Page. Zoom: None

Minutes of May 22, 2023 were reviewed. Darryl moved to approve the minutes with the addition of “magnesium” chloride in the Road Report, Regina seconded the motion and it carried.

Public Comment and Possible Additions to the Agenda:

-Letter of support for NEK Broadband

-David Punt requested the Recycling bulk waste price increase be posted on the Town website and Post Offices.

Regina moved to add the addition to the Agenda, Darryl seconded the motion and it carried.

Bid opening for Paving Stone Rd & Groton/Peacham Rd:

The Board received 3 sealed bids for the 2 paving projects.

Blacktop, Inc. Groton/Peacham Rd-1400 tons at \$91.49=\$133,864.64
Stone Rd, Hall Rd & Cowie Hill-1410 tons at \$91.49=\$129,635.40

J. Hutchinson, Inc Groton/Peacham Rd-1400 tons at \$85.70=\$124,779.20
Stone Rd, Hall Rd & Cowie Hill-1410 tons at \$85.70=\$120,837.00

Pike Industries, Inc. Groton/Peacham Rd-1456 tons at \$82.89=\$120,687.84
Stone Rd, Hall Rd & Cowie Hill-1410 tons at \$82.89=\$116,874.90

Darryl moved to accept the bid from Pike Industries, Inc for the 2 paving projects, Regina seconded the motion and it carried.

Chairman Andrew Smith recessed the Select Board meeting for the Public Hearing-Solar Siting Amendment to the Town Plan. Andy stated the Board is here to listen to the community's comments and concerns. 26 members of the community were present.

The Public Hearing began with a statement read by John De Santis which included 5 points:

- (1) A large-scale installation should be limited to Rt. 5 and Rt. 302 corridors and large farms.
- (2) Any solar array should be subject to local permits.
- (3) The scenic viewsheds should be extended to include an approximately 1-2 mile radius around Ryegate Corner.
- (4) Agricultural land should be defined more precisely.
- (5) Much weight should be given to abutting and nearby neighbors' concerns and objections.

Regina Hazel responded by explaining that items 2 & 5 are not the purview of the local municipality but solely governed by the PUC. (Section 248 of Act 174).

Several community members stated a need for transparency.

David Punt wanted the Town website to list solar projects as they are approved.

Jeffrey Haslett wanted more transparency to the process.

Cindy De Santis felt an expansion of view sheds to include from Ryegate Corners to Dickey Drive was important.

Carl Bayer stated that 150kw projects placed in single phase power areas can be changed to 3 phase. The PUC would have to approve.

Questions were answered by Regina Hazel and Alison Low of NVDA. NVDA has reviewed the amendment with the Regional Plan, and it meets the standards.

It was reiterated that the entire purpose of the Amendment is to achieve "substantial deference" with the PUC; in other words, "a seat at the table". The large map of the view sheds was reviewed by the attendees.

Select Board Chairman Andrew Smith reconvened the Select Board meeting.

Rural Infrastructure Assistance Program-Alison Low/NVDA

Alison Low provided information about a grant program that would provide expanded technical and administrative services to municipalities that might have certain needs. Andy suggested the possibility of using the grant for an engineering study for the Town Geothermal project. After discussion, Alison will look into it.

Treasurer Report: The Board reviewed bills and signed orders.

Road Report: Nelson stated that culverts will need to be replaced before paving begins. The Hwy crew has started to haul winter sand as time permits. They have been grading roads as weather permits. All paved roadsides have been mowed; the mower has been returned to Danville. The remaining roadsides will be mowed later this summer. The Town received the grant for the Whitehill culvert project. Bruce Boyce is recovering from knee surgery; he is hoping to return to work soon. The Board suggested they receive a doctor's note clearing him to return to work.

FOR ACTION:

Recycling Discussion, Possible Action and Sticker Proofs:

The bulk waste price increase will be posted in the Post Offices and on the Town website. Recycling Stickers were discussed and reviewed. A decision will be made at the next meeting. The free stickers will be mailed with the tax bills to all Ryegate and Groton property owners. Others in adjoining towns may purchase stickers at the Town Clerks' Offices.

The Connecticut River Joint Commission nomination form was signed; Sally Wilson was appointed by the Board at the Organizational meeting in March.

The MERP mini grant was signed.

The Class 4 and Trails Policy will be on the agenda for the next meeting.

Public Comment: None

Regina moved to proceed into Executive Session as requested by William Elder- Zoning Administrator for a personnel discussion, Andy seconded the motion and it carried at 9:30 PM

At 9:45 PM the executive session concluded. The Board thanked William Elder for his 9 years of service to Ryegate as Zoning Administrator and accepted his resignation/retirement.

There being no further business, Darryl moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:45 PM, Regina seconded the motion.

Elizabeth Page, Clerk for the Board