

Village of Derby Line, Vermont
Trustees Meeting
December 5, 2023
Derby Line Village Hall

Call to Order:

Present were Trustees Richard Creaser, Dustin Horne, and Sarah Webster.

Also, present were Karen Jenne, Frank Davis, Charles Gross, Ed Barber, Troy Rabideau, Hilda Perez, Colleen Sealander, Road Foreman Jaret Judd, Madeleine Roy, Village Clerk and Laurie Sanville, Assistant Clerk.

The meeting was called to order by Trustee Richard Creaser at 6:07 pm.

Additions or Deletions to the agenda:

- Safety Officer Duties
- Contract with Conley Country for 34 Ducharme Drive
- East Engineering Agreement for Caswell Ave Project

Sarah made a motion to waive the reading of Rules of Procedure. Dustin seconded. Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes of the Nov. 21, 2023 Regular Trustees Meeting:

Sarah made a motion to accept the minutes of the Nov. 21, 2023 meeting as presented. Dustin seconded. Motion carried.

Customs & Border Protection (CBP) Update:

Troy Rabideau clarified that he is Port Director and that Todd Philabaum is Port Supervisor. He went on to discuss any concerns that the Trustees might have with Customs. Discussed were the placement of cones in the non-winter months on Main Street where cars are entering the U.S. from Canada. Rabideau explained that this was mainly to keep traffic out of the intersection, but he did agree that that area, especially parking spaces and the sidewalk, are village property and can be used for parking. He also confirmed that the three properties recently acquired by the government (blue apt building, Caswell's store, and Brown's Drug Store) are scheduled to be torn down with traffic from Canada to be re-directed further back on that property. Prior to demolition the government is planning to erect a fence around these buildings for safety concerns. Jaret mentioned to him that any road work to be done after demolition should be considered as part of the village's Main Street re-paving in 2025. Richard Creaser and Frank Davis made it clear that the village has lost significant tax revenue since the government's acquisition of the three properties mentioned above. Another concern voiced was the ease, or lack thereof, of mutual aid agencies from both sides of the border being able to cross the border at times of a fire or medical emergency when the gates are closed and locked. Rabideau confirmed that the gates can be opened by Customs officials, or mutual aid agencies can simply cut the chain if needed. Sarah Webster noted that one of the biggest concerns the Trustees have had is the lack of communication with CBP. Rabideau agreed to advise Todd Philabaum to call the village with any decisions/changes (temporary or permanent) that will be made. He also agreed to keep the village apprised of what and when will be happening with the three properties on Main Street. Rabideau agreed to Jaret Judd's request that the locked gates at the border be opened early on days when plowing needs to be done. Regarding the loss of tax revenue, Frank Davis advised everyone that he has again been in contact with our Congressional delegation and they have agreed to pursue legislation that will require Homeland Security to pay entities, such as the Village of Derby Line, for the loss of tax revenue on their purchased properties.

Mutual Aid Agreement:

Equipment costs have been acquired and entered into the Agreement. Laurie was advised to revise the labor costs by removing the health insurance and related benefits. This agreement will be approved at the next Trustees meeting after which they will be presented to the Towns of Derby and Holland for their approval.

Park & Recreation – Employee Time and Maintenance Expenses:

Jaret suggested that the available funds in the park trust fund be used, for example, toward purchasing bark mulch for the playground, new benches and picnic tables, upgrades of the tennis courts, but not for general labor and maintenance expenses. This would help in keeping taxes down for the residents. Richard noted that these types of expenses should still be entered into the village budget to be offset by trust funds. Dustin mentioned that another grant up to \$100,000 may be available in January for such things as park benches, tables, etc.

Safety Officer Duties:

A draft of the Safety Officer Duties was presented by Richard. He noted that this in no way means that a safety officer will be hired and that any additional payroll will result. Jaret stated that he had been in contact with the City of Newport and the Town of Derby about such a position. Newport has one and it apparently doesn't work well. Derby does not have a safety officer. They simply have regular safety meetings held by the town road foreman with employees and that it works fine. They rely on VLCT for a list of trainings. Colleen Sealander objected to the creation of the safety officer position because Jaret's management skills are excellent, and we should all be able to rely on him to keep the village in compliance. Sarah noted that the trustees' thought was to meet problems before they occur. Jaret predicted that this would end up costing the village more money when inspections are done and issues found that are grandfathered in and don't really need to be changed or updated. This issue was tabled.

Conley Country Listing Contract for Old Village Garage on Ducharme Drive:

After reviewing the contract provided by Michael Conley, Sarah made a motion to authorize the Trustees to enter into and sign the contract with a sale price of \$25,000 on the old village garage at 34 Ducharme Drive. Dustin seconded. Motion carried.

East Engineering Agreement for Caswell Ave Retaining Wall Project;

The proposal from East Engineering shows their costs as \$8,000 for design, \$2,500 for bid phase, and \$5,000 for construction phase, for a total of \$15,500 plus \$125 per hour for right of way/easements if/as needed. This project is scheduled to be completed in conjunction with the repaving of Caswell Ave and Main Street in 2025 as per Jaret's discussions with VTrans. The plan design has been received from our lawyer and sent to the property owner for review. Jaret noted again that the retaining wall will be built in the village's right of way and that the easement is needed only for the purpose of getting equipment there to do the work.

Sarah made a motion to enter into a contract with East Engineering for engineering the Caswell Avenue retaining wall project as per their proposal. Dustin seconded. Motion carried.

Business from Trustees, Treasurer and Road Foreman:

Water and Sewer: Jaret noted that he had met with Stanstead's employee regarding monitoring of the level of water in the reservoir. Stanstead is also concerned about the amount of water going into the treatment plant as it appears they have triple the amount of water flowing as Derby Line has. They want to view our meter station. They may have to put a camera through the pipes going across the Tomifobia River to determine where the water is coming from.

Dodge Truck: Jaret noted that they've had significant problems dealing with Northpoint and repairs have been very expensive. Still, there are issues with the truck. He recommends that the next truck bought by the village not be diesel. There are now gas-powered trucks that are powerful enough to take care of the type of work done by the village. Dustin suggested, even though there is still an outstanding loan on this vehicle, Jaret should get a trade-in value to see if it would be worth trading at this time.

Plowing of New Skating Rink: Dustin stated that as soon as the new rink system is received, he will check the width of the entrance doors to determine what size snowblower can be used to clear the snow from the rink.

New Business from the Audience:

Karen Jenne noted that the posting for the Clerk job is not correct and needs to be revised. Richard accepted her suggestions and took them under advisement.

Old business from the Audience (5-minute limit unless otherwise directed): None

Next Meeting: The next regular meeting will be on December 19, 2023, in the village hall at 6:30 p.m.

Review and Sign Bank Statement: Yes

Warrants were Reviewed and Signed: Yes

The Last Check Printed: #18255

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Madeleine C. Roy, Assistant Village Clerk