

Town Council Meeting

October 24, 2023

Open Town Council Meeting: Council Chair Mark Ketch opened the Town Council Meeting. All members were present except for Councilor Hatch who was excused. Also present was Town Manager Melissa Doane.

Rocky Mountain Trail Riders – Route 178 ATV Access: Bradley resident David Soucier and other members of the Rocky Mountain Trail Riders Club were in attendance to present a proposal to the Town Council. They would like to have ATV access from Bullen Street in Bradley to Pleasant Street in Milford for the sole purpose of allowing Bradley's residents to have access to the ATV trails without having to load their ATVs on trailers. Soucier, club president Vinal Applebee as well as Manager Doane have unofficially spoken to a member from DOT and they do not see an issue with the open access. What is needed essentially is a blessing from both municipalities, Bradley and Milford, that can be attached to the request form that will need to be given to Brian Bronson, Director of the ATV Department for Department of Parks and Land. They are the only ones that can officially submit a request to the DOT for the ATV access to be approved. Councilor Lugdon asked what the speed limit would be on the roadway. Soucier responded that in Town the speed limit would be 15 mph and the operator of the ATV must drive on the shoulders going in the same direction as traffic. Councilor Lugdon questioned who would be responsible to police them. Soucier replied that he does not believe there would be anyone in particular, but mainly it would be based on complaints which would then be handed over to the Warden service. Councilor Ketch wanted to clarify that the stretch of the road that they would like to have ATV access on is 1.1 miles long, which is correct. Manager Doane also provided a map to the Town Council Members. Councilor Lugdon asked if with other alternative routes, if any studies had been done to allow travel up the powerlines. Soucier did state that they had looked into it in the past, however, that is not an option. Landowners are not willing to participate in allowing ATV access along the powerlines. Councilor Lugdon questioned if the Club had intentions to put out the signage that would be involved for anyone that was using the ATV access points. Soucier stated that all signage would be covered by the Club. Councilor Lugdon also asked if the access is only to get from point A to point B. Mr. Soucier responded by saying the sole purpose is to get Bradley's residents specifically to the trails without having them load their ATV on a trailer and drive a couple of minutes to the County Road Market, just to unload them to get on the trails. Councilor Lugdon asked who had been interacting with the DOT. Soucier stated he called DOT himself which sparked the idea. When he spoke to DOT, they informed him they had to get the form from Brian Bronson. He received an email from Brian that included the packet and forms he needed. Missy, Vinal and David have been working on it since. Town Manager Melissa Doane added that she had met with the Maine DOT Traffic Engineer herself, and received the unofficial response that there should be no issues moving forward. Resident Brian Wilcox asked if anything

ever came from contact with a Bradley Resident who owns a piece of land on Great Works Stream. Manager Doane stated that she did send out a letter, however, no communication was received back. Wilcox asked if the Town would consider eminent domain on the small portion. The small piece of property would be great multi-use land if an easement was provided. Councilor Wade made motion to endorse the request to open the road to ATV use and the submission to DOT, seconded by Councilor Clemons. Vote 4/0.

Review of Minutes: Councilor Ketch made a motion to approve the minutes of 10/10/2023, seconded by Councilor Wade. Vote 4/0.

Citizens Request: None

Manager's Report: Melissa stated that the Assessing Agent Mark Gibson will be coming to the November 7, 2023 Town Council meeting to discuss re-evaluation options.

The Municipal Review Committee Board of Directors' election ballot is ready. Melissa requested a motion to have the Town Council vote for her. Motion made by Councilor Wade to vote for Melissa Doane for a Board seat, seconded by Councilor Clemons. Vote 4/0.

Melissa provided a draft updated foreclosure policy to the Town Council. This policy adapts the current foreclosure policy to comply with a new law. The new law provides an opportunity for the former owner to require that a sale be done by virtue of a real estate broker and any excess funds be returned to them. Melissa explained as cited in the policy a previous owner who neglected to pay real estate taxes for 3 years will be given an additional 90 days to pay all real estate taxes in full to redeem the property or to provide a written demand to request an alternative sale process. If the sale is successful through a real estate broker (who would price the home at what they believe would sell the home within 6 months and if indeed is sold in those six months) the prior owner would receive the excess funds after all outstanding real estate taxes, accrued interest, taxes that would have been assessed should the property not be foreclosed upon, property listing and broker fees, legal fees and 10% administrative fee. Once Town Council reviews the policy, the document will be forwarded to the municipal attorney for further review. Councilor Clemons and Councilor Wade asked what would happen if the home does not sell within the 6-month time frame. Manager Doane responded by saying that if the home is not sold in 6 months, the Town would revert back to the prior foreclosure policy. Councilor Ketch asked how long the prior owner has to make a decision. Manager Doane responded by stating 90 days. If they do not return a demand to have the home sold by a real estate broker, the Town would revert back to the prior foreclosure policy. Councilor Lugdon clarified with Manager Doane that the prior owner is the one who needs to request that the Town put the property up for sale with a real estate broker. If they do not send in a request to sell the home within the 90 days, the Town then can sell the property for what is due for taxes.

Melissa reported that the Town was awarded grant funds through the Maine Municipal Association to purchase security cameras for the municipal complex. The amount of the grant award is \$3,000.00 and \$2,000.00 was budgeted towards the project. The total to provide cameras on the municipal office, Post Office, fire station, and salt shed totals \$9,731.00. Melissa's recommendation is to take the remaining amount of \$4,731.00 out of the budgeted capital reserve deposit. This budgeted amount was for \$21,000.00 and was to be deposited into the capital reserve account in January. The deposited amount would be reduced to \$16,269.00. Councilor Ketch asked if the cost was a one-time cost. Manager Doane stated that it was. The cameras record for 30 days at a time. Councilor Ketch also asked Manager Doane if she happened to get an answer from the company on how long the camera system may last. Manager Doane said she did not ask but assumes that it would be at least 15 years which is a typical time frame. Councilor Lugdon wanted to know if the Post Office had to put up any funds for the camera system. Manager Doane replied that they would not as the main system would be located at the municipal building and the camera would just be recording the Post Office. Councilor Ketch asked how soon she would expect before installation. Manager Doane stated that she would be giving the security company a call, and is hoping within the next week or so. Councilor Wade made a motion to move forward with Melissa's recommendation, seconded by Councilor Ketch. Vote 4/0.

Melissa wanted to remind the Town Council and the public that there is an ordinance to restrict winter parking in which no person shall allow or permit any vehicle under their control or registered in their name to stand or to be parked upon a public way within the limits of the Town of Bradley in such a manner as to interfere with or hinder the plowing or removal of snow at any time. The Road Commissioner or the Town Manager may cause any vehicle so parked to be towed from the public way at the expense of the owner.

Melissa also presented a draft personnel policy that she has been working on that would add protection to the volunteer firefighters. She is planning on meeting with the volunteer firefighters to go over the policy with them. She has given the policy to the fire department and is awaiting their input before asking the Town Council for their approval.

New Business: Melissa stated that a motion and signature are needed to accept the municipal election warrant as presented. She added that the municipal election is on November 7, 2023 and only includes the RSU Board Director. Motion was made by Councilor Lugdon and seconded by Councilor Wade. Vote 4/0.

Melissa reminded Town Council that April will be doing the election by herself. However, Melissa will obviously be available if assistance is needed. If there are no issues, Melissa believes that it will be reasonable to appoint April Dorr as the Bradley Town Clerk, and Melissa appointed as the Deputy Town Clerk.

Councilor Lugdon wanted to know if any other motions were needed for the property located at 114 Cram Street. Melissa stated that she sent him a letter and has not yet received notice that he signed for the letter. Councilor Clemons asked Melissa if the new foreclosure law would pertain to the property at 114 Cram Street if it was to go to foreclosure and Melissa did state that it would.

Councilor Lugdon wanted to know if Melissa knows anything about eminent domain, regarding the little piece of land the ATV Club had mentioned. Melissa responded by saying that she has done some reading on eminent domain but would need a motion from the Council to move forward. She stated that it is a great piece of land and the Town would only need the road part. If the Town were to gain ownership of the little piece of road, it would open up a lot more options for more residents. It would not only be great for the ATV users but also for people that like to hike, bike ride, horse ride, etc. Councilor Lugdon asked Melissa what her thoughts were on taking the property and Manager Doane stated she would like to wait to see how the winter goes. Once she found out that the Town did not actually own that piece of land, she realized that she was having it snow plowed and is going to have that stopped. She feels that since it is a private road, the Town should not be plowing the road.

Unfinished Business: Councilor Ketch asked Manager Doane if she has heard anything new about the Town signs completion. Manager Doane stated that she has not heard anything, however, she plans on checking on them this Spring.

Councilor Ketch wondered if there had been any updates on when they will be working on the railroad tracks for Route 178. Manager Doane replied saying that she has not heard any updates.

Municipal Warrants: Councilor Ketch made a motion to accept the municipal warrants as presented, seconded by Councilor Wade. Vote 4/0.

Next Meeting: The next meeting is set for November 7, 2023

Motion to adjourn: Councilor Ketch made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Councilor Clemons. Vote 4/0.