**MINUTES**

**SELECT BOARD MEETING**

**Monday, December 16, 2019 @ Town Garage 6:00PM**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM

Present: Selectboard: Chair Joe Pollio, Cathy Siano-Goodwin, Al Sands and Chris Wallace. Stan Mack was on a fire call.

Others present: Suzanne Welch, Hardy and Nancy Merrill, Joan lake, Dottie Cannon, Matt Siano, Christine Tattersall, Rich Thompson Fire Chief, Adam Grinold (SeVEDS), Jack Bryar (School Board), Kim Record Clerk/Treasurer, and Bill Kearns Town Administrator.

FACT8 TV Matt Farkas

1. Adopt Agenda. Motion by Al Sands, second Chris Wallace to adopt the agenda as presented. Motion passed 4-0.
2. Approve Minutes: December 2, 2019. Chris Wallace moved, second Cathy Siano-Goodwin to adopt the minutes of December 2, 2019 as presented. Motion passed 3-0 with al sand abstaining.
3. Warrants. The warrants of December 5, 2019 were presented to the Selectboard.
4. Highway: Bill Kearns referred to the Agenda and spoke of the Grants pending and granted.
   * The $110,000 with VTrans for the HB culvert was approved by VTrans and awarded to us. In addition, a Better Roads (BR) structures grant in the sum of circa $50,000 has been applied for to make up the difference in the grants and the actual cost which is circa $183,000. The Towns share is our match, which is approximately $23,500.
   * Other BR grants: we have applied for Better Roads Hydrologically Connected roads grants, 4 of them, for a total of about $39,000 with our share being about $7800.
   * Otherwise, daily work schedule is primarily winter operations.
5. School Advisory committee – Jack Bryar had not yet arrived, so this was passed till later.
6. SeVEDS Article for Town meeting. Article for Town Meeting - "Shall the voters in the Town of Grafton appropriate the sum of $2,037.00 to be raised by taxes for the support of Southeastern Vermont Economic Development Strategies (SeVEDS) to provide workforce and economic development services to the Windham Region"  SeVEDS - representative was not present so this was passed till later.
7. Request for Town Appropriation, Vermont Rural Fire Protection Program. The Vermont Rural Fire Protection Task Force has made a request for an Article be placed on the Warrant for Town Meeting to approve a disbursement is $100 to RFP. RFP has provided the town with several grants for several thousands of dollars each, which dollars went to installing dry hydrants in Town over the years. Al Sands proposed we set aside them money for this in our budget rather than send it our of town. Rich Thompson, Fire chief, will look more into the current status of RFPP and report back. After more discussion, Chris Wallace moved, second Cathy Siano-Goodwin to approve an article for the Town Meeting warrant for $100 to Rural Fire Protection Task Force. Motion passed 4-0.
8. Collector of Delinquent Taxes (CDT) – Kim Record stated the delinquent tax office needed to be restructured because the current collector has decided to do the job no longer and no one has been found to take the job. Kim Record asked for advice from VLCT about making the job a SB appointed position, with a stipend, and have the town keep the 8% instead of paying it to the collector and make the job with its stipend a part of another official’s job. VLCT suggests the above be accomplished in steps: 1. Vote an Article to pay the CDT a stipend in lieu of the 8% and the 8% would be turned over to the Town once a month as taxes are collected (citing 32 VSA 1674(3) and 24 VSA 1530); 2. Vote to make the CDT a one-year term (17 VSA 2646(9), which provision will take effect in 3 years; 3. Vote to make the CDT a Selectboard-appointed position under 17 VSA 2651d, this will become effective after the end of the next three year term. 4. The Treasurer run for the position now for those three years. #s 1-3 should be articles to vote upon. If this plays out, the treasurer will be CDT for three years, with a stipend and the 8% to the Town. At the end of three years the position would be an appointed position. Discussion followed and then a motion by Al Sands, second for Kim Record, Clerk Treasurer, craft the appropriate articles to accomplish the above for vote at Town Meeting. Motion seconded by Chris Wallace and passed 4-0
9. Public Comment. Bill Kearns, Town Administrator, asked if the Selectboard wanted to know more about the CIC Building (so-called) at 3992 Saxtons River Rd in the Cambridgeport section of Grafton and the chemical company located there. There is an issue there with proper working conditions and contamination. The TA had alerted Division of Fire Safety, VOSHA, Vt Tier II at VEM. The Dept of Health is already aware. The school buses use the site as a transfer site and the secretary at the school Mary Beth culver has been informed. Fire Chief / Health Officer has been involved in this issue since Friday and has been on site. Div. of Fire Safety and other State agencies to visit the place this week and keep us informed. SB ordered that the TA get the reports back, keep the SB informed, and then the SB decide if further action is necessary by the town in addition to actions taken by the State.
10. Back to item 5 above re. School Advisory Committee. Jack Bryar came to the meeting at this time. He was asked to speak about the Committee and the state of the school.
    * The fight against the forced merger continues and is now in Supreme Court. Oral argument before the court will happen soon. No decision will be made for a while. School meetings will not occur in March, but rather hopefully by may so that budgets can be know in timely fashion for the tax rate to be set timely and tax bills not delayed.
    * Advisory Committee – Jack and other Board Members from Towns throughout the state, which are fighting the merger are designing local advisory boards, which would hopefully become institutionalized, if the mergers continue, and which would give locals more than an advisory say in the districts business in financial (budget) decisions and facilities and other items as requested by the District Board. He is asking that the Town put an article on the ballot forming such a committee and electing the members. He will have something to put in the Town report and model articles for the Town warning. He will get that to the Town by January 6th. Absolute last date for these items to be delivered to the town would be before Jan 20th SB meeting. SB authorized Jack Bryar to prepare the article(s) for the warning and that they would be used what he delivered in the town report and warning.
11. SeVEDS representative Adam Ginold arrived during Jack’s presentation. And requested the article (above) be authorized, cited the work the SeVEDS does, as presented several weeks ago at the SB meeting. The amount $2037 reflects $3.00 per resident. 679 population in 2010. After his presentation and discussion, it was moved by Chris Wallace, second Al Sands to authorize that Article be included in the Town meeting articles. Motion passed 4-0.
12. Other Business. Al Sand recounted how the Grafton Improvement Association makes it money for its efforts to improve the Town and support various Town activities is by selling the timber on its land. The GIA had a large sale ready to go, has had the sale contracted for by a logger and received payment from the logger ready to harvest the trees, but cannot find a way to get the logs off Kidder Hill. The Kidder Hill covered bridge bypass though the river has been denied them by ANR. A road through Windham Foundation land was too soft to carry the loads. The use of ledge road turned out to be not possible due to, yes, ledge. The Howland mill bridge is being questioned by the logging truck operators as to its carrying capacity. Al Sand cited the adage “no parcel can be landlocked.” He said the GIA has the right to access to public roads to move its resources off the hill. There was no further discussion, Al wanted to make this point.
13. Date of Next Selectboard Meeting: January 6, 2020
14. Adjourn Motion by Al sands, second Chris Wallace to adjourn at 7:30 PM

Respectfully submitted,

William G. Kearns