**MINUTES**

**SELECT BOARD MEETING**

**Monday, March 16, 2020 @ Town Hall, Upstairs 3:00PM**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 3:00 PM

Present: Selectboard: Chair Joe Pollio, Stan Mack, Al Sands, Cathy Siano-Goodwin and John Gregory.

Others present: Rich Thompson and Bill Kearns Town Administrator.

Matt Farkas Fact 8 TV

1. Adopt Agenda. Motion by Stan Mack, second Al Sands to accept the minutes as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

Due to dealing with Coronavirus, this meeting was moved to Town Hall and earlier than regular time.

1. Approve Minutes: March 2, 2020. There were several typos and errors edited, and as corrected motion by Al Sands, second Stan Mack to approve. Motion passed 4 – 1, with John Gregory abstaining, as he was not on the Board for that meeting. March 3, 2020. Motion by Stan Mack, Second Cathy Siano-Goodwin to approve as presented. Motion passed unanimously.
2. Warrants of 3/13/2020, as signed by each member, were presented to the Selectboard.
3. Highway Report.
	* In place of Danny Taylor, Bill Kearns reported the work was ordinary road maintenance and necessary equipment maintenance.
	* Paving Discussion:
		+ Bill Kearns stated that there were three potential projects that the SB, and then he and Danny Taylor discussed and from which Danny wanted the SB to select a project and put it in priority 1, 2, 3. Those three projects are:
			- Route 35 from Chester town line to the box culvert just beyond Ellsworth Rd. Danny and Bill wrote a grant request on this portion last year and the estimate was about $240, bullmagging and Danny says more base and cloth underlayment would be used from the Town line to the corner with the turn-off.
			- Route 121 West from end of pavement to Cabell Rd approx., bullmagging and ditching and cross culvert replacement, approximately $230,000.
			- Route 121 East from Beck’s Bridge to just past Ledge Rd, unknown the extent of the underlayment replacement and no estimate of cost.
			- John Gregory added to this list by citing his conversation with Danny Taylor about
				1. ditching and work on the southwesterly side (opposite side from the river) of Route 121 E past Ledge Rd to the Bridge
				2. Village roads repaving, Pleasant, Kidder Hill, School streets.
				3. And some time in the future Townshend Rd repaving.
		+ Discussion from the Selectboard covered the costs of each, which needed to be done sooner. John Gregory questioned spending paving money for road work that needs to be done and could be done separately. He would like to see the cost break down showing paving cost vs bullmagging, underlayment, culverts, ditching and stone-lining and road base, so we can see what can be done separate from “paving” an what can be done by the Town in usual course of business. The discussion centered on having $300,000 for road work this season, and we could do one or other of the first two projects and maybe Becks bridge to Ledge Rd. We could get the $175,000 from VTrans next year as we are number 8 this year, and VTrans says we will not get it this year. After some further discussion it was decided to vote on priorities for projects, pending estimates of costs on each from Danny Taylor. The priorities were requested of the Selectboard by Danny Taylor.
		+ MOTION by Al Sands, second by Cathy Siano-Goodwin to set the priorities as: 1. Route 35 from Chester town line to Ellsworth culvert, 2. Beck’s bridge to Ledge Road, 3. Route 121 East from end of pavement to mid-Houghtonville and 4. Village roads Kidder Hill, Pleasant, School streets. When called the motion passed unanimously.
4. Town Health Officer Policy adoption.
	* Cathy Siano-Goodwin stated that the THO Committee came up with 12 recommendations for the office of the THO. She then gave that list of recommendations to Bill Kearns who used them to prepare a policy. The committee approv3ed the policy as written. As to the reference to tickets as a manner of enforcement, a ticket system with the Judicial Bureau will be set up I the future. Al Sands then moved, seco0nd by Stan Mack to adopt the policy subject to the question on ticketing being removed and the execution of the document by each Selectboard member. Rich Thompson, Town Health Officer, took part in the above discussion and then commented re: coronavirus, see below.
	* There was another issue raised by Rich Thompson and that is police response to a Rescue call when needed – rarely are the State Police available. It was recommended that a meeting between the Fire Rescue, Town and State police and Sheriff be called to discuss the matter
5. Coronavirus:
	* Rich Thompson: Fire and Rescue is keeping up to date with happenings and bulletins from various state agencies and the State EOC relating to SEOC.
	* Stan Mack gave a report on the work of the White Church group regarding vulnerable population and caring for their needs, including those who are self-quarantining and need someone to run errands. The work is comprehensive and pro-active and includes letting the health providers of this population know they are ready to help as needed. There is a letter going out to all the identified vulnerable population, which will be mailed and/or hand delivered. The letter makes it clear they will shop, run errands or whatever the persons need. There is also a food shelf at the White church, MKT is making back packs for the school kids and June Lupiani asks for info on needs not met – respond on FB site – School will have food pick-ups.
6. Flood Damage Prevention Regulations and Subdivision Regulation amend to name DRB as the Hearing Board. Bill Kearns had prepared amendments to both sets of Regulations to correct the name of the Hearing Board in each regulation. Motion by Al Sands, second john Gregory to approve the amendments to name the Development review Board as the hearing board in each regulation and adopt the regulations as amended. When called the motion passed 4-1 with Stan Mack abstaining as he wished more time to tread the regulations.
7. Discussion of Delinquent Tax Collector, the action at the Town meeting was to fulfill recommendation made by the Town CPA. Bill Kearns had written as statement for the SB and offered it. Al Sand called it a “poor showing” by person who attacked the Treasurer and Selectboard over something the CPA had recommended, and thought was a matter that simply should be done as good fiscal policy. After more discussion, the Selectboard adopted the language and asked Bill to add a statement based on Jan’s comment that she collected $1,000,000 over 20 or so years, and if we had paid a stipend at $1500 a year, the collector could have been paid $30,000 with $50,000 retained by the Town. See language of statement at end of minutes.
8. Tree Warden and Fire Warden would be discussed in Executive Session so skipped till later in the meeting.
9. Appointed persons list – attached at end of the minutes. Discussion: all persons contacted want to serve. No one for Council on Aging, otherwise all filled. Cemetery – uncertain. Stan Mack and Joe Pollio will work on a Cemetery policy and then resolve issues of leadership. Motion by Cathy Siano-Goodwin, second Stan Mack to make the appointments as listed in the appointment list at the end of these minutes.
10. Other Business:
	* Al Sands brought up the issue of Volunteers and Forms for them to sign in order to work for the Town. Bill Kearns is working on the forms and will send them out when done. These forms are based on forms from PACIF and PACIF will be asked to look at the final product and approve it. These are needed now for EAB survey volunteers and for Two persons doing the Trails in the village Park.
	* Al Sands asked if we could, in addition to working on trails and the patch cut as already approved, the Town could cut and log ash trees while they are healthy and worth something, rather than wait, have them die, then have to cut down dangerous trees which have no value. After discussion it was moved by Cathy Siano-Goodwin, second Stan Mack to do the patch cut for bird habitat, clear paths, create log land which later would become parking area for Village Park, all as was discussed with Act 250 and okayed without permit per written Project Work Sheet, and while doing this, log the Elm trees that are now healthy and have value. Motion passed unanimously.
11. No information on ATT First alert, so this item skipped.
12. Executive Session, personnel. Motion by Stan Mack, second Al Sands to enter Executive Session for personnel at 4:40 pm.
13. On Motion exited Executive Session at 5:10 pm.
14. Action after session: The appointment of Al Sands to Tree Warden is interim only pending work on a job description, which work should be shared with Danny Taylor, who needs to have input and determine compensation. As for Fire Warden,
Stan Mack will speak with Rich Thompson Fire Chief and Bill Brown to clarify roles in a wildland fire.
15. Date of next meeting April 6, 2020, to be held here at Town Hall and remotely attended.
16. Adjourn on Motion by Stan Mack, second John Gregory at 5:12 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

William G. Kearns

Two attachments: Delinquent Tax Collector statement and List of Appointed persons:

Delinquent Tax Collector:

Jan Atwood did a very good job collecting delinquent taxes for the Town over the years. She was ready to retire from the position. This gave the Town time to consider the necessity of continuing the Office of Delinquent Tax Collector. On advice of its accountants, Sullivan Powers, and for the following reasons, the Town decided to bring the position in-house:

* Our accountants, who do our yearly audit, advised the Town to eliminate the office of Delinquent Tax Collector, when the current Delinquent Tax Collector did not wish to continue and retired.
* The Town already tracks tax payments and delinquencies in our financial software. This information is then provided to the Delinquent Tax Collector. If the Office of Delinquent Tax Collector did not exist, or its duties were handled in-house, the same person, who now tracks the data and makes data entry, would handle the collection of delinquent tax payments along with the timely tax payments.
* Fiscal conservatism would dictate that, since the work is being done by the treasurer and/or her assistant through the software, the 8% penalty should be retained by the Town. [Note: at Town meeting it was stated that $1,000,000 in delinquent payments have been collected over the past 20 or so years. At 8% the penalty that comes to $80,000 over those 20 years. If a stipend of $1,500 per year were subtracted, approximately $30,000 would have been paid to the collector and $50,000 would have been retained by the Town.]
* It is an archaic and unnecessary to retain a separate person and pay that person the 8% penalty on the delinquent tax collected when the Town personnel, expending a minimum of extra time and labor, can perform the task themselves.

For the reasons stated above and for the furtherance of good risk management practices, many Vermont towns have done away with the office of Delinquent Tax Collector entirely or brought the position in-house. Our CPA, Sullivan Powers, recommended we do the same.

For the Selectboard,

Bill Kearns, Town Administrator

Appointment made by Selectboard on March 16, 2020:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Persons appointed on March 16, 2020 |  |  |
| **POSITION** | **Term Length** | **2020 appointed persons** |  **Expires**  |
| Capital Budget - ex officio | 1 yr. | Kimberly Record | 2021 |
| Capital Budget Committee | 1 yr. | Cynthia Gibbs  | 2021 |
| Capital Budget Committee | 1 yr. | Hardy Merrill  | 2021 |
| Capital Budget Committee | 1 yr. | Joan Lake | 2021 |
| Capital Budget Committee | 1 yr. | Joe Valente | 2021 |
| Capital Budget Committee | 1 yr. | Linda Robertson | 2021 |
| Capital Budget Committee | 1 yr. | Jason Archambault  | 2021 |
| Capital Budget Committee | 1 yr. | John Gregory | 2021 |
| Constable | 1 yr. | Michael Waysville | 2021 |
| Council on Aging | 1 yr. |  | 2021 |
| Dog Census | 1 yr. | Kimberly Record | 2021 |
| Dog Census | 1 yr. | Michelle Dolloph  | 2021 |
| Emergency Management Coordinator | 1 yr. | Eric Stevens | 2021 |
| Emergency Management Dep. Director | 1 yr. | Al Sands | 2021 |
| Emergency Management Director | 1 yr. | Bill Kearns | 2021 |
| Energy Officer | 1 yr. | Eric Stevens | 2021 |
| Fence Viewers | 1 yr. | Listers | 2021 |
| Inspector of Lumber | 1 yr. | Tracy lake | 2021 |
| Pound (This is contracted - up in July) | 1 yr. | (by contract with W Co Humane) | 2021 |
| Road Commissioner | 1 yr. | Selectboard | 2021 |
| Solid Waste District Rep. | 1 yr. | Cynthia Gibbs | 2021 |
| Solid Waste District Rep. | 1 yr. | Kimberly Record | 2021 |
| Tree Warden | 1 yr. | Al Sands | 2021 |
| WRC Representative | 1 yr. | Eric Stevens | 2021 |
| WRC Representative | 1 yr. | not filled  | 2021 |
| Grafton Development Review Board | 3 yr. | John Plummer  | 2023 |
| Grafton Development Review Board (Alternate) | 3 yr. | Rodney Record | 2023 |