**MINUTES SELECTBOARD MEETING**

**Monday 3:00 PM, April 6, 2020**

**Town Hall – Selectboard Office**

**Attendance of Selectboard by Electronic Devices**

**Meeting being held electronically pursuant to 1 VSA 312, including The Legislature’s H.861 (2020) “Temporary Suspension of Designated Physical Meeting Location Requirements” (see attached)**

**Public, wishing to attend the meeting remotely were invited to email** [**townadmin@graftonvt.org**](mailto:townadmin@graftonvt.org)**, request to be invited to join in on the meeting on Microsoft Teams, and provide the email address to which the invitation should be sent. Instructions on connecting to the meeting accompanied the agenda. See agenda**

1. The Chair opened the meeting at 3:00 PM.

Present at the meeting electronically were:

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

Others present: Hardy & Nancy Merrill, Joe and Jessa Westclark, Charles Bonin, Thomas Toscano, Michelle Dolloph, Michelle Dufort, Danny Taylor Highway Foreman, Kim Record Clerk/Treasurer and Bill Kearns Town Administrator. Suzanne Welch was present by phone.

FACT TV present on Microsoft Teams and live streaming the meeting.

1. Adopt Agenda. Bill Kearns asked that an Executive Session for personnel be added to the agenda, and with that addition it was move by John Gregory, second Al Sands to adopt agenda as edited. Motion passed unanimously.

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It had been requested by FACT TV that a summary of the Board of Adjustment meeting that was held before this meeting be presented at the start of this meeting: Kim record reported that a motion to waive the 1.5 and 1% tax rates for March and April 2020 because of difficulties in making payments raised by Coronavirus outbreak per the request of the current tax collector and per 24 VSA 1535(c).

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1. Approve Minutes: March 16, 2020 two edits, and as edited motion by Stan Mack, second Cathy Siano-Goodwin to approve as corrected. Motion passed unanimously. March 25 (emergency meeting) several edits, and as edited motion by Al Sands, second John Gregory to approve as corrected. Motion passed unanimously. March 26, 2020 several edits, and as edited motion by Al Sands, second Stan Mack to approve as corrected. Motion passed unanimously.
2. Highway Report
   * Essential/nonessential Highway work. Al Sands asked why this came up again, and Bill Kearns stated, because VTrans will not pay grants for works under awarded VTrans and Better Roads grants. Thus, he wanted to be sure Selectboard understood that and still stood by their decision. Discussion was joined in by all, including Danny Taylor noting that Sue Johnson of VTrans recognizes that VTrans roads are different, paved except for a very few, and no gravel. Work to be done to maintain our roads is essential. Al Sands made the motion to reaffirm the decision on Highway employees being essential and their work itself was essential to be done now and to affirm that no work under VTrans or Better Roads grants will be done until VTrans gives the go ahead to do grants work. Second by Stan Mack. Motion passed unanimously.
   * Weight permits. None presented.
   * HB Culvert – The SB asked about the culvert on Hinkley Brook and Danny Tayler and Bill Kearns stated the bidding process would continue and bids were to be opened on April 20, but work would not be done until VTrans said we could proceed with construction under the grant.
3. Clerk/Treasurer Report
   * Kim record had sent the balance sheet out for perusal by Selectboard. She asked them to study the sheets and talk to her if they had questions. Discussion of funds balances to be sure we had money to run the town until taxes come in and in case there were issues, delays, in the tax payments
   * School budget and School meeting to set. Jessa Westclark joined the meeting and report there was a school board meeting tonight at which most likely, the April 9 School meeting (Town meeting) would be cancelled and rescheduled because of the problems COVID-19 raised with mass meetings of residents and voting, even voting by Australian ballot would put counters at risk. In any case, Jessa, the budget situation would be a mess as they will not be done timely. The rescheduled meeting would be out 2 months or so. Discussion then of the choice of having no budget this year and reverting by law to 87% of last year’s budget. Jessa Westclark said that would be substantially below the proposed budget, which proposal is a bit less than last year’s budget. No one knows when a vote could be done safely either Australian ballot or public meeting.
   * Al Sands then moved, Cathy Siano-Goodwin second for Kim Record and Bill Kearns write an email to the School board in time for their meeting tonight with the SB’s agreement with the cancellation of the April 9 meeting, and our concerns with danger and cost of Australian balloting. Motion passed unanimously.
4. Coronavirus: Bill Kearns gave an update on the efforts being carries out to care for at risk and or shut-in residents through outreach by the Grafton Community Church and the various home care NGOs and Grafton Cares. The emergency Management Committee is meeting every morning by Microsoft Teams. Bill Kearns send out SEOC Situation Reports daily, as well as the VT Dept of Health daily report, and points out important points to the residents. Governor orders and *pressers* reported out to residents and the Selectboard. Everyone must keep up the social distancing.
5. Purchasing Policy – discussion. Bill Kearns believes the SB should appoint people to go over the policy and then make recommendations back. For instance, the dollar amounts for requiring different processes, as well as federal requirements and these must be mulled over, and a decision made on what these requirements would be. Those figures and the requirements on each were then discussed. Bill Kearns will work it over some more and then bring back to Selectboard. The Chair stated the matter would be on agenda for next meeting.
6. Village Park work and forester. Al Sands stated that an issue arose a while back and angry phone call of complaint about tree removal were generated toward Hayden Lake as forester and he does not want to deal with that, and thus will not be the forester for the Village Park. Tim Morton is a forester and works for Forest, parks and Recreation and working for municipalities in municipal forests is part of his job description. Al Sands contacted Tim Morton and asked if he would be interested in that state employee capacity to assist the town as forester for the work proposed in the Village Park and Tim Morton agreed to do so. His credentials are very good, and he is good to work with, said Al Sands. With that accomplished Al Sands has written a letter to Tim Morton and asked the Selectboard’s approval to send that letter to him, which letter is what Tim asked to be sent so that his Dept would allow the service to the town. Cathy Siano-Goodwin moved, second John Gregory to send the letter to Tim Morton as described. Motion passed unanimously. Bill Kearns was asked to prepare the letter on Town letterhead for the Chairs signature.
7. Inquiring as to need to acquire future Cemetery Land. Kim record stated we were getting low on plots, less than 100, and many of those not desirable. Discussion included a comment that at one point the owner of the land abutting the current Burgess Cemetery was willing to transfer land to the Town for the Cemetery, if the town wished. Bill Kearns will follow up with that owner. Tanya Evans has offered to gift land on Rte. 35 in the village and that possibility will be followed-up on by Stan Mack and Joe Pollio. It was suggested that an ad in the News that Grafton was looking for cemetery land would be appropriate. There was also discussion about setting specification for determining the desirability of land for cemetery use, including access and soil type, lack of ledge. It was agreed this matter should be on the agenda regularly. It was suggested a “natural cemetery” idea could be considered.
8. Other Business: Warrants. It was suggested that during this “stay at home, social distancing” time with the virus, only one Selectboard person sign the warrants and then they be presented at meeting as we do now, and as permitted by law. 24 V.S.A. § 1623(a)(1). Al Sands moved, second Stan Mack to appoint Joe Pollio to approve and sign orders for warrants for operating expenses, payroll and other obligations during this time that we are subject to Governor’s orders to Stay at Home and socially distance ourselves from one another. This is in compliance with 24 V.S.A. § 1623(a)(1) the warrants would continue to be presented at the meetings. The clerk stated she would send the warrants out and if there were any invoices someone wanted to back up a warrant, she would scan and send out. The Chair called for a vote, and the motion passed unanimously.
9. Public Comment - None
10. Date of Next Selectboard Meeting: April 20, 2020.
11. Motion by Stan Mack, second Cathy Siano-Goodwin to enter Executive Session for personnel. Motion passed unanimously at 4:35 PM. Motion to exit session at 4:44 PM.
12. Adjourn. Motion by Al Sands, second Cathy Siano-Goodwin to Adjourn at 4:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

William G. Kearns