



SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES OF APRIL 3, 2023

Members: Judy Bickford, Don McDowell, Laura Streets, Travis Sabataso

Absent:

ADMINISTRATION and STAFF: Eric Dodge, Town Administrator; Judi Alberi, Administrator's Assistant; Kevin Barrows, Highway Superintendent; Dennis DiGregorio, Fire Chief; Jason Luneau, Police Chief; Tina Sweet, Finance Director; Paula Beattie, Human Resources Director; Sara Haskins, Town Clerk/Treasurer; Mitzi Fleming*, Assistant Town Clerk/Treasurer; Tricia Follert, Community Dev. Coordinator; Bill Mapes, EMS Chief

PARTICIPANTS/GUESTS: Chris Palermo, Dennis Smith, Theron Matthews, Steven Ireland, Martin Green, Laura Green, Mary Lou Nichols, Rob Moore, Tony Cote, Sheila Tarbox, Dave Goodlin, Brent LaBree, Bethany Salvas, Garrot Huren, Charles Burnham, Thomas Moog, Richard Craig, Jonathan Moygar, Jamie Jaret, Jerry Throne, Evelyn Throne, Alexander Cyr, Dale Touchette, Garret Hirschak, Martha Battle, Dave Goodlin, Rebekah Carney

**participating via Zoom*

CALL SELECTBOARD MEETING TO ORDER

Judy Bickford called the Selectboard Meeting to order at 5:36PM at the Tegu Building.

AGENDA CHANGES/ADDITIONS

Add Soulmate Brewing pavement cut application

APPROVE MINUTES

1. Approve minutes 3-20-23

Motion made by Travis Sabataso to approve the minutes of March 20, 2023. Motion seconded by Don McDowell. Motion carried. (4/0)

NEW BUSINESS

1. Public input request for improvements at VT 100A and Stafford Ave

Theron Mathews and Steven Ireland from McFarland Johnson, a multi-discipline consulting firm, was hired by the Vermont Agency of Transportation to evaluate improvements at the intersection of Rte 100A and Stafford Ave due to safety concerns. Theron is seeking support from the Town of Morristown to conduct a more thorough investigation of this intersection. There have been 10 accidents over the past 3 years at this intersection. The research is being financially supported by Vtans. The Selectboard is in favor of continued research.

Motion made by Don McDowell to write a letter in support of the continued research at the

intersection of Route 100A/Stafford Ave by McFarland Johnson. Motion seconded by Laura Streets. Motion carried. (4/0).

2. Approve Oxbow Park Field Use Applications

Tom Moog, owner of Moogs for the past 12 years in Morrisville is looking to continue with his music in the Oxbow Park events: July 29th Summer Jam 73, August 19th Oxbow Music Festival and September 19th Keep on growing. Moogs will be catering alcohol at these events. Chief Luneau met with Tom Moog and had no concerns.

Motion made by Laura Streets to approve all three events as presented. Motion seconded by Don McDowell . Motion carried (4/0).

3. Soulmate Brewing pavement cut application

Soulmate Brewing needs to connect to the power box by the post office which comes out at the back of Demars building and Jonathan is looking to connect his power to that box. He will need to cut through the pavement near the parking area of the Demars building.

Motion made by Don McDowell to approve the pavement cut by Soulmate Brewing. Motion seconded by Travis Sabataso. Motion carried. (4/0).

4. Accept Resignation from Scott Longe - Highway Foreman

Motion made by Don McDowell to accept Scott Longe's resignation as the Highway Foreman, effective March 31st, 2023, with regrets. Motion seconded by Laura Streets. Motion carried. (4/0).

5. Accept Resignation from Peter Hughes - PT Police Officer

Motion made by Don McDowell to accept Peter Hughes' resignation as a part-time Police Officer, effective March 30th, 2023, with regrets. Motion seconded by Travis Sabataso. Motion carried. (4/0).

6. Accept Resignation from Samuel Johnston - PT Paramedic

Motion made by Don McDowell to accept Samuel Johnston's resignation as a part-time paramedic, effective March 18th, 2023, with regrets. Motion seconded by Laura Streets. Motion carried. (4/0).

7. Accept Resignation from Gervais Fitz - PT Paramedic

Motion made by Don McDowell to accept Gervais Fitz resignation as a part-time Paramedic, effective March 27th, 2023, with regrets. Motion seconded by Travis Sabataso. Motion carried. (4/0).

8. Accept Resignation of Patric Saad - FT Police Officer

Motion made by Don McDowell to accept Patric Saad's resignation as a full-time Police Officer, effective March 31st, 2023, with regrets. Motion seconded by Laura Streets. Motion carried. (4/0).

9. Approve hiring Derek Small as the FT Highway Foreman, Step 9 at \$27.13 per hour

Kevin Barrows was part of the interview process for Derek Small and supports the hiring of Derek. Derek has been with the town for almost 5 years as a tech 3 with grader experience. He has been Scott's go to guy and was the only internal applicant.

Motion made by Don McDowell to hire Derek Small as the Highway Foreman, step 9 at \$27.13 per hour. Motion seconded by Laura Streets. Motion carried. (4/0).

10. Approve adding Gervais Fitz as a MEMS volunteer.

Motion made by Laura Streets to add Gervais Fitz as MEMS volunteer. Motion seconded by Don McDowell. Motion carried. (4/0).

11. Approve hiring Kelly Mayo as a PT Paramedic at \$20.68 per hour

Bill Mapes, EMS Chief, spoke about Kelly Mayo and Hunter Tallman's experience and value to the town.

Motion made by Don McDowell to hire Kelly Mayo as a PT Paramedic at \$20.68 per hour. Motion seconded by Laura Streets. Motion carried. (4/0).

12. Approve hiring Hunter Tallman as a PT AEMT at \$17.87 per hour

Motion made by Don McDowell to hire Hunter Tallman as a PT AEMT at \$17.87 per hour. Motion seconded by Laura Streets. Motion carried. (4/0).

13. Appoint Pound Keeper

Jason Luneau reached out to Jason McArthur who is willing to serve as pound keeper.

Motion made by Travis Sabatase to appoint Jason McArthur as Pound Keeper. Motion seconded by Don McDowell. Motion carried. (4/0).

OLD BUSINESS

1. Budget Revisions

The Selectboard was given a revised budget which reduced the overall budget to 16.4%. There was a request by the board to bring the budget to 14%. Tina Sweet said that \$80,000 would reduce the budget by approximately 1%. The auditors felt that the Fund balance was healthy enough to be used to lessen the tax burden on the citizens. Laura Streets discussed the Recreation Coordinator position being a non-essential need and keeping that position part time. This stirred up a lot of discussion regarding the direction of recreation in our town. Laura also mentioned that she would like to see \$5,000 stay in the budget for an assistant to run Zoom for Planning Council and Development Review Board. Don McDowell would also like to see the \$5,000 stay in the budget for zoom help as well.

Citizens were still very concerned about the wages of the town employees being out of line with what they could afford. Paula Beattie, Human Resources Director, has done extensive research and the salary/wages of town employees are still not up to par with other municipalities and government employees. Paula will update her research and bring it back to the citizens and the Selectboard members on April 24th. Tina Sweet mentioned that the salary/wages for all town employees is under 4% of the budget increase.

The direction of the Selectboard is to have more research on wages done and research into how much of the Fund balance the town can use to lower the tax burden. Also, the financial impact of staggering start dates for full-time vacancies.

APPROVE WARRANTS

Motion made by Don McDowell to approve the warrants. Motion seconded by Laura Streets. Motion carried. (4/0)

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Eric was on vacation for two weeks and was so impressed with how well Tina had worked with Department Heads to get the budget to 16.4%. Very impressed with how comfortable he felt that his teams could carry on in his absence with confidence.

SELECTBOARD CONCERNS

Travis Sabatase - The budget needs to be put into laypeople terms and get some outreach and education to the citizens in order for the budget to pass. The interviews for the 5th selectboard member are warned as potential executive session interviews and Travis is opposed to closed interviews, he would like them open to the public.

Laura Streets - Met with Bill Mapes, EMS Chief and Jason Luneau, Chief of Police - Laura was very impressed with the caliber of these folks. Is hopeful that we can someday have grant funding for a training facility for EMS.

Don McDowell - reminder of how lucky we are to have the caliber of this staff in the Town of Morristown. Roads are well taken care of, the community is safe due to police, EMS and fire, folks are working hard.

Judy Bickford - shared stories of how Eric Dodge goes above and beyond his job duties to help the citizens of this town. Thanks the staff for all the work they have been doing.

COMMUNITY CONCERNS

Citizens had comments regarding the floor vote on April 18th and the salaries/wages of town employees. The roads in our town need grading due to spring weather and rain and discussions around the selectboard candidates and who they are.

OTHER BUSINESS

None

ADJOURN

Motion made by Don McDowell to adjourn. Motion seconded by Laura Streets. Motion carried. (4/0)

Meeting adjourned at 8:04pm

Submitted and filed this April 7th, 2023 .

Judi Alberi, Scribe

Please note all minutes are in Draft form and are subject to approval at the next Selectboard meeting.