



SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES OF MAY 15, 2023

Members: Don McDowell, Chris Palermo, Travis Sabatase, Laura Streets

Absent: Judy Bickford

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; Bill Mapes, EMS Chief, Derek Small, Foreman; Anna McCormick, Recreation Coordinator

PARTICIPANTS/GUESTS: Eric Lande, Martin Green, Tom Cloutier, Kristin Marriott, Tony Cote, Kenneth Grimes, Alexander Cyr, Sheila Tarbox, Chris Doyle, Laurie Doyle, Liam Reynolds, Gary Briggs, Shannon Curchidi, Ed Loewenton, David Ring, Laura Green, Harper Phillips, Becky Gilson

**participating via Zoom*

CALL SELECTBOARD MEETING TO ORDER

Don McDonald called the Selectboard Meeting to order at 5:33PM at the Tegu Building. Judy Bickford is out of town this week.

AGENDA CHANGES/ADDITIONS

Add under new business:

1. Communication with the Selectboard
5. Discuss Special Meeting for Hiring Committee

APPROVE MINUTES

1. Approve minutes 5-1-23

Motion made by Chris Palermo to approve the minutes of May 1, 2023. Motion seconded by Laura Streets. Motion carried. (4/0)

2. Approve minutes 5-8-23

Motion made by Chris Palermo to approve the minutes of May 8, 2023. Motion seconded by Laura Streets. Motion carried. (4/0)

NEW BUSINESS

1. Communication with the Selectboard

After careful consideration, the Selectboard felt it necessary to ask the public to please communicate in a more civil manner. Chris Palermo read an email that was received from a citizen that gave a

description of the tone and behavior that is negatively affecting the Selectboard and town employees. It is okay to disagree, but let's be constructive and kind.

2. Presentation Morristown Wellness (Chapter 13 Town Plan)

Valerie Valcour and Alison Link from Healthy Lamoille Valley (HLV) gave a presentation "What does a healthy community look like?" HLV is a coalition of individuals and community organizations working collaboratively to reduce youth substance misuse and encourage youth to make substance-free healthy choices. HLV is a program of the nonprofit Lamoille Family Center, serving the communities of Vermont's Lamoille Valley region.

The presentation was informative and discussed ways to create meaningful change in our community by working together with businesses, schools, towns, and citizens. What is the next step? How do we bring this forward? Chapter 13 of the Town Plan is the Wellness section and it has been identified that a committee would be a step forward. Alison and Val will put together some language for the Morristown Website and Front Porch Forum.

Anyone interested in forming an ad-hoc committee, please contact Morristown Administration- admin@morristownvt.org.

3. Community Development Update - Tricia Follert

- a. WNL Music**
- b. Student Community Service Day**
- c. LVRT/KIOSK update**
- d. 4th of July**
- e. Green Mountain Byway**
- f. Lamoille Cancer Walk - June 24th**
- g. Doggie Day Out -Aug 13th**

Tricia Follert, Community Development Coordinator, updated the Selectboard of the many events and community projects happening in our town. Wednesday night live begins in June and runs through mid-August with lots of entertainment and sponsors! Friday, May 19th, students will be doing community service and helping to fill the planters around the town. LVRT/Kiosk is full of activity, even the governor is going to be on the rail trail coming up soon! Bourne's is installing a bicycle repair station at the Kiosk in Morristown and hopefully there will be solar lights there as well. Tricia touched on the 4th of July, cancer walk, doggie day out and many other exciting events! The arts are important to the area and Tricia is working hard to inform many folks of what our town has to offer.

4. Discuss canceling Selectboard Meeting June 5, 2023

Motion made by Chris Palermo to cancel the Selectboard Meeting for June 5th due to the budget revote on June 6th. Motion seconded by Travis Sabataso. Motion carried (4/0).

5. Special Meeting

Motion made by Chris Palermo to hold a special Selectboard Meeting on May 25th to discuss the TA hiring process. Motion seconded by Laura Streets. Motion carried (4/0).

6. Waive building permit fee for Green Mountain Habitat for Humanity build on Olive Street.

It has been a matter of routine to waive the permitting fee for Habitat for Humanity new build projects.

Motion made by Chris Palermo to waive the permit fee of \$272, and the recording fee of \$15 for a total of \$287 for 11 Olive Street. Motion seconded by Travis Sabatase. Motion carried (4/0).

7. Approve improvements to Ross Hill

Ken Grimes and Chris Doyle discussed the improvements they would like permission to make on Ross Hill Road, entering from Ron Terrill Rd. The total length of the road to be improved would be about 900 feet. Ross Hill Road does have an entrance from two sides with a legal trail in the middle, so this would not impact traffic going through from one side to the other side.

Don McDowell and Kevin Barrows visited the property about a month ago. There is a culvert that will need to be lowered and Ken is aware of that. Ken feels that on first appearance the culvert looks in good shape, but he will know more later. Chris Doyle indicated that he had spoken with neighbors, Streeter, Pinkhams and O'Brien's son and they were okay with the improvements. Eric Lande lives on the other side of Ross Hill Rd, entering from Cole Hill Rd, and expressed concern over improvements that might increase traffic on the road.

Once the road work is complete, a designee from the town will inspect the road work for final approval.

Selina Rooney asked the Selectboard to approve the improvements to Bull Moose Rd as well. This is not a warned agenda item, so it cannot be discussed. The board has agreed to bring it up for discussion on the May 25th agenda.

Motion made by Travis Sabatase to approve the suggested improvements to Ross Hill Rd as presented by Ken Grimes. Motion seconded by Laura Streets. Motion carried (4/0).

8. Housing committee update

Laura Streets was happy to announce that she can run zoom now so the Housing Committee meetings will be on Zoom.

She also reported that there is a large study currently happening on housing so the committee will be postponing meetings until more data comes in.

9. Approve Job Descriptions:

Recreation Summer Camp Counselor

Recreation Summer Camp Assistant Director

Recreation Summer Camp Director

Paula Beattie, HR Director, has completed the job descriptions for summer camp counselor, summer camp assistant director and summer camp director for the Recreation department.

Anna McCormick and Paula spoke about the great group of youth in our community that are interested in working for the summer camp program, specifically those returning. Preference will be given to candidates that are 16 years of age and older, but the Coordinator reserves discretionary

privilege in hiring someone who has not reached their 16th birthday.

Motion made by Travis Sabatase to approve the job descriptions for Summer Camp Counselor, Summer Camp Assistant Director, and Summer Camp Director as presented with the correction to Summer Camp Assistant Director and Summer Camp Director that preference will be given to candidates that are 16 years of age and older, but the Coordinator reserves discretionary privilege in hiring someone who has not reached their 16th birthday. Motion seconded by Chris Palermo. Motion carried (4/0).

Tom Cloutier asked what the wages were for these positions. Paula Beattie will email the wages to Cloutier. Travis Sabatase also clarified that these wages paid to the counselors are offset by the revenue from summer camp fees.

10. Approve Desk Officers rate of pay for patrol work

Chief Luneau reminded the Selectboard that they are two officers short at this time and would like to pay the Desk Officer, Glover, as a patrol officer when he is taking on shifts patrolling. This practice has been done before and reduces burnout and over-time for the current patrol officers. The Union is okay with this arrangement.

Motion made by Travis Sabatase to approve Officer Glover to be paid \$38.07, step 25, equivalent to a Patrol Officer when out on patrol. Motion seconded by Chris Palermo. Motion carried (4/0).

11. Accept resignation Highway Tech 3 employee

Joey Hall has accepted an offer in the private sector and will be leaving the Town of Morristown Highway job as of June 11th.

Motion made by Chris Palermo to accept Joey Hall's resignation. Motion seconded by Laura Streets. Motion carried (4/0).

12. Approve Hiring Highway Tech 2 Employee

Joshua Miller has accepted a position with the Highway Department starting May 31st. Kevin Barrows feels he is a good fit for the town crew.

Motion made by Chris Palermo to hire Joshua Miller as a Tech 2 at \$22.08 per hour with a start date of May 31, 2023. Motion seconded by Travis Sabatase. Motion carried (4/0).

OLD BUSINESS

1. Review Class IV Road Policy VS 2

The Selectboard was in favor of discussing the Class 4 Road policy before the Selectboard Rules of Procedure.

Eric Dodge went over the changes from the last draft of Class 4 Road Policy. After consulting Atty James Barlow, bridges and culverts do not need to be covered by the town, so the language is being removed. The Vermont statute does not allow us to restrict ATV and snowmobiles from our policy, even though ATV's are not allowed on town highways, we cannot exclude registered vehicles from our roads. Other changes were for agricultural and forest management on legal trails, and logging and agricultural activities on Class 4 roads.

State law says that a locked gate cannot be placed across the road but a pent road (public roads that may be gated but not locked) so that animals stay on site is allowed.
There were some questions regarding E-Bikes and motorcycles becoming electric so non-registerable.

Motion made by Chris Palermo to move to accept proposed class 4 road policy as presented. Motion seconded by Travis Sabataso. Motion carried (4/0).

2. Discuss Adopting Selectboard Rules of Procedure Draft VS 2

The Selectboard reviewed the revised Selectboard Rules of Procedure and were satisfied with the changes.

Motion made by Laura Streets to approve the Selectboard Rules of Procedures as presented. Motion seconded by Travis Sabataso. Motion carried (4/0).

APPROVE WARRANTS

The warrants are the bills and payroll the Town of Morristown must pay.

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

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Eric Dodge reported that he met with a team from the regional Red Cross office to tour The National Guard Armory, Civic Center, American Legion Hall, and PA gymnasium to update memorandums of understanding for our shelters.

Garfield Rd has had the final top coat of paving. All that is left is the edging and striping.
The turn around at Mac Miller Rd project is complete. Becky Gilson properly located the end of the highway, pin in place and the circle deeded to the Town. Residents are happy to know this has been put to rest.
Bill Mapes will be hosting a BBQ for his team for EMS week, which is next week.

Sara Haskins reported that ballots went out, thanks to the BCA who did an amazing job. Also, please do not be confused, as the school board did NOT mail ballots, so you must ask for an absentee ballot from the school or come in June 6th to vote in person.

SELECTBOARD COMMENTS

Travis Sabataso thanked the Clerks office and the BCA for all they are doing getting ballots out and the information out to folks about voting

Laura Streets asked the citizens to be patient as the Selectboard navigates the hiring committee and policy procedure. Laura felt the SB members created some confusion and she would like to prevent this going forward.

Chris Palermo likes all the public engagement that is happening. He can agree to disagree when needed, but feels there is a lot of agreeing happening which is nice.

Don McDowell mentioned that he and Travis held a coffee chat 2 weeks ago and it was great! Tulips on Brooklyn Street are gorgeous.

COMMUNITY COMMENTS

Thanks to the Selectboard for getting information out to the community in a timely manner. Hoping for clarity going forward in the process of replacing Eric Dodge.

OTHER BUSINESS

1. Possible Executive Session - Legal

Travis Sabatase made a motion to go into Executive Session because I find that premature general public knowledge of pending or probable civil litigation or prosecution, to which the public body is or may be party, will clearly place the town at a substantial disadvantage by disclosing its negotiation strategy. Motion seconded by Laura Streets. Motion carried. (4/0)

Travis Sabatase made a motion to go into Executive Session to discuss the pending or probable litigation or prosecution under the provisions of Title 1 section 313 (a) (1) of the Vermont Statutes, to include Town Administrator, Eric Dodge, Licensed land surveyor, Rebecca Gilson. Motion seconded by Laura Streets. Motion carried. (4/0)

Travis Sabatase made a motion to come out of Executive Session. Motion seconded by Laura Streets. Motion carried. (4/0)

ADJOURN

Motion made by Travis Sabatase to adjourn. Motion seconded by Chris Palermo. Motion carried. (4/0)

Meeting adjourned at 8:28pm

Submitted and filed this May 19, 2023

Judi Alberi, Scribe

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