State of Vermont Chartered in 1781
MORRISTOWN

SELECTBOARD MINUTES NOVEMBER 25, 2002

Members Present: Brian Greenia, James Paige, Mark Struhsacker, Shaun Bryer and Lee Sturtevant

Department Heads: Paul D. McGinley, TA; Mark Leonard, Mary Ann Wilson, Lynn Miller, Wally Reeve, Chief Richard Keith and Carol Bradley

Guests: Graham Govoni, Steve Rae, Paul Trudell, Judith Harris, Larry Bertrand, Brian Kellogg, Donny Hill and Min Cote

Chair Brian Greenia called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM at the Morrisville Water & Light Facility.

DEPARTMENT BUDGET REVIEW

ZONING:

Zoning Administrator (Z.A.) Mark Leonard stated there were no major changes in his budget and explained the increase in the number of his work hours budgeted. On the average he has one night meeting each week between the Development Review Board and the Planning Commission and felt by increasing his hours from 30 to 32.5 it would allow him to cover his office zoning duties from 9:00 to 3:00, as well as additional time to deal with the junk ordinance.

Discussion included the original number of letters sent to residents pertaining to the new junk ordinance, the percentage (25%) that have come into compliance and the number (25%) who are in the process as well as feedback from the public. Mark noted that come springtime; there would be stricter enforcement. However, action taken will be by the Board of Selectmen. He inquired about means to cover disposal expenses if needed. It was suggested to use the expected grant revenue from the LRSWMD Recycling Station for this purpose.

MUNICIPAL FACILITIES COMMITTEE

Mark Leonard presented the Municipal Facilities Committee's findings and recommendations to the Selectboard. An inventory of the Town's current facilities, their deficiencies along with the recommended space requirements and timelines were included in the packet of information.

From their findings, it was determined that the Town and Village garages were both adequate; the Police and Rescue facilities would both require additional space within five years; the Fire Station was set for at least ten years but the Town Hall facility is currently inadequate with no room for expansion. Morristown's Town Hall has 3200 square feet of space. Through the extensive research and Judith Harris's expertise for the committee, it was determined that a 7200 square foot facility would be necessary to house the Town's general government offices and provide a public meeting room for up to (40) persons as well as room for future growth of 25 years.

Judith Harris, Consultant for the Facilities Committee presented a menu of services to continue with this project in chronological order and proposed fees from phase one, which has been completed through phase four that would bring the study to a point where the Selectboard could warn for a bond vote in 2004. Her packet of information included floor plans of the municipal buildings with existing square footage as well as her recommendations of the space required. At this time, the group is requesting $25,000 to continue the process of finding a suitable location for a Town Hall.

When asked by the Selectboard if it was feasible to project a bond vote for Town Meeting 2004, Ms. Harris responded in the affirmative. She stated she once did this same procedure in about three months time. Shaun Bryer and Graham Govoni left to attend another scheduled meeting.

When Chair Greenia referred to the Town of Milton, who combined their Municipal and School facilities in one building, it was noted that Mr. Cormier of the LSSU has not appeared to be enthusiastic about joining with the Town. It was later discussed that LSSU does not just represent the Morristown School system, but a Supervisory Union consisting of other towns.

Further discussion included the salability of our current building. The Town Administrator had drawn up a comparison of the general government employees, both full time and part time and office square footage over the past twenty years showing growth from 2 full time and 3 part time employees in 1976 to today with 8 full time and 3 part time employees. Town Clerk Mary Ann Wilson interjected with statistics that Morristown's population has grown 60% since the Town offices moved into building in 1950. Larry Bertrand, Judith Harris, Mark Leonard and other members of the committee left at this time.

When asked where she sees the Town heading and how fast, Mary Ann stated she see Morrisville as the next Milton, "because of our desirable location". She felt the need for larger accommodations was more urgent than five years. She concluded that the "Downtown" was important to keep as a whole and although a Village location would be ideal, realistically the Municipal Offices could be outside of the Village, but the offices of general government should be all under one roof. The *Bypass* would play a big part in location.

TOWN CLERK/TREASURER/TAX COLLECTION

Changes made in how the budget is presented were discussed. For instance, instead of each department of general government having its own computer/technology line items, they now will be combined. This makes it easier for the accounting department in that all computer/technology expenses will now be posted in the same section and not have to be broken out for each department. Mary Ann felt that there might be more accounts that could also be combined.

Wally Reeve and Donny Hill arrived at this time.

Discussion included the implementation of a Town Government web page and its benefits, and the changes for FY 03 – 04 in the distribution of Karen Walker's hours between departments. Mary Ann stated with reappraisal happening this year, it may be a good time to increase the number of property tax payment installments from 2 to possibly 3 or 4 per year. The Town Clerk felt that residential taxes would be the hardest hit. In which case, a resolution would need to be presented to the voters at Town Meeting in March. After discussing the matter, it was decided that it would require new tax payment coupons printed and with grievance and BCA meetings there would not be enough time to accomplish everything for this year. Mary Ann will check with other Town Clerks on the number of tax payment installments requested in their towns. Jeff Limoge arrived at this time.

FISCAL SERVICES

The Fiscal Officer explained the additional hours in her budget. Discussion included combining the computer/technology for General Government and the GASB requirements. Carol explained that she has been keeping a folder for any information that will be needed and discussed dates and what will be required for compliance. She further stated that the additional hours that Karen will work, would allow her to handle other necessary issues. Min Cote arrived at this time. The cross reference for grant revenues and expenses were discussed and Carol explained that the money in the account is not to be considered surplus, it is money that the Town must set aside to work on specific projects.

LISTERS

Reappraisal is 81% complete at this time. Lynn Miller stated that she along with Stearns Allen and Tom Vickery have been working on factors and explained that there have been a lot of high sales, which throws the equalized grand list off. If there were only one or two, they could be thrown out but there have been several. She stated they planned to set aside one night for training before any complaints are heard. The Town Administrator stated that the Selectboard, as part of the BCA needed to participate. Lynn reported that she would be certified by July of 2003, and does not plan on leaving Morristown. She recommended instituting a sales questionnaire for both buyers and sellers. She has been keeping a spreadsheet for the past three years to help track the property sales in town.

When asked about the E911 workload and how much time she spent doing that she replied that she didn't know what percentage of her time was spent on E911, but there was a lot of forms to complete and document. The chairman asked if she did all of the E911 work and why didn't she delegate it to someone else. Lynn remarked she could with the right person. Carol, Mary Ann and Lynn left at this time.

OLD BUSINESS

MINUTES:

On a motion by Lee Sturtevant, seconded by Mark Struhsacker, the Selectboard approved the minutes of November 12th and November 18th as presented.

FIRE TRUCK BID:

The Town Administrator reported that the contract information for the fire truck had been given to the Town's attorney for review and has not heard back from him yet. He also has talked with Bill Dobbs of Emergency Equipment Supply regarding pricing options. Copies of a letter emailed to the Administration Office were presented to the Selectboard. The letter showed a breakdown of additional costs that included the PTO driven generator on the new fire truck. The Board asked the Fire Chief what was the life expectancy of the truck. Wally stated 25 to 30 years, as the body was stainless with a poly tank.

Prepayment of the chassis was discussed with reference made to the options listed in Mr. Dobbs' letter. (Attached)

Brian Greenia made the motion to authorize the expenditure not to exceed $249,503 to purchase the fire truck pumper from Emergency Equipment Supply Inc. utilizing the chassis prepayment option and performance bond if approved by the Town Attorney as to the sales agreement. Lee Sturtevant seconded the motion.

Discussion included the length of note and where the money was to come from and the Board decided to amend the motion.

Lee Sturtevant moved to amend the motion to include an eight (8) year pay down, and was seconded by James Paige. The amendment passed unanimously.

A vote was called on the amended motion and was passed unanimously.

The Administrator was instructed to ask the attorney to prepare the performance bond.

On a motion by Lee Sturtevant, seconded by James Paige, the Board authorized the Town Administrator to sign on behalf of the Selectboard for note and bond issues.

Carol Bradley returned at this time.

NEW BUSINESS

USDA – FSA BALLOTT

The USDA Farm Service Agency is requesting the Town of Morristown to vote for not more than one of four candidates listed on the FSA Committee Election Ballot, or they may write in a name.

On a motion by Lee Sturtevant, seconded by James Paige, the Selectboard unanimously nominated Andre G. Valcour Sr. as their candidate of choice to serve on the FSA Committee and have the TA sign on behalf of the Board.

EMPLOYEE ADVISORY BOARD

After Chair Brian Greenia's comment at the November 12th Selectboard meeting, that it might be a good idea to have a panel of employees to meet with the Selectboard to discuss the rising costs of health insurance premiums, the Town Administrator drafted a memo to the Selectboard with a copy given to department heads regarding an Employee Advisory Board (EAB). An EAB is one of two recommendations that were listed in the May 2000 Blue Sky Report that are still not realized. After discussing the issue at the staff meeting, employees revised the EAB draft Policy and presented copies to the Selectboard tonight. (Attached) At this time, if authorized by the Selectboard, the EAB will consist of seven employees, three from the Highway Dept., three from General Government and the Police Chief. The Group felt that the initial board should be reviewed in June of 2003 and possibly downsized in number. The employee group elected the Police Chief as spokesperson.

The Selectboard was in favor of forming the EAB. Member Sturtevant felt it would be good for morale and an education process for both groups. Chair Greenia had concerns of how the Selectboard could go to the EAB for information. It was explained that in **Section D. Advisory Meetings** it clearly states that a minimum of two meetings per year would be required with the option for either board to call additional meetings.

On a motion by Lee Sturtevant, seconded by James Paige, the Selectboard authorized the Morristown employees to establish an Employee Advisory Board using their proposal 11/22/02. So passed.

OTHER BUSINESS

LCSD BUDGET INCREASE:

Chair Brian Greenia encouraged all Selectboard members to attend the Sheriff's Advisory Board Meeting.

Member Bryer returned at this time.

SNOW PACKERS:

Min Cote of the Lamoille County Snow Packers requested permission for snowmobile travel on the same Morristown roads as last year. Discussion included the wear on highways from studded tracks, the ability to pick up the blade on the groomer when crossing roads and enforcement. Min concurred that this was exactly the same list of roads as the one approved last year and plans are in progress to provide training on trail rules and violations at schools.

On a motion by Lee Sturtevant, seconded by James Paige, the Selectboard voted to accept the list of roads as presented and will post same in the News & Citizen.

Min Cote stated that they did not encourage travel on public highways. Their purpose was to be used as a means of traveling from one trail to another.

WARRANTS

On a motion by James Paige, seconded by Shaun Bryer, the Selectboard authorized the warrants as listed on the Memorandum dated 11/25/02. (Attached)

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

The 2003-2004 budget was the main topic for discussion. The Fiscal Office had provided new Budget Overview (goldenrod) sheets dated 11/25/02 to replace the pink ones in the Budget Books. The Administrator explained to the Board that there were increases in the budget that were not within our control, but were items voted on by the people at Town Meeting such as

VMERS Plan D for the Union Police Officers, various pieces of equipment i.e.: fire truck, ambulance and sand screen as well as health insurance increases. Carol left at this time.

New highway practices and equipment were discussed. After talking with George Cormier the Administrator reported that there was a possibility of a request for the town to plow snow for the school next year. Other discussion included septic fees and reserving funds to address failed systems.

LRSWMD has requested to hire the Highway Department to plow the recycling station when needed. The Administrator informed the Board he has agreed to this and it would generate $1,000 revenue for the town. It was felt the expected grant revenues from the LRSWMD recycling station work should be set aside to establish a reserve fund for junk ordinance enforcement issues.

The Administrator informed the Board of the Clock installation situation at the Union Bank Park. Chair Brian Greenia requested the Town Administrator meet with the Bank's President, and if needed he would go as well.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

On a motion by Shaun Bryer, seconded by Lee Sturtevant, the Board moved into Executive Session on a personnel matter with the Town Administrator and the Administrative Assistant in attendance at 9:18 PM.

On a motion by James Paige, seconded by Mark Struhsacker, the Board moved out of Executive Session at 9:45 PM.

ADJOURN

On a motion by James Paige, seconded by Shaun Bryer, the Selectboard adjourned at 9:46 PM.

Respectfully submitted and filed this 2nd day of December 2002
Barbara Cochran, Scribe

Minutes to be presented for approval at the next regular meeting.

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Minutes Approved Date