

# **TOWN OF MORRISTOWN SELECTBOARD MEETING**

**JULY 22, 2002**

**Members Present:** Brian Greenia, Donald Anderson, James Paige, Mark Struhsacker and Shaun Bryer

**Department Heads:** Paul D. McGinley, TA; Chief Richard Keith, MPD and Mark Leonard, ZA

**Guests:** Steve Rae, Kevin Lane (Morristown Conservation Commission member), Sam Guy and Julia Compagna (Morristown Planning Commission Co-chairs), Heidi Krantz, Amy Noyes, Laura Walsh, Jim Mahoney, LEDC President, Chris D'Elia, Dept. of Economic Development Commissioner and John Sullivan, LEDC

At 5:55 PM the Selectboard began their regular scheduled meeting at the close of the Copley Trust meeting.

## **GUESTS**

### **MCC APPOINTMENT:**

Morristown Conservation Commission member Kevin Lane introduced Steve Rae to the Selectboard. The MCC has recommended that Steve be appointed as the eighth member of their board.

The Selectboard chair explained that as a board, they like to meet new appointees to be able to put names and faces together and asked Steve why he was interested in joining the MCC board. Steve replied that he had attended both Trails and Conservation meetings over the past year and Kathleen had asked if he would be interested in joining as a board member. He continued that he is now retired from teaching and felt this would be a good opportunity for him to be more involved with the town.

*On a motion by Donald Anderson, seconded by James Paige, the Selectboard appointed Steve Rae to a 3-year term on the Morristown Conservation Commission.*

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **MINUTES:**

*On a motion by Donald Anderson, seconded by Shaun Bryer, the Selectboard approved the minutes of July 8, 2002 as presented. Jim Paige abstained, as he was not at the last meeting.*

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municipality can enter into an agreement for tax stabilization with a property owner on the entire tax bill, but the draw back is the town enters into this type of agreement without state approval; the community is liable to the education department for any shortfall from this stabilization agreement. The third option Mr. D'Elia felt was the most attractive. This is where a community enters into an agreement on the municipal liability and then they approach the Vermont Economic Progress Council for approval of the agreement as it relates to the state education side of the equation. If approved, the community is no longer liable to make up the difference.

The tax agreement can range from a three-year agreement up to a ten-year agreement and will not show on the state's grand list until the agreement is completed. This option is more attractive to property owners, because they receive tax stabilization on the entire tax bill rather than just on the municipal portion.

Mr. D'Elia explained that there are requirements that must be dealt with in order to utilize the third option. The Council meets once a month; therefore there is a three to four week turnaround time and applicants need to comply with three required elements. They are: 1) one must demonstrate that tax stabilization is necessary for their deal to go forward; 2) submit with the application a series of data forms which covers various information over a ten-year period to understand the fiscal nature of the project and put the data into a cost benefit model which would show the state for example: that for \$20,000 worth of property tax incentives, there are \$100,000 in economic benefits generated in other forms of taxes, such as sales tax, corporate income taxes, rooms and meals taxes etc. This is a cost benefit incentive. The third element is that there are nine guidelines in statutes that the business entity needs to respond to such as types of jobs created, the quality of the jobs, compatible with the Town Plan or Regional Plan, opportunity for advancement to name a few. Not all of the guidelines pertain to each business.

These are usually based on new activity in town and do not pertain to existing businesses. If an existing business asked for stabilization under the second element, they would not succeed because they are not creating any new activity.

Two other property tax incentives are: reallocation of education funds, which deals with infrastructure improvements for existing businesses and tax increment financing districts, where municipalities create geographic boundaries around several parcels of land. Any economic development activity within that district, you can pull the property tax revenues associated with that activity to pay back the bond entered into for infrastructure purposes.

When asked if tax stabilization could be used as a way for sewer expansion to outlying areas, Chris responded "probably not". There are other grant funds available for such project improvements such as the CDBG. Reclaiming leach fields was also discussed, but advised it would be a very expensive project.

The community in a warned public meeting must authorize the Selectboard the right to enter into tax stabilization agreements. When a Selectboard has been given the authority

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ordinances and possible ways to enforce the ordinances, problems with the ordinances, other alternatives and possible penalties and fines. Recommendations were given as well as a draft model ordinance.

Suggestions included providing one or two "free removal" or "reduced rate" days to allow residents to dispose of their trash at a local recycling station during the year. The Town of Wolcott recently did a reduced rate day for their community.

The Board asked the Zoning Administrator if his part-time schedule would allow the additional work to enforce this ordinance. Mark felt confident that he could handle it at this time, but more hours may be needed in the future. He felt the "junk" problem should get smaller with time once the ordinance was in place.

The Selectboard will take action on the proposed ordinance at their next regular meeting.

**GRANT UPDATE:**

Heidi Krantz presented a Memorandum of Understanding between the Community of Morristown, the Village of Morrisville and the Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund, Inc. regarding tasks, responsibilities and phases of the project for the Selectboard chair's signature. Approximately \$60,000 in funds and in-kind services will be made available through this grant to develop a working relationship among town boards and organizations, encourage economic development and host a community forum to receive input for the Town Plan revisions, share current projects and celebrate recent achievements.

The Town Plan, sewerage issues and "Downtown" Designation are all very important to the town and community at this time. Available commercial space in town was revisited along with encouraging new businesses and ways to make them feel welcome. An annual grant or loan utilizing MDF monies was suggested to encourage building improvements.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**MPD NON- DEPARTMENT DUTY FEES:**

Chief Richard Keith requested increasing the Non-Departmental Duty Fees from \$30.00 to \$36.00 per hour for an officer. The cruiser fee would stay the same at \$15.00 per hour. The officer would be paid \$30.00 and \$6.00 would be used to cover the officer's cost to the town. He felt another adjustment would be required next year due to the increase in the cost of the plan "D" retirement.

*On a motion by Donald Anderson, seconded by Mark Struhsacker, the Board set the MPD Non-Department Duty Fees at \$36.00 per hour for an officer and \$15.00 per hour for a cruiser.*

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## **CEMETERY INSURANCE ISSUES:**

Although the town insures the Pleasant View Cemetery and the Morrisville Cemetery Association, VLCT has recommended that both be designated as insured, as the town has no control over who is elected to the cemetery boards or their operations.

*On a motion by Donald Anderson, seconded by Shaun Bryer, the Selectboard moved to include the Morristown Cemetery Association and the Pleasant View Cemetery as insured on the town's policies.*

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

### **SCHOFF REQUEST:**

The Selectboard acknowledged receipt of a July 15, 2002 letter from James Schoff regarding speed limit signs. The issue was postponed until the August 5<sup>th</sup> meeting with a request for an update from the Morristown Police Department.

### **JUNKYARD LICENSE RENEWAL:**

Charles and Rebecca Hess submitted an application for renewal of their junkyard license for approval.

*On a motion by Brian Greenia, seconded by Donald Anderson, the Board approved the request for renewal of a junkyard license by Charles and Rebecca Hess.*

Discussion included the number of vehicles for sale out in front of the property and whether they were in violation of their permit.

### **SIDEWALK COMPLAINTS:**

Board member Shaun Bryer stated that he had received a complaint on the sidewalk next to Melben's restaurant. He was informed that the sidewalk near the handicap ramp for the restaurant had dropped, which prevents certain styles of wheelchairs from using the ramp. The sidewalk at that location has pavers and they have shifted. The Board asked the Administrator to see that this was corrected.

### **OTHER CEMETERY ISSUES:**

Don Anderson was concerned of the washed out roads at the Pleasant View Cemetery and asked if the Highway Department had gone up there yet. Paul McGinley said they had not had a chance yet. He also informed the Board that King's Property Maintenance were ready for the topsoil to fill in the graves. The Administrator would handle.

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**BOARD OF LIQUOR CONTROL**

The Board of Liquor Control opened at 9:30 PM to address an off premise consumption catering permit request from Green Mountain Catering for a wedding reception to be held on the Randolph Road on August 10, 2002.

*On a motion by Mark Struhsacker, seconded by Donald Anderson, the Board authorized the off premise catering permit request by Green Mountain Catering for August 10, 2002.*

**ADJOURN**

*On a motion by Donald Anderson, seconded by Mark Struhsacker, the Board of Liquor Control adjourned at 9:33 PM.*

Barbara Cochran, Scribe  
Minutes filed July 25, 2002

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Minutes Approved

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

