

Minutes for Town of Pawlet Select Board
Pawlet Town Hall
November 24, 2015

Members in Attendance:

Mike Beecher
Sarah Ludlam
Bob Jones
Charles Weeden
Ed Cleveland

Others in Attendance:

James Holtzman
Jim Boyle
Eric Mach
Elizabeth Gibson
Daniel Maloney
Elaine Decker
Charles Mason
Karen Folger
Keith Mason
Timothy Hughes-Muse

Meeting Called to order at 7:00 pm

Item 1: Review Past Meeting Minutes of the November 10th, 2015 meeting of the Select Board. Ms. Ludlam made motion to accept the minutes as written, seconded by Mr. Cleveland motion carried, voted and approved.

Item 2: Clean Energy Design Group, Inc.; James Holtzman & Dan Maloney

CEDG works with municipalities throughout VT, but is based in the mid-west and are proposing a 1.6 megawatt solar installation on the Town's decommissioned landfill. There are economic incentives and tax benefits for solar installation that are time sensitive. A solar installation at the landfill with a 25 year agreement, with cash payout to the Town of Pawlet could be \$25,000 per year. Additionally, the town would be able to purchase electricity at a 20% discount. CEDG would handle design and permitting of the project. There is no obligation to commit from the town for CEDG to make an initial proposal to Green Mountain Power that would analyze the feasibility of the program. Project needs to be commissioned by the end of Calendar Year 2016 to be eligible for economic incentives. The project would be approximately 7-8 acres. The solar installation design would incorporate the design requirements of the landfill. There would be no cost to the town whatsoever. Ecological sensitivity is important to CEDG, as is assembling a local team for contracting. The wastewater treatment plant, the school, and other municipal entities would be able to accept the electricity at 20% discount.

CEDG would require a LOI from the town to move forward with an interconnection application to Green Mountain Power.

The audience and select board members asked clarifying and detail questions to Mr. Holtzman. Select Board Members polled the audience. The audience has a positive attitude toward this project. The consensus of the board is for the Select Board will review the form Letter of Interest from CEDG and proceed at the next meeting.

Item 3: Restructuring the Lister Department, Jim Boyle, Elaine Decker, Charles Mason, Karen Folger

Mr. Boyle works as a consultant and as an assessor for different towns.

From Mr. Boyle's perspective, an assessor's board would be advantageous in that:

- it creates a better relationship between the selectboard and the lister's board.
- the assessor does not have to be someone from the town.
- it allows for selection of candidates based on qualification.

The Board continued to question Mr. Boyle and gathered the following information:

- Mr. Boyle thinks that Pawlet will likely need an assessor and an assistant assessor in order to perform the work adequately.
- The change from elected lister to appointed assessor is a change in the town's by-laws and is required to be a balloted vote.
- In other towns, the change in structure has led to a decrease in the budget for assessment.
- A reassessment would be done in-house by the Assessor and assistant Assessor.
- A re-evaluation would be hired out to another contractor.
- The grievance process would be similar, except the the assessor would need to be voted to the board of abatement.

A member of the audience pointed out that because Pawlet is a chartered town, the change in structure would require legislative approval.

Item 4: Energy Group

Regarding the PACE program, there is still no word. Ms. Ludlam will follow up

Regarding the heating for the auditorium, no bids have come. Mr Cleveland and Mr. Hughes-Muse will follow up.

Item 5: Zoning Administrator

Mr. Mach received a permit application for Edwards Excavation and it has been sent to the DRB for consideration.

The town plan is ready for public hearing and that is scheduled Monday December 28th.

Mr. Mach stated that there are a few things that still need to be addressed in the unified bylaws, namely the threshold for required permits and the ability of municipalities to build equipment sheds. Mr. Mach outlined the future work of the Planning Commission stating that the planning commission will review the unified bylaws and begin the work necessary to renew the Village Center Designation for Pawlet and West Pawlet Villages.

Item 6: Road Foreman, Keith Mason

- Rob Faley and the VTrans shed at the gravel pit want less than five acres. VTrans wants to move forward and would like a figure from the town for the purchase.

- Dodge Truck needs rear brakes and CV joint.
- Yellow Mack needs brake work also. Maybe \$2,500.
- Ed Lewis would like slate. The town requires certificate of insurance, filed with the Town Clerk, for Mr. Lewis to proceed.
- Personnel issues were discussed.
- Tire chains need to be ordered. Likely to be \$2,400.
- Salt bins are full.
- Nortrax is going to fix the bucket on the backhoe.
- If the snow does not come, the crew will begin on brush cutting on paved roads.
- The Euclid Street stop sign needs a new post.
- “Share the Road” signs did not get ordered because there are not currently available.

Item 7: Town Treasurer’s Memo

Reviewed Town Treasurer’s Memo.

Ms. Ludlam made motion to approve the warrants, seconded by Mr. Weeden, motion carried, voted and approved.

Item 8: Wastewater Treatment Plant

Kee Equipment has not yet confirmed that they will fix the bearing and level the platforms. Mr. Beecher continues to pursue remediation without resorting to legal action. Other parties are cooperating.

Item 9: Heating Oil

The board discussed the merits of the different contracts with Mac’s Fuels for heating oil. Ms. Ludlam made a motion to accept a fixed price for heating oil, Mr. Cleveland seconded, motion carried, voted and approved.

Item 10: Public Information Officer

Based on a suggestion made to the Select Board that there should be redundant communication systems in case of emergency, the members of the Select Board request that the management of the town’s official website be accessible to the Select Board through the town’s Public Information Officer, Elizabeth Gibson, and through the Select Board Administrative Assistant, Mr. Hughes-Muse. Currently, Elizabeth Gibson is the town’s Public Information Officer, and expertly manages the website, newsletter, and the eNewsletter and the printing of Town Report.

Item 11: Structural Fire Debris

Mr. Weeden cited Pawlet Town Ordinance #73-2, Governing Structural Fire Debris. The cited ordinance states that “any and all debris left or resulting from structural fire or fires shall be removed within ninety days from the date of the fire”. The Select Board has instructed Mr. Hughes-Muse to draft a letter to Laverne James informing him of the ordinance.

Ms. Ludlam made a motion to adjourn at 9:06 pm, Mr. Cleveland seconded, motion carried, voted and approved.

Respectfully submitted by Timothy Hughes-Muse, Select Board Administrative Assistant.