



## MINUTES OF THE PAWLET SELECT BOARD

December 13, 2011

**7:01PM** Meeting called to order by Chair Mike Beecher

Present: Mike Beecher, Clarence Decker, Joe Clark, Sue LaPorte, Bob Jones

Audience: Keith Mason, Fred Stone, Tom Pyle of Pyle Agency, Jason Curtis of Canon Group, James Glick, Judy Coolidge, Lenny Gibson, Carl Eberth

The draft minutes of the November 29 meeting were reviewed. *Clarence moved that the minutes be accepted as written. Sue seconded, motion passed.*

### Audience:

**Jason Curtis**, representing the copier and software company owned by Canon, reported that he has been working with Judy and Deb for a few years now. Regarding the present copier that has been here for 7 years, the Town has canceled the maintenance contract on it, and the parts are harder to get. Within a few months, Jason says, his company won't be able to service the machine any more. The best option would be to purchase a basic setting, low volume machine, about 2,000 pages per month. This 25-copy/minute machine also offers network printing (standard), scanning-to-file capability, sorts, collates, and serves as a fax machine. He guarantees to be here within four hours of initial service call.

The Town's present lease on old machine is \$118/month. Jason says that the Town can request a buyout to purchase this machine, but it's like buying a car that doesn't have parts to go with it. He quotes a five-year lease for new machine: \$65/month with maintenance of \$26 per month, so \$91/month for a faster machine with more options. The Town would be getting a faster machine with more capabilities for less than what it is now paying. Jason's company will cover the cost of taking the old copier back and shipping it back to the lease company.

*Sue moves to accept the proposal for the new Canon 2025 copier, five-year lease without option to buy for \$91/month. If we lease it we are locked into a term lease so we can't terminate early if we decide to buy the machine as a better option. To lease for five years vs. buy is a difference of \$700 for five years. Discussion of lease vs. purchase.*

*Joe seconds, motion to buy the copier without option to buy is passed.*

**Tom Pyle** advises the board on health insurance. Currently the town's plan is with MVP, and the rates went up 6% this year, an increase that is less than in previous years. Some of the competing plans ("Blues") went up more, like 10%. Tom recommends the town stick with MVP in for another year because it is the most competitive price-wise for the type of design the

town has. He offers to return after January 1 and review the plan with those who are enrolled in it.

**Fred Stone:** I am here to discuss the lack of communication between the Planning Commission and the board and have asked the PC clerk to communicate to the board re: the last two meetings minutes. Did the minutes come through? Have you seen them? Is that the way to do it?

The board did not get those minutes until tonight (minutes from the Oct 24 meeting; did not get the November minutes, which are draft).

Fred: But in the case of this problem regarding the appointment of the alternate to the RRPC, if you had had the draft, would it have made a difference in your deliberations? How can the planning commission be assured that you are going to read our minutes?

Board: If it gets to the town clerk it will be with our paperwork.

Fred: We will be talking about someone from the planning commission being here at the board meetings. We had asked Eric to present our recommendation for the alternate to the board, but it did not come through the way it should have.

Clarence: Deb Hawkins wants the email for Fred so the minutes can be emailed back and forth between the SB and PC.

Elizabeth: The board minutes are posted on the Town of Pawlet website. We could post the PC minutes there also. Fred says that is a plan and will have Jackie Lappan, PC clerk, send Elizabeth the PC minutes.

**Keith Mason:** discussion regarding various Highway Department issues: uniforms, information about replacing the 2000 dump truck, conversations with insurance company regarding equipment reimbursement. Keith also talked about work needed to the Town green space and the road by the library; Decker mentions drainage concerns.

**Lenny Gibson:** re: fiber optics letter to the Town and offer from Sover.net, Lenny has reviewed the offer and has also talked with Deb. VTel will put fiber in here anyway, trunk-type. Sover.net is building a trunk line and is offering a deal to municipal buildings, but the town will be getting it from VTel anyway. VTel is doing fiber for the whole town this summer. So there is no reason to think about the Sover.net offer; VTel will cover it. Keith is concerned about Vtel and Town ROW, any VTel work must conform with Town specs. The Board needs to review permits before construction starts.

**Old Business:**

**Budget:** needs to be finalized. Review of increases/decreases. *Joe moves to accept the general fund budget of \$334,756. Sue seconds, passed.*

Highway budget: discussion regarding whether to give raise to highway personnel. The Board gave a raise last year. Keith says that the raise last year was more than offset by reductions in other benefits: health insurance, uniforms. The Board points out that the town is also incurring higher health insurance premiums this year and not passing them onto the highway workers. The salary discussion continues. The Board decides against raises. *Bob moves to accept the highway budget of \$378,786. Clarence seconds; passed.*

*Clarence moves to approve wastewater budget of \$67,500. Bob seconds; passed*

**Other Highway:** Keith reminds the board about two manholes along the discharge line of the West Pawlet wastewater treatment plant that are now covered and no longer visible. Keith will check on them while Leon is working over there.

**Audit:** Mike Beecher signed the audit papers for the 2011 audit by Mudgitt.

**Bills:** Joe is not signing the elevator contract payment until the elevator issues get resolved. John Thrasher is looking into those problems. John will review the elevator contract and bill that we just received for work that should have been done when the elevator was installed anyway.

**Irene recovery reimbursement:** Clarence reports that the Town has received the insurance check for the wastewater plant damage and town hall damage, and the Town has also received its first FEMA check.

**Warning item:** Add \$10K appropriation line item on warning for wastewater plant upgrade. *Clarence moved, Joe seconded, passed.*

**Planning Commission alternate to RRPC:** The board considers whether to revisit its appointment of the alternate representative to the Rutland Regional Planning Commission.

Joe asks if the alternate term changes at town meeting. Fred assumes it would change at town meeting. Decker says that he and Deb Hawkins have ascertained that it is a yearly appointment, usually done right after town meeting at the annual organizational meeting of the board. Consequently in this case the board would reappoint in March after Lenny's term ends. Fred comments that Eric did not follow through on the PC's recommendation and asks the board to reconsider both candidates at this time. Sue says that the board does not need to reconsider; Joe says to wait until Lenny's term expires in March – Clarence and Bob agree. Consensus of the board is to wait until the board's organizational meeting in March to reappoint the Planning Commission's alternate representative to the Rutland Regional Planning Commission.

Clarence reminds Fred that the board's organizational meeting is the Wednesday after town meeting and that all applicants should submit letters and resumes to the board. Fred tells the board that the Planning Commission would be upset if its recommendation were not taken by the board.

**Correspondence:**

The Board signed the certificate of correction to the grand list re: breakdown of Andy Farmer's homestead from his land in West Pawlet. This change does not affect the total appraisal amount.

The Board reviewed the Rutland County budget.

The Town has received the Vermont municipal fiscal survey of costs resulting from Irene damage. The Town needs to fill it out so the Legislature can make some decisions regarding abatements in property taxes. The Listers will be asked to complete and return the survey.

Town Clerk notice: Town offices closed Dec 26-Jan 2 for holidays.

Wastewater treatment plant report: one pump failed but was replaced on 12/1.

Town has received notice of May 5-6 United Counseling Service of Bennington bike race, "weekend tour of the dragons," which will pass through Pawlet. The race is cosponsored by the Bennington Cycle Club.

**Other Business:**

Joe reports more on the elevator work. A repair person from Shindler corrected everything and gave Joe the round key to get into the emergency panel – and now the Town has a bill for \$964 for that work. What does the Town's elevator service contract really mean? The Town is paying \$900 per year for that service contract. John Thrasher is looking into the matter. Joe has also called the elevator inspection company and they will inspect on Monday, December 19 and the Town will be billed for that inspection.

Joe reports that the town garage overhead door will be here and installed next week.

The Board discusses whether the Pawlet and West Pawlet fire departments are covered for workmen's compensation. Joe is investigating with VLCT to be sure, after the incident in Colchester where an injury was not initially covered. Statute presently says that you are only covered if you are "in the line of duty."

Sue has arranged for a free energy audit of the library and has gotten an estimate for insulating the Town Hall basement. She will get a second estimate for that job.

Discussion of the dog incident on Herrick Brook Road. A person was bitten; the dog was destroyed.

**8:45 PM** *Clarence moved to adjourn the meeting, Sue seconded.*

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Gibson

kf