

Final Minutes
SELECTBOARD, TOWN OF PAWLET
February 12, 2019
7:00 pm at Pawlet Town Hall
Regular Meeting

Members in Attendance:

Bob Jones
Mike Beecher
Ed Cleveland
Chuck Weeden
John Malcolm

Others in Attendance:

Kristin Powers
Jay Luebke - PEG-TV
Julie Mach
Bob Morlino
Ray Duquette, Sr.
Paul Tilander
Michelle Tilander
John Davis
Valerie Davis
Ben Tarbell
Frank Norman
Eli Anita Norman

EVENT

1. Call to order at 7:06 pm
2. Addition or Deletion of Agenda Items
 - a. Additions: None.
 - b. Deletions: None.
3. Introduction of those present by chairperson
4. Approval of minutes from previous meeting
 - A. Motion to accept the Minutes of January 29, 2019 with edits made to Item 8, Second bullet item.
 - Mover: Ed Cleveland
 - 2nd: John Malcolm

- Discussion: No further discussion therefore the minutes are approved (unanimous).
- 5. Appearances by local citizens and visitors.
 - Ray Duquette, Sr. - Read aloud email correspondences in relation to the Briar Hill shooting facility, along with excerpts from the Unified Bylaws. Inquired as to when penalties due to non-compliance would be collected by the Town. Requested that the Board converse further with Zoning Administrator, Hal Wilkins.
 - Michelle Tilander - Thanked Ray for his words and seconded his notions.
 - Mr. Beecher responded, sharing that the DRB will be holding an Executive Session on Thursday, 2/14/19 to discuss this item.
 - John Davis - Inquired as to why no one has been up to the property to assess. Mr. Beecher responded, stating that the Board is aiming to handle the situation correctly and appropriately.
 - Bob Morlino - Asked for the Board's feedback on the Rutland County Public Works Mutual Aid Agreement. Also shared that he is updating the Local Emergency Management Plan (this is an annual update). The format has changed considerably this year. Mr. Morlino shared the changes with the Board, one of which included emergency purchasing power. The Town has until May 1st to have the plan approved by the Select Board.
 - Motion made to enter into the Rutland County Public Works Mutual Aid Agreement.
 - Mover: Ed Cleveland
 - 2nd: John Malcolm
 - Discussion: None
 - Result: Approved (Unanimous)
 - Memo: Mr. Beecher signed the document

- Julie Mach - Shared she has accepted the position to work with Judy Coolidge as Assistant to Treasurer. She shared that the BRSU has decided to take further steps try to maintain Julie's role with the Board of Directors due to the belief that the two roles were not conflicting with one another. Julie requested that, if in agreement with the BRSU's opinion, the Select Board also share support in her maintaining both roles. The Board agreed that it would be great to have Julie maintain her role with BRSU while also fulfilling the role of Assistant Treasurer.
- Ben Tarbell - Inquired about the deed for his property, obtained last year, sharing there was information in the deed regarding the requirement of a 30ft berm which was not stated in the agreement or draft deed.
 - Mr. Beecher recused himself from all dealings of this subject.
 - Mr. Weeden replied stating that the Board had waived the 30 ft. berm. Mr. Weeden said that he would contact John Thrasher to address this.
 - Mr. Beecher interjected to share that John Thrasher had suggested a 50ft right-of-way and 30ft berm to protect from quarry activity.
 - Discussion ensued. Mr. Weeden to contact John Thrasher to gain clarification on the subject.

6. Announcements:

- The Highway & Bridge Restrictions for 2019 have been updated for the period between 4/1/2019 and 3/31/2020.
- The DRB will be meeting in Executive Session on Thursday 2/14/19 at 5:30pm.

7. Reports:

A. Zoning Administrator's Report:

- The Board reviewed the Zoning Administrator's Report.

B. Road Foreman's Report:

- No report at this meeting.

- Mr. Malcolm shared a question received from a citizen inquiring as to when the Town will post roads to keep trucks from driving, etc. Further discussion ensued regarding current state of roads.
- C. Planning Commission's Report:
- The Board reviewed the Planning Commission's Report.
 - Kristin to contact Elizabeth regarding Town website corrections.
- D. Assessor Report:
- No report at this meeting.
- E. Town Clerk's Memo:
- The Board reviewed the Town Clerk's Memo.
 - Mr. Beecher read aloud a letter from Christopher Viens of the Waterbury Select Board. See attached.
 - Bob Jones signed the Municipal Excess Weight Permit, yet the item from rk Miles is lacking proof of insurance. Must include that before going out.
 - Motion made to accept the Liquor License for Sheldon's Market.
 - Mover: Chuck Weeden
 - 2nd: Bob Jones
 - Discussion: None
 - Result: Approved (unanimous)
- F. Town Treasurer's Memo:
- The Board reviewed the Town Treasurer's Memo.
 - The Board signed checks.
 - The Board reviewed the warrants.
 1. Motion to approve the warrants
 2. Mover: Chuck Weeden
 3. Second: Ed Cleveland
 4. Discussion: None
 5. Result: Approved (Unanimous)
- G. Emergency Management Director's Report:

- The Board reviewed the Emergency Management Director's Report.
- H. Health Officer's Report:
- The Board reviewed the Health Officer's Report.
- I. Waste Water Treatment Facility:
- No report at this meeting.
8. Old or unfinished business:
- James Glick and Eric Mach to be contacted to confirm their desire to continue working with the Regional Planning Commission and Regional Transportation Council.
 - The Board confirmed that the rental fee would still be \$30.00 for the Mettowee Maker's use of the main level of the Town Hall. Kristin will communicate this with Helen.
 - Mr. Cleveland shared that there is a mold and mildew issue in the ducts of the Library that needs to be looked into.
 - The Board began discussions about the Roads Crew vacation time item brought to the Board by Judy Coolidge. Ideas were brainstormed, and Kristin to talk with Judy regarding conversations and next best steps.
9. New Business:
- Mr. Weeden to follow up on current status of the D. Wood property in West Pawlet.
 - Mr. Beecher reviewed mail.

10. Motion made to Adjourn at 8:50pm

- Mover: Ed Cleveland
- Second: John Malcolm
- Discussion: None

January 30, 2019

To Vermont City Councils, Select Boards, Boards of Trustees:

Over 70% of the roads in Vermont, about 11,382 miles, are maintained by Vermont cities, towns and villages. Our municipalities are facing a crisis in the upkeep of highway infrastructure as needs far outweigh the financial resources available to address the problem.

Over the past 10 years, the general state aid to highways transferred from the state to Vermont municipalities has remained static, forcing towns to increase already high property tax burdens to address highway infrastructure needs. The stress on the property tax has been exacerbated as municipal budgets are forced to address more and more issues, such as the clean-up of Lake Champlain and storm water runoff, in general.

As a means to offer a solution to this problem that is almost universally understood, a proposal is being contemplated which would increase the taxes on gasoline and diesel fuel by 4 cents per gallon. Some have suggested the tax should be tied to the retail price of the fuels, dropping off if the price per gallon exceeds, for example, \$3.00 per gallon. Others have suggested the tax should be implemented and then stay in place for 5 years when it would automatically "sunset", unless an analysis of its economic impacts and its efficacy in improving highway infrastructure indicated it should stay in place.

At this time we are not certain how much revenue might be generated if this tax was implemented, but it appears it may be more than \$10 million annually. The best means to distribute this money to municipal governments appears to be through the formula which distributes general state aid to highways. As such, this revenue would not fund a grant program, but it would make more "unrestricted" dollars available to municipal highway budgets.

In order to ensure that the additional revenue was actually spent to improve municipal highway infrastructure, it might be necessary for municipalities to file a report with VTrans each year showing how the additional funds were spent and what infrastructure improvements were made with the money. It is very important that these additional revenues are not used to simply "buy down" the property tax rates in our municipalities, so a reporting requirement may be a small price to pay if municipal officials can secure this new tax in the legislature.

If you, the elected officials in your municipality, believe more funding is needed to address failing highway infrastructure and you would like to see the revenues generated by broad based fuel taxes rather than through the property tax, please help to support this proposal. At the very least, send an e-mail to the select board members listed below indicating that your legislative body approves this concept. If possible, send a letter to your state representatives, state senators and to the chairpersons of the House and Senate Transportation Committees to show support. **Best yet, bring your letters in person to the state house when you come to VLCT's Local Government Day on February 14th.**

If we can pack the committee room with like-minded local officials who are passionate about fixing the failing infrastructure that we constantly hear about, perhaps we can get the legislature to do something to help our cause. The particular details about the size of tax, how long it should be in place and how the additional revenues can be distributed can be worked out later. **We need to show the legislature and the governor now that we need their help to get this job done.**

Sincerely,

Christopher Viens, Waterbury Select Board
cpviens@gmail.com

John Freitag, Strafford Select Board
jfreitag@straffordvt.org

- Result: Approved (Unanimous)