

Final Minutes
SELECTBOARD, TOWN OF PAWLET
June 15, 2021
7:00 pm Virtually via Zoom
Regular Meeting

Members in Attendance:

Mike Beecher
John Malcolm
Bob Jones
Jessica Van Oort
Rich Hulett

Others in Attendance:

Kristin Powers
Frank Nelson
Mark Frost
Harry Van Meter
Julie Mach
Nancy Morlino
Harley Cudney
Tom Collard
Ray Duquette, Sr.
Maureen Brown
Colin Stabile
Paul Tilander

EVENT

1. Call to order at 7:01 pm by Chairman, Mike Beecher.
2. Pledge of Allegiance.
3. Introduction of those present by chairperson.
4. Addition or Deletion of Agenda Items.
 - a. Additions:
 - ARPA Funds Discussion.
 - Upcoming Grants.
 - Governor's Update re: Covid-19.
 - b. Deletions: None.
5. Approval of minutes from previous meeting.

- Motion made to approve the minutes of June 1, 2021, with an edit to item 8, section H.
 - Mover: Jessica Van Oort
 - 2nd: Rich Hulett
 - Discussion: None.
 - Result: Bob Jones, John Malcolm, Rich Hulett, Jessica Van Oort – in favor. Approved.
- 6. Pre-Requested Appearances by local citizens and visitors:
 - None.
- 7. Announcements:
 - The Governor and Secretary of State's office have announced the culmination of the state of emergency declaration due to Covid-19.
- 8. Reports:
 - A. Zoning Administrator's Report:
 - No report at this meeting.
 - B. Planning Commission's (PPC) Report:
 - No report at this meeting.
 - C. Road Foreman's Report:
 - No report at this meeting.
 - The Board unanimously supported the submission of the letter of intent for the SFY22 Grants in Aid Program.
 - Ms. Powers to work with Mr. Mason on determining necessary details for this letter, to be filed by June 25, 2021.
 - The Board discussed a message received regarding a pothole on Buttons Falls Road.
 - Discussion ensued in regards to money spent on roadside mowing, as well as the possibility of the Town purchasing a tractor for this purpose.
 - Mr. Hulett offered an update on the Herrick Brook Road project, sharing that all looked well and progression is positive. He also shared a summary of his discussion regarding an online auction platform, which may be a great option for selling the Town's truck.
 - Motion made to authorize Rich Hulett to negotiate the sale of the Town truck (Dodge 5500) via online auction.

- Mover: John Malcolm
- 2nd: Bob Jones
- Discussion: None
- Result: Jessica Van Oort, Bob Jones, John Malcolm, Rich Hulett – in favor. Approved.

D. Assessor Report:

- The 2021 Grand List Abstract was lodged with the Clerk's office on 6/14/21. There was an increase of \$1,737,159.00 to the Grand List. Of that, \$892,178.00 was Utilities. Change of assessment notices and Current Use change of assessment notices were mailed by Certificate of Mailing on 6/14/21.
- Grievance hearings are scheduled for Monday, 7/12/21 from 9:00am-12:00pm. Covid protocol will be practiced and hearings will not be in person.
- All mapping changes have been sent to Cartographics Associates International for updating.
- The Assessor's office requests the Board sign the Certificates of No Appeals or Suits Pending for the 2019 and 2020 Grand Lists.
 - Motion made to authorize Bob Jones to sign the Certificate of Appeals or Suits Pending for the 2019 and 2020 Grand Lists.
 - Mover: Jessica Van Oort
 - 2nd: Rich Hulett
 - Discussion: None
 - Result: John Malcolm, Jessica Van Oort, Rich Hulett, Bob Jones – in favor. Approved.

E. Town Clerk, Deb Hawkins, shared a report with the Board:

- In light of the lifting of the Vermont Covid provisions, masks and appointments continue as requirements for business taking place in the Town Offices. The question has been raised regarding mask requirements for Town Hall yoga classes.
 - The Board discussed this, and the consensus was that the Town supported the yoga group's use of the Town Hall auditorium without the requirement of masks, so long as attendees access the auditorium via the side stairs or exterior elevator access.

- In 2020, many towns, including Pawlet, saw a significant increase in Land Record Recordings
- Effective June 16, 2021 at 12:01am, Secretary of State, Jim Condos, has announced the State of Emergency Expiration and the adjustments made to the Open Meeting Law (OML). All public bodies must now comply with the long-standing OML as it appears in 1 V.S.A. section 310-314.

F. Town Treasurer's Memo:

- Town Treasurer, Julie Mach, shared a memo with the Board, including: an overview of payroll, accounts payable, monies from the General Fund, Highway, Wastewater.
- The Treasurer's Office has received the letter from the Town's auditor to sign and return in order to commit to the audit this year. Ms. Mach seeks confirmation the Board wishes to proceed with this.
 - Motion made to commit to and proceed with signing a letter of intent with our auditor, Mr. Mudgett.
 - Mover: Bob Jones
 - 2nd: John Malcolm
 - Discussion: None
 - Result: John Malcolm, Rich Hulett, Bob Jones, Jessica Van Oort – in favor. Approved.
- Motion made to approve the warrants.
 - Mover: John Malcolm
 - 2nd: Jessica Van Oort
 - Discussion: None.
 - Result: John Malcolm, Bob Jones, Rich Hulett, Jessica Van Oort – in favor. Approved.
- The Board and Treasurer continued to work though and discuss the Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT) Financial Controls Checklist, which evolved to a conversation focusing on updated file storage practices. The Board and Ms. Mach also spoke about a fraud prevention policy.

- The Board and Ms. Mach discussed the benefit of establishing a Selectboard member serving as a liaison to the Treasurer's Office.
 - Motion made to establish Jessica Van Oort as the liaison to the Treasurer's Office.
 - Mover: John Malcolm
 - 2nd: Rich Hulett
 - Discussion: None
 - Result: Jessica Van Oort, Bob Jones, John Malcolm, Rich Hulett – in favor. Approved.
- G. Emergency Management Director's Report:
 - No report at this meeting
- H. Health Officer's Report:
 - No report at this meeting.
 - All necessary paperwork has been filed with the state to recommend Jennifer Sullivan as Pawlet's Health Officer.
- I. Waste Water Treatment Facility:
 - Jill Marsano of Vermont Utility Management Services (VTUMS) provided the Board with an update from the WWTF.
 - Jennie Auster, of Hoyle, Tanner & Associates, will be sending over a proposed scope and fee in the next few weeks. This is a continuation from the RFQ process.
 - Scope will include recommendation to apply for RD program in December of 2021 for bond vote in March 2022.
 - Ms. Marsano offered prospective projects to take place in FYE 2022.
- 8. Old or unfinished business:
 - ARPA Funds – Jessica Van Oort shared that she would be attending the webinar on how to request Pawlet's funds, which amount to a total of \$143,527.00. Half of these funds are available for request in the immediate future, and the second half will be available next year. The Town needs to authorize a representative to utilize the online portal to request funds – this includes the obtaining of some of the Town's identifiable information.

- Motion made to appoint Jessica Van Oort as the authorized Pawlet representative for the ARPA funds (with access to the portal, etc.).
 - Mover: John Malcolm
 - 2nd: Bob Jones
 - Discussion: None
 - Result: Jessica Van Oort, Bob Jones, Rich Hulett, John Malcolm – in favor. Approved.
 - Ms. Van Oort shared information she gained from Ed Bove at the Rutland Regional Planning Commission, who shared potential grant opportunities for the town-owned property in West Pawlet (beside the WWTF).
9. New Business:
- The Board and body discussed the memorandum from the Secretary of State's office regarding the lift of the Covid-19 state of emergency, as well as the adjustments made to the Open Meeting Law during that time. The next upcoming Selectboard meeting, scheduled for June 29, 2021, will be held in person at the Town Hall to comply with the long-standing Open Meeting Law.
11. Public Comment:
- Frank Nelson supported the notion of conducting business as usual at the Town Hall.
12. Motion made to Adjourn at 9:00pm.
- Mover: Bob Jones
 - Second: John Malcolm
 - Discussion: None.
 - Result: John Malcolm, Bob Jones, Jessica Van Oort, Rich Hulett - in favor. Approved (Unanimous)