

Final Minutes
SELECTBOARD, TOWN OF PAWLET
January 9, 2024
7:00 pm
Pawlet Town Hall
122 School Street, Pawlet, VT
& Virtually via Zoom

Members in Attendance:

Mike Beecher
Bob Jones
Jessica Van Oort
Perry Brown
Rich Hulett

Others in Attendance:

Kristin Powers
PEG-TV
Harley Cudney
Julie Mach
Frank Nelson
Ruth Lampi
Aaron Levine
Carl Diethelm
Carol Schoenwetter
Bob Morlino
Nancy Morlino
Lyndsi Barnes
Cori Rail
Jennifer Sullivan
Harry Van Meter
Lauren Herbert
Molly Beverage
Deb Hawkins
Eve Schaub
Huletts Landing (Zoom)
Williamsr (Zoom)
Pawlet Citizen (Zoom)
Two Unidentified Zoom Participants

EVENT

1. Call to order at 7:07pm by Chairman, Mike Beecher, with the Pledge of Allegiance and a review of the Rules of Procedure.
2. Introduction of those present, virtually and in person.
3. Addition or Deletion of Agenda Items.
 - a. Additions:
 - Executive Session to discuss confidential attorney-client communications made for the purpose of providing professional legal services to the body.
 - Facilities Report
 - Existing Town Garage Property Request
 - New Town Highway Garage
 - b. Deletions: None.
4. Approval of minutes from previous meeting.
 - Motion made to approve the minutes of December 26, 2023 as printed.
 - Mover: Jessica Van Oort
 - 2nd: Perry Brown
 - Discussion: None.
 - Result: Approved.
5. Pre-Requested Appearances by Local Citizens and Visitors:
 - Harley Cudney – per the Board’s request at the last meeting, Harley submitted a summary of the duties currently being fulfilled by the Assistant Librarian. Based on this summary, Harley adjusted the compensation request made at the last meeting, requesting to raise the Assistant Librarian’s rate to \$21.00/hour during the time in which she fulfills several Library Director duties.
 - Motion made to approve Harley’s request to adjust the rate of pay for the Assistant Librarian to \$21.00/hour.
 - Mover: Rich Hulett
 - 2nd: None
 - Discussion: None
 - Result: Motion not carried.
 - Motion made to approve a pay raise for the Assistant Librarian, amount to be determined, in Executive Session later in the meeting.

- Mover: Jessica Van Oort
- 2nd: Bob Jones
- Discussion: Perry requested to also determine the retroactive payment in Executive Session as well.
- Result: Approved

6. Announcements: None.

7. Reports:

A. Zoning Administrator's (ZA) Report:

- Nancy Morlino reported that 39 permits were issued in 2023, with one permit pending based on a DRB variance review.
- Nancy provided the Board with drafts of short-term rental ordinance forms. The Board agreed that the drafts looked good and ok'd them to go to the next step.
- The Town received payment for the unpermitted camper in West Pawlet.

B. Planning Commission's Report:

- The Pawlet Planning Commission met on 12/28/23. This meeting also included a public hearing to discuss the updates made to the Town Plan. Following the public hearing, the plan was distributed to the Board members, and the next step is to adopt a resolution of public hearing. From there, the Selectboard will need to meet to amend and/or adopt the Town Plan following input from the public.
 - Motion made to adopt a resolution to hold a public hearing on the Town Plan on January 30th at 7:00pm at the Pawlet Town Hall.
 - Mover: Jessica Van Oort
 - 2nd: Perry Brown
 - Discussion: None
 - Result: Approved
 - Motion to host a special meeting of the Selectboard on January 31st at 7:00pm.
 - Mover: Jessica Van Oort
 - 2nd: Rich Hulett
 - Discussion: None
 - Result: Approved
- Jessica Van Oort shared additional information with the Board on the Housing Resource Navigator Program (facilitated by the Rutland Regional Planning Commission), discussing three

potential sites in Town which may benefit from being developed through this program. This program could also benefit local landowners wishing to improve existing structures or build new. The Planning Commission would like to apply for this free program through the Rutland Regional Planning Commission, and requests the Selectboard's approval.

- Rich Hulett made an inquiry on zoning as it may pertain to this program. Frank Nelson made an additional inquiry regarding the fine details of the potential developments.
- Motion made to authorize the Pawlet Planning Commission to work with the Rutland Regional Planning Commission on the Housing Resource Navigator Program.
 - Mover: Jessica Van Oort
 - 2nd: Bob Jones
 - Discussion: None
 - Result: Two Board members in favor, One Board member in opposition, One Board member offered no answer – motion carried.

C. Road Foreman's Report:

- The Highway Department has:
 - Addressed mudhole on Rupert Mtn Road with two loads of gravel and the grader.
 - Performed maintenance repairs on the 2013 Mack and serviced and prepped the loaner International.
 - Built carts for plow wings to aid in safe installation and removal.
 - Hauled gravel for summer projects.
 - Begun the process of marking dead trees for professional removal. Will need to obtain quotes.
 - Installed additional signs.
 - Requests:
 - Approval to mark school zone with signage and to reduce the speed limit to 30mph around the school.
 - Change winter hours from 7:00am-3:00pm to 6:00am-2:00pm
 - To have the Board review a potential position for the Town – to be discussed at the next meeting.

- Motion made to adjust the school zone speed limit to 30 mph.
 - Mover: Rich Hulett
 - 2nd: Jessica Van Oort
 - Discussion: None
 - Result: Approved
- Motion made to adjust winter hours from 7:00am-3:00pm to 6:00am-2:00pm.
 - Mover: Perry Brown
 - 2nd: Rich Hulett
 - Discussion: None
 - Result: Approved

D. Assessor Report:

- Errors and Omissions Request – the Assessors requested the approval of the 2023 grand list change on two parcels.
 - Motion made to sign the Errors and Omissions report.
 - Mover: Jessica Van Oort
 - 2nd: Rich Hulett
 - Discussion: None
 - Result: Approved
- A Request For Proposal (RFP) for the town-wide reappraisal for the 2026 grand list has been distributed.

E. Town Clerk's Memo:

- Motion made to approve the tobacco license for Apollo Industries.
 - Mover: Bob Jones
 - 2nd: Perry Brown
 - Discussion: None
 - Result: Approved
- Bob Jones signed the excess weight permit.
- Article petitions are due by 1/18/24, nominating petitions and consent of candidate forms are due by 1/29/24.
- Two notices from the ANR were provided to the Board.
- There will be an ACT250 hearing on 2/6/24 at 5:00pm. This meeting will be held in the Town Hall Auditorium as to not conflict with the regularly scheduled Selectboard Meeting.

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.
 - Motion made to approve Payroll Warrant #24033 for \$462.25, Payroll Warrant #24035 for \$7,265.03 and Accounts Payable Warrant #24036 for \$34,060.23.
 - Mover: Bob Jones
 - 2nd: Perry Brown
 - Discussion: None.
 - Result: Approved.
 - Julie Mach reached out to the VT Treasurer's office regarding the Municipal Equipment Loan, with no decisions made. Truck finance discussions to be continued at the next regular meeting.
 - Julie met with Berkshire Wealth Management regarding the gifted funds discussed at the last meeting. Recommendation was to keep some investments in longer term treasury bills, and the remainder in short-term treasury bills. There are no penalties for early withdrawal.
 - Motion made to sign the management letter for audit.
 - Mover: Jessica Van Oort
 - 2nd: Rich Hulett
 - Discussion: None
 - Result: Approved
 - Julie reviewed the appropriations with the Board:
 - Reappraisal \$8,000.00, wastewater \$20,000.00, capital infrastructure projects \$17,000.00, equipment fund \$33,000.00.
 - Discussions ensued regarding the reasoning behind necessary increases in appropriations.
 - Julie addressed the Board regarding how they would like to handle investments. The Board agreed with Julie's suggestions.
- G. Emergency Management Director's Report:

- EMD, Bob Morlino, shared a report summarizing December 2023 with the Board:
 - Three shelter staff members completed the Red Cross Shelter Fundamentals Training & Shelter Management courses.
 - R. Morlino attended the Homeland Security Working Group meeting and the FBI Albany WMD Working Group Meeting.
 - Hazard Mitigation plan has been submitted to the State, the cost of this planning will be covered by grant funding.

H. Health Officer's Report:

- Health Officer, Jennifer Sullivan, had information learned about the Rental Housing Health and Safety Code from the Division of Fire Safety, to be discussed at the next meeting.
- Health officer and EMD investigate a possible improper disposal of food waste.

I. Waste Water Treatment Facility (WWTF): None.

J. Facilities Report:

- The Board received a letter of interest from the Pawlet Volunteer Fire Department regarding the property currently housing the Town of Pawlet Highway Garage. Ultimately, the goal is for the PVFD to occupy this land as it is out of the flood plane and within reasonable location of the existing fire department.
- The Board partook in brief discussion regarding the necessary steps to begin the process of building a new Town garage. Rich Hulett offered the suggestion of creating a planning group to focus on the efficient planning of this project.

K. Mettawee School Board (MSB) Report: None.

8. Old or unfinished business: None.

9. New Business:

- The Board received notice that there will be two applications from the Cannabis Control Board for review.

10. Public Comment:

- Frank Nelson shared that funding for mini grant is coming, and will require general reporting.
- Aaron Levine commented on the Library Board's request for a for wage increase for the Assistant Librarian, suggesting the Board have a job description handy when considering this increase.

11. Motion made to enter executive session to discuss confidential attorney-client communications made for the purpose of providing professional legal services to the body, as well as to discuss labor relations agreements with employees at 8:29pm.

- Mover: Bob Jones
- 2nd: Rich Hulett
- Discussion: None
- Result: Approved

12. Motion to come out of executive session with no decisions made at 9:50pm.

- Mover: Perry Brown
- 2nd: Rich Hulett
- Discussion: None
- Result: Approved

13. Motion made to adjust the rate of pay for the Librarian Assistant to \$20.00/hr, effective 1/10/2024 with no retroactive pay and to return to the previously established budgeted Assistant rate when a Library Director is hired.

- Mover: Bob Jones
- 2nd: Jessica Van Oort
- Discussion: None
- Result: Approved

13. Motion made to adjourn at 9:52pm

- Mover: Perry Brown
- 2nd: Jessica Van Oort
- Discussion: None
- Result: Approved