

Mount Holly Select Board Meeting
August 13, 2019
Minutes

Present: Select Board: Mark Turco (chair), Ron Tarbell, Jennifer Matthews

Town Officials: Carol Garrow-Woolley, David Johnson, Jon McCann, Jim Seward, Clinton Woolley

Members of Public: Robert Bryant, Robert Combe, Megan Harlow, Judy Hyjek, Annette Lynch, Don Richardson, Donna Seward, Ray Tarbell, Dick Tilton, Mike Valente

1. **Call to Order** by Chair Mark Turco at 6:00 pm.

2. All stood for the **Pledge of Allegiance**.

3. Consideration of any changes and/or additions to the **Agenda** - Three items were added to the agenda under New Business.

4. **Approval** of the July 9, 2019 Minutes and July 24th Special SB Meeting Minutes - Ron Tarbell made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Mark Turco, passed unanimously.

5. Reports

a. **Highways** – Clinton Woolley

i) **Update** – Mr. Woolley reported: almost all the winter sand is now in with about 3500 tons delivered; the Freeman Brook project is complete with the reimbursement to come; roadside mowing is almost finished. The Beaver Meadow Project was given go-ahead by FEMA. Only two bids were received, as M&M is too busy at present to take on an additional project. Of the bids, the lower is from Markowski @ \$29,362; they can start within the week. Ron Tabell made the motion to accept the Markowski bid, seconded by Jennifer Matthews, passed unanimously.

b. **Treasurer** – David Johnson

i) **Monthly Income & Expense Report** - Mr. Johnson reported the town is only one month into the new fiscal year with not much to report: first quarterly payment for State Aid for Roads has been received; no unique expenses so far; mower and truck were paid for which explains the high Purchased Equipment number; winter road materials' figures are up due to winter sand purchases; tax bills were mailed on July 26th with discount available until August 29th. Two property appraisals were appealed to the State after review by the Board of Civil Authority. The State lowered the appraisal in one case – that adjustment has been made to the lister records and the second year tax refund is on the current orders. A decision on the second case has not yet been received. The Errors and Omissions Certificate on property appraisals was presented to the Select Board for signature, necessitated by a purchase of property abutting the purchaser's with the purchased property added to original piece but still listed in the Grand List separately.

ii) **Advance Payment to School District** – Mr. Johnson noted that the Town, once tax payments start coming in, usually advances \$250,000 to the School to cover expenses until the State funds arrive. The Select Board agreed with this course of action.

6. Old Business

a. **Town Office Roof** – Jennifer Matthews reported that in spite of a number of contacts made, only one bid had been submitted. The Select Board decided to keep the bid process open until the next Select Board meeting on September 10th.

b. **Propane & Oil Pricing** – Ms. Matthews reported that five companies were contacted. The Board received four bids for heating oil and diesel, only one for propane. For heating oil, the two lowest bids were from Champlain Valley Fuels at \$2.20/gal capped and Marcell Oil at \$2.30/gal presently. For diesel, the bid ranges were within 15 cents of each other; Champlain Valley Fuels had the lowest bid, Cota & Cota the highest. Mark Turco spoke of the cost savings that might be realized with Champlain Valley Fuels lowest bid. Clinton Woolley questioned how often they would make deliveries to Mount Holly. Mr. Turco stated they would need to be contacted but was sure they would make regular deliveries. Ms. Matthews expressed concern about Champlain Valley Fuels being so much further afield with their locations in Middlebury and Fair Haven, and she did not want to see the road crew run out of diesel in the midst of a snowstorm as had happened with a previous fuel provider. Ms. Matthews also pointed out Marcell Oil's excellent service to the Town over the last several years. As such, Ms. Matthews made a motion to continue to use Marcell Oil based on the company's great service and reliable delivery record in past winters. Ron Tarbell seconded, and the Select Board unanimously awarded contracts for heating oil and diesel to Marcell Oil and to Cota & Cota for propane.

c. **Swap Shed** - Jennifer Matthews reported that 60+ people had signed the Swap Shed petition at the Transfer Station. She also read an email submitted by Jeff Teter, former Road Foreman, that he requested be read at the Select Board meeting:

"I'm writing to you in support of the swap shed. As you know, I was the dump coordinator for around 30 years and I know what go's thru there which includes many useful things. When Paul Nevin got a grant with the swap shed in mind, it ended up being no cost to the town. Later, there was a period of time we had a employee that was a pack rat and held on to way too much stuff. . . . Now with Kevin and Pete there, they could control what is saved and whats not saved. You don't need to make any kind of list. They have been around long enough to know what people might need. The bottle deposit might be moved over by the food scraps and the swap shed put there where the attendants could monitor and clean as needed. Also, with the one way two way plows it could be easily maintained in winter. The new office old swap shed is of minimal size so please don't make it smaller and a barn type double door works well. It was my idea to make the swap shed into a office for the attendants because at the time it was a cheep answer to a problem. The cost to the town even if it's 5k is a minor investment to benefit the people of the Town of Mount Holly.
Thanks, Jeff Teter"

Ron Tarbell said that the town should try a Swap Shed a second time. Mark Turco said he just did not want the town to inherit the cost of disposing of items that ended up being junk. Ms. Matthews said that could be put in the rules for use. Clinton Woolley said that Kevin and Pete at the Transfer Station can and will do a good job. Don Richardson noted that the Ludlow Swap Shed was well-run and a great resource to residents. Ms. Matthews made a motion to spend \$2,500 for a Swap Shed for reusable goods. Ron Tarbell seconded. The vote was two in favor, Mr. Turco against. The motion passed.

d. **Other** - Jennifer Matthews was pleased to report that the Vermont Public Utilities Commission has continued its workshop to further investigate the problem of phone backup batteries which die during extended power outages after 8 or so hours. This leaves town residents without any access to emergency services, as was the case last November. She had written a letter from the Select Board asking that the PUC determine and implement best practices for telecom providers in regards to backup batteries and access to emergency services. Select Board members signed the letter.

7. **New Business** – Three items were added:

Robert Bryant read his letter with a number of questions (*SB responses following*) regarding:

- Permit for electrical & other work at the school? - *school business*
- Policies & Procedures for Town Constable? – *SB will consult state law & VLCT*
- State troopers reluctant to come to Mount Holly, especially at night when unlicensed vehicles are on the roads – *check with Constable*
- Neighborhood Watch update – *waiting to hear from Mr. Fitzgerald*
- 4153 VT Route 103 has expanding campground – *SB to investigate*
- Junk continues to accumulate at 137 Shunpike Road – *SB to send letter with Junk Ordinance*
- Thanks to Clinton Woolley for making Shunpike Road safer – *all present agreed.*

Mike Valente had a question about public funds available for a special needs student being schooled at Mount St Joseph's. Mr. Valente was directed to School Board members Bridget Faenza or Kelly Tarbell for answers to his questions.

Don Richardson drew attention to information about the Emerald Ash Borer from the Ludlow Tree Warden, Ralph Pace. This information can be found in the August *Chit Chat*.

8. **Announcements/Other Business** - Jennifer Matthews expressed the Select Board's appreciation to Randy Bixby for the Mount Holly NewsFlash. She noted that the Select Board and all members of the Mount Holly Community are deeply grateful to Randy and his family for the valuable community resource that Randy initiated, developed and operated for many years. Where would Mount Holly be without the NewsFlash? All present expressed gratitude and offered best wishes.

Ms. Matthews also reminded everyone of the great summer events happening in Mount Holly this month.

9. **Review & Sign Orders** – The Select Board reviewed and signed.

10. **Adjourn** – Ron Tarbell made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Jennifer Matthews, with meeting adjourned at 6:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted: Jennifer Matthews

Minutes Approved: 9/10/2019