

Mount Holly Select Board Meeting
February 9, 2021
Minutes

In-Person with Zoom Meeting: 898 6126 5487

Present: Select Board: Jeff Chase, Jennifer Matthews, Mark Turco

Town Officials: Sue Covalla, Francis DeVine, Russ Garrow, David Johnson, Annette Lynch, Jon McCann, Stephen Michel, Renee Sarmento, Carol Woolley, Clinton Woolley

Members of the Public: Zena Gates, Steve & Barbara Hazelton, Jim Heald, Paul Orzechowski, Christine Pratt, Amy Turco, Ron Unterman, and Donna

1. **Call to Order** by Mark Turco at 6:30 pm.

2. All recited the **Pledge of Allegiance**.

3. **Changes and/or additions to the agenda** - Jennifer Matthews asked to add the Grand List Certificate of No Appeals or Suits Pending and the Geese Depredation Permit to the agenda. It was agreed to add both under New Business - Other. Paul Orzechowski asked to add an update on the Mount Holly School/Town Garage well water system. It was agreed to do so under Ongoing & Old Business - Other.

4. **Approval of January 12th, 2021 Minutes and January 5th, January 19th & February 2nd Special Select Board Meeting Minutes** - Jeff Chase made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Mr. Turco, unanimously approved.

5. **Reports**

a. **Highways & Transfer Station Update - Clinton Woolley** reported the Town of Mount Holly has been awarded \$20,340 in Grants-in-Aid funds with a Town match of about \$5,000. These funds should cover the ditching. Mr. Woolley also reported that the insurance for repairs to the truck has now been settled. He said three barrels of food scraps are driven up to Rutland about every two weeks.

b. **Treasurer - David Johnson**

i) **Monthly Income & Expense Report** - Mr. Johnson reported the Property Taxes Receivable figure of \$139,399 was lower than usual for this time of year; the third quarterly payment of \$30,200 for the State Aid for Roads has been received; the \$15,217 figure for Misc Grant Proceeds is for a Better Back Roads Grant that was just received, although the work was done in 2019; the Officers' Salaries are all under budget; the Solid Waste Expenses are holding steady at 20 more tons than last year, an amount which was disposed of over the summer, with \$4,000 more in expenses due to this and the food waste disposal; over half the funds for Winter Road Labor have not been spent even with all the overtime due to small snowstorms; and, the Misc Grant Disb. of \$5,299 is for the leaf blower, for which the grant funds have not yet been received.

ii) **LMHUUSD Revised Payment Schedule** - Mr. Johnson reported this is the first year for high school students to be tuitioned out with bills for tuition due in November and March. The new schedule reflects the revised remittance schedule.

c. **Mount Holly Planning Commission Update - Jon McCann** reported the updated subdivision guide is now on the website with paper copies available in the town office. All the town plans back to 1974 are also available online. Feedback from the State's Community Wildlife program was reviewed at the last meeting.

d. **Mount Holly Conservation Commission Update - Fra DeVine** reported that the Conservation Commission has submitted a VT Watershed grant application for \$4,000 to address issues with Star Lake. Working with the Mount Holly Conservation Trust, the Commission has also submitted an application to the State to receive free technical assistance to draft a Municipal Shade Tree Preservation Plan. Mr. DeVine thanked the Select Board for the letters of support on both projects. He also reported on the on-going work to update the inventory of Mount Holly's natural resources, and on the iNaturalist bio-diversity project, in which participants can download an app, photograph an animal, and the app will aggregate the data for the town. To

date, 550 species have been reported by 93 observers in town. The Commission hopes to work with the school on this project, and all information gathered will help update the natural resources inventory.

e. **Rutland Regional Planning Commission Update - Jon McCann** reported it was a very short meeting; no update necessary.

6. New Business

a. **Improvements to Nature Trail Network - Mount Holly School Student** - As no student was in attendance, this item was tabled.

b. **Lake Ninevah Aquatic Nuisance Control Grant** - The Select Board agreed to continue to partner with the Ninevah Foundation and to support the Aquatic Nuisance Prevention program, as the town has done for the past 20 years. The Select Board also agreed to sign the necessary grant documents once in hand.

c. **Highway Mileage Certification - Review & Sign** - Mr. Chase made a motion to approve and sign the Certificate of Mileage, seconded by Mr. Turco, unanimously approved.

d. **Town Highway Retreatment Plan Draft** - Mr. Chase working with Mr. Woolley put together a 12-year Retreatment Plan for both Class 2 & Class 3 roads prioritizing pavement replacement based on prior paving, current need, and funding available. Using \$55,000 available from taxes, \$21,000 in this year's budget, and \$31,000 from State funds, the end of Healdville Road and Station Road as well as Chalet and Alpine Drives are scheduled for work this year. Mr. Chase and Mr. Woolley will put together a RFP for this work.

Mr. Woolley stated the FY22 Town Highway Structures and Town Highway Class 2 Roadway grant program information has been released. The plan is to apply for a grant for work on Belmont Road.

Mr. Turco and Ms. Matthews thanked Mr. Chase and Mr. Woolley for their work on the retreatment plan.

e. **Other - Grand List Certificate of No Appeal or Suit Pending** - Mr. Johnson stated this was just a formality from the Listers for the Select Board to sign.

Geese Depredation Permit - Ron Unterman explained this was the 10th year of working with the town to decrease goose poop on the beach at Star Lake by killing a few geese. Ms. Matthews made a motion to approve and sign the Migratory Bird Depredation permit, seconded by Mr. Chase, unanimously approved.

7. Ongoing & Old Business

a. **Audit RFPs - Open & Review** - Ms. Matthews reported that six RFP packets were mailed out: five to firms in VT, and one to a firm in Maine which performs audits for a number of municipalities here in VT. Three of the VT firms and the ME firm submitted proposals. The Select Board did an initial review of the proposals. Three firms had similar bids, and one firm's bid was double that of the others. The Select Board decided to only consider the three firms with similar bids. Ms. Matthews will draft a list of questions to ask when talking with the municipal references provided by the firms.

b. **Local Hazard Mitigation Plan Update - Review & Adopt** - Ms. Matthews made a motion to adopt the 2021 Mount Holly VT Local Hazard Mitigation Plan, seconded by Mr. Turco, unanimously approved. Ms. Matthews and Mr. Turco thanked Mr. Chase, Mr. Woolley, Jon McCann, and Russ Garrow for their work on the plan.

c. **Class 4 Highway Policy** - Mr. Chase drafted a policy based on VLCT's model policy. One issue that remains is the need for a Highway Access Policy, which with the 2019 adoption of the Road & Bridge Standards, we no longer have. Mr. Chase will work on a draft for highway access, again using the VLCT model policy. Ms. Matthews noted the recommendation by both VLCT and VTrans to have both policies reviewed by the town attorney.

d. **Lowery Property - VT Route 103** - Mr. Turco reported that Health Officer Tim Bickford visited the property and found: water is hooked up to the trailer; gray water is being collected in buckets under the trailer and disposed of properly; bathroom black water is being collected in bagged buckets and being disposed of accordingly; trailer is to be moved into its permanent position in the spring.

e. **Select Board Admin. Assistant Position** - Ms. Matthews reported that she had learned of a couple of prospects for the position, but unfortunately neither panned out. It was decided to re-advertise the position in the *Vermont Journal* and to contact a temp agency.

f. **EV Charging Station - Don Richardson** was not in attendance. Ms. Matthews reported that he was still gathering information.

g. **Other - Mount Holly School/Town Garage Well Water System** - On behalf of the LMHUUSD, Board Chair Paul Orzechowski thanked the town for the hook-up to the town garage well. He asked if there was an update on the Town's review of the contractual agreement and easement. Ms. Matthews explained that the Select Board had just received these documents in the past few days and they still need to be reviewed.

8. **Concerned Citizens Comments** - Jim Heald asked if town meeting would be the same. Mr. Turco responded that it would be held at the town garage and via Zoom. Sue Covalla announced the ballots are now in; call for an absentee ballot or stop in the town office. Zena Gates asked about the numbers permitted to attend town meeting in person. Mr. Turco responded that was determined by the State. Mr. Unterman asked if all items would be on the ballot. Response was all except for accepting the town report.

9. **Announcements/Other Business**

a. **Reminder: Town Office Closed on February 15th**

b. **Reminder: Town Meeting on Monday, March 1st @ 7:00 pm at Town Garage & via Zoom**

c. **Reminder: VOTE on Tuesday, March 2nd from 10:00 am to 7:00 pm at Town Office**

d. **Other** - There were no other announcements.

10. **Review & Sign Orders** - To be signed one Select Board member at a time at the town office.

11. **Executive Session: Title 1 V.S.A. S 313(a)(3) - personnel** - Not needed this evening.

12. **Adjourn** - Mr. Turco adjourned the meeting at 7:22 pm.

Respectfully Submitted: Jennifer Matthews

Approved: 3.9.2021