

Mount Holly Select Board Meeting

May 11, 2021

Minutes

In-Person with Zoom Meeting: 898 6126 5487

Present: Select Board: Jeff Chase, Jennifer Matthews, Mark Turco (Chair)

Town Officials: Phil Crane, Carol Garrow-Woolley, Russ Garrow, David Johnson, Annette Lynch, Jon McCann, Stephen Michel, Renee Sarmento, James Seward

Members of the Public: Paul Barton, Melissa & Buddy Batchelder, Zena Gates, Steve & Barbara Hazelton, Craig Hutt Vater (Mount Holly School Principal), Mount Holly School Students Aidan, Jameson and Thomas, Judy Nevin, Christine Pratt, Donna Seward, Amy Turco

1. **Call to Order** by Mark Turco at 6:33 pm.

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

3. **Changes and/or additions to the agenda** – Judy Nevin asked to make an announcement, which was agreed to following the Approval of the Minutes.

4. **Approval of April 13th, 2021 Meeting Minutes and April 23rd Special Select Board Meeting Minutes** – Paul Barton asked the minutes of April 13th meeting be changed so as to name Charles Tarbell, an American patriot and hero who died in 1862 in service to his country defending the Constitution and American freedoms. Jeff Chase made a motion to approve the minutes with that amendment, seconded by Mr. Turco, unanimously approved. Mr. Turco made a motion to approve the April 23rd Special Select Board meeting minutes, seconded by Mr. Chase, unanimously approved.

Judy Nevin explained that the Master Gardener program would like to plant a display garden in every town. After looking around town, she identified the shore of Star Lake behind the rock wall as a good place for Mount Holly's display garden, a garden which would feature pollinator-friendly plants. Mr. Turco made a motion to allow the Master Gardener program to plant a display garden in that spot, seconded by Mr. Chase, unanimously approved.

5. **Reports**

a. **Highways & Transfer Station Update – Clinton Woolley** was not able to attend the meeting, so Mr. Turco gave the update. The culverts on Alpine Drive and Healdville Road have been replaced in preparation for the paving. Mr. Turco signed the paperwork to have the yellow and white line striping done on Shunpike and Maple Hill Roads. No update necessary on the transfer station.

i) **Retreatment FY21 Underrun** – Mr. Chase asked about using the remaining funds in the paving budget. Discussion ensued about best use with the decision to roll remaining funds over at the end of the fiscal year into next year's paving budget.

ii) **Plow Bills – Plymouth & Wallingford** – For plowing this past winter season, Plymouth will be billed \$3,300 and Wallingford will be billed \$2,600. Bills will be mailed this month.

b. **Treasurer – David Johnson**

i) **Monthly Income & Expense Report** – Mr. Johnson reported he has not received a report from the Delinquent Tax Collector but an additional \$24,000 in delinquent taxes has been collected and the lawyer has been directed to send an initial letter to all non-responsive delinquent taxpayers; the Prepaid Property Taxes amount of \$9,921 is correct reflecting early tax payments by some taxpayers; the final payment from the State has been received for State Aid for Roads for a total of \$120,806 which is \$4,806 more than budgeted; the Solid Waste Labels Sold amount of \$26,834 is almost at budgeted amount; the Solid Waste Hauling & Disposal Expense of \$48,032 is through the end of April and should be close to budgeted amount; Vehicle/Equip Repair & Maintenance amount of \$19,423 is under budget; and, the Purchased Equipment amount of \$1,000 is for the used sweeper bought from the Town of Plymouth.

Ms. Matthews asked about the possibility of doing a dog census, as Mr. Johnson had suggested last month, as only \$356 has been received of the \$1,200 budgeted for Dog License Receipts. Mr. Johnson explained that the

\$1,200 budget figure also includes the funds received for liquor licenses and that another \$400 has been turned over for dog licenses.

ii) **Independent Audit Update & Fixed Asset Services Contract** – Mr. Johnson reported that he is to meet with the auditors on Thursday. They seem to have completed their initial work. A list of needed documents as part of the audit is to come with a site visit following and a walk through the financial procedures. As to the Fixed Asset Services Contract, the town has not kept a fixed asset schedule in the past. The previous auditors just worked that information into the financial statements. The contract will maintain the fixed assets schedule per accounting regulations on an annual basis. Ms. Matthews made a motion to sign the Fixed Asset Services contract for fixed asset database maintenance at a flat rate of \$250 annually, seconded by Mr. Turco, unanimously approved.

c. **Listers Update – David Johnson** reported that grievances are scheduled for May 21st and 22nd. He reminded residents to file their HS-122 by May 17th. The Listers recently attended a webinar on the statewide Grand List program; they now have the option to continue to work with NEMRC until 2023.

d. **Mount Holly Planning Commission Update – Jon McCann** reported the Planning Commission had completed the Bolalek subdivision, including writing the findings of fact and conclusions of law. Although previous Planning Commissions had written these, this has not been done for some time. Both the Rutland Regional Planning Commission and VLCT recommended this be done going forward. The Planning Commission is calling these findings and decision, and they will serve as a record of the process and the subdivision decision. The Planning Commission has also been working with the Listers on revisions to the Building Construction Registration form and the ordinance; more info is needed, probably from the lawyers. Mr. McCann is working with the National Historic Lookout Register folks in order to add the Okemo Tower to the fire tower registry.

e. **Mount Holly Conservation Commission Update – Phil Crane** reported the town-wide survey received 124 responses of which 109 were complete. Castleton University is assembling the final report, which will be posted on the Conservation Commission webpage on the town website. The report will contain a few definitive items for the Planning Commission on what townspeople value. The Conservation Commission is putting together a subcommittee to work on the Municipal Shade Tree Preservation Plan, and they hope to establish a fruitful collaboration with Shrewsbury in this undertaking; a Tree Warden is needed to help with this project. Work continues on updating the town's inventory of natural resources. As part of this work, Commission members, led by Jim Corven, made a visit to a vernal pool. They are planning a visit to look at ledge habitat, core forests, and riparian areas soon. Commission members plan to participate in the Summit on the Future of Vermont on May 26th & 27th.

f. **Rutland Regional Planning Commission Update – Jon McCann** reported more FEMA reimbursement for flood disasters may be available. He will email the Select Board with that information.

g. **Rutland Region Transportation Council Update – Clinton Woolley** was not able to attend this evening's meeting, so there was no update.

h. **Rutland County Solid Waste District Update – Clinton Woolley** was not able to attend the evening's meeting, so there was no update.

i. **Black-Ottawquechee and West Watersheds Report – Jon McCann** reported on the five-year project to update the flood maps with community input and involvement from the outset. The project looks at how floods affect local roads. Branch Brook empties into the Black River. New, more accurate mapping shows a larger floodplain, especially where VT Route 103 crosses Branch Brook. This project will provide helpful information to towns regarding roads and floodplains.

6. New Business

a. **Bowlsville Road South/Class 4 Road Request** – Mr. Turco stated the Select Board had received a letter from Melissa & Buddy Batchelder about the town taking over the Class 4 section of their road. Mr. Turco explained that the road would have to be brought up to town standards and he gave Mr. Batchelder a copy of Mount Holly's road and bridge standards. Discussion ensued about the work necessary to do this. Once the work is done, Mr. Turco said the town would look at the road and make a determination.

b. **Town of Mount Holly Transfer Station Recertification – Approve** – Ms. Matthews explained that the transfer station needs to be recertified every few years. The recertification application is 44 pages long plus attachments. She thanked the Rutland County Solid Waste District for their diligence in putting the application together, an application which includes the option for onsite composting at the transfer station.

Mr. Turco made a motion to approve and sign the Mount Holly transfer station recertification application and endorsement letter, seconded by Ms. Matthews, unanimously approved.

c. **Delta Dental Insurance Plan Renewal** – Ms. Matthews noted the upcoming renewal for dental insurance with a 3.25% decrease in the rates for two years. Mr. Chase made a motion to continue the dental insurance with Delta Dental, seconded by Ms. Matthews, unanimously approved.

d. **Belmont Store Liquor License Renewal Application – Approve** – Mr. Chase made a motion to approve the Belmont Store’s liquor license, seconded by Mr. Turco, unanimously approved.

e. **American Rescue Plan Funds** – Ms. Matthews briefly described the ARPA funding: \$195 billion going to the States, of which the State of Vermont is to receive \$1 billion; \$65 billion to the Counties - the funds received by Rutland County to be divided up among the county’s 28 municipalities with the amount received based on each town’s population; and, \$19.5 billion going to local governments, of which Mount Holly is to receive \$123,037. These funds can be used to support public health expenditures, to address negative economic impacts caused by the pandemic, to replace lost public sector revenue, to provide premium pay for essential workers, and/or to invest in water, sewer and broadband infrastructure. Ms. Matthews reiterated the Governor in saying this is an once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to invest in our town for the betterment of the community. Once more details are available about the amounts and permitted uses of the funds, the Select Board will call a special meeting to discuss possible projects.

f. **Other** – There was no additional New Business this evening.

7. Ongoing & Old Business

a. **Sharon Lane Old Recycling Shed Rental Request** – Mr. Turco reached out to the interested individual. Discussion ensued about rental rates, the size and condition of the building, its contents. Mr. Turco will follow up with the interested party, and the item will be on a future agenda, if need be.

b. **Junk Ordinance Enforcement** – Ms. Matthews explained that certified letters had been mailed out to the property owners who are in violation of the ordinance, the tickets ordered, and Paul Faenza, our enforcement officer, contacted about the possible need to issue tickets. The property owners have until June 6th to take steps to clean up their property. At the June 8th meeting, the Select Board will decide on ticket issuance. Ms. Matthews also noted that two complaints have now been received about one property on Station Road; a warning letter will be mailed to them. She asked about compensation for Mr. Faenza’s time and expenses in his role as enforcement officer. Amy Turco questioned the reason for paying Mr. Faenza more given his pay as Constable. Mr. Turco said there were no funds in the budget to compensate the enforcement officer. Discussion ensued about the Constable duties, compensation, fines and fees, the budget, the health officer, legal expenses. Mr. Chase asked all to clean up their yards, follow the ordinance, and to ask for help if they need it in cleaning up their yard. Mr. Turco said there was value in scrap and to use the list of resources Mr. Chase pulled together; there are organizations and individuals who will take junk vehicles and scrap at no charge. He pleaded with residents to keep their yard clean.

c. **Select Board Admin. Assistant Position** – Ms. Matthews is talking with Adecco, as the Leddy Group’s rates were quite high. Mr. Turco commented on how difficult it is to find employees at present.

d. **Other** – Ms. Matthews asked about the ash tree inventory. Mr. Chase will pull together a group to finish the inventory. Mr. Turco emphasized the need for a Tree Warden to help with this work. He said several people had looked at the tree warden position, but they did not want to take on the responsibilities involved. Ms. Matthews made a plea to residents to please get involved, especially younger community members as the future of Mount Holly is in their hands, and the town needs you.

8. **Citizen Comments** – Craig Hutt Vater wanted to follow up on revisions to the hiking and biking trail. Only Mr. Turco had seen the revised map, having been given a copy by Mr. Woolley. Once all Select Board members have had a chance to see and review the map, we’ll address this at a future Select Board meeting.

9. Announcements/Other Business –

- a. **Appointments to be made @ June 8th Meeting for July first to June 30, 2022 terms:**
- **Rutland Regional Planning Commission Representative & Alternate**
- **Rutland Region Transportation Council Representative & Alternate**

Ms. Matthews noted that our RRTC Alternate was Don Richardson, who passed away over the weekend. She wanted Rhonda Rivers to know our thoughts and prayers are with her, and she expressed the Select Board’s appreciation for all the work and time Don had given our community over the years. Mr. Turco said that our hearts and blessings go out to the family. The Alternate position(s) will be posted.

b. Reminder: Homestead Declarations due May 17th

c. Reminder: Town Office Closed, Memorial Day, Monday, May 31st

d. Other – Ms. Matthews thanked all those who participated in Green-Up Day for picking up the litter along the roadsides. Mr. Turco reminded community members to **not** throw trash out on to the roads and to please keep Mount Holly pristine.

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 (if needed)** – Not needed this evening.

12. **Adjourn** – Mr. Turco adjourned the meeting at 8:02 pm.

Respectfully Submitted: Jennifer Matthews

Approved: 6.8.2021