

Mount Holly Select Board Meeting

January 11, 2022

Minutes

In-Person with Zoom Meeting: 898 6126 5487

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

Town Officials: Tim Bickford, Sue Covalla, Dennis Devereux, Fra DeVine, Diana Garrow, David Johnson, Phil Leonard, Annette Lynch, Jon McCann, Christine Pratt, Renee Sarmiento, James Seward, Brigid Sullivan, Andy Tanger, Clinton Woolley

Members of the Public: Zena Gates, Barbara & Steve Hazelton, Anna McGee Hanson, Marianne McGee, Stephen Michel, Devon Neary (Rutland Regional Planning Commission), Andrew Seward, Donna Seward, Sue Starr-Adams

1. **Call to Order** by Mark Turco at 6:31 pm.

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

3. **Changes and/or additions to the agenda** – No changes or additions needed this evening.

4. **Approval of December 14th, 2021 Meeting Minutes & Special Select Board Meeting Minutes of January 4th, 2022** – Mr. Turco made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Jeff Chase, unanimously approved.

5. Reports

a. Highways & Transfer Station Update –

i) **Monthly Update - Clinton Woolley** reported: a hydrology study is needed for Perry Road; two culverts are going out to bid; transfer station is okay.

ii) **Certificate of Highway Mileage** – No changes needed. Mr. Chase made a motion to approve the Certificate of Highway Mileage as presented, seconded by Mr. Turco, unanimously approved.

iii) **FY'21/22 Paving RFP for Spring** – After the budget vote in March, Mr. Chase stated he thought it a good idea to put a RFP out as soon as possible. Discussion ensued about the price of materials, paving contractors' schedules, possible grant funding, and which road to focus on – probably, Hortonville Road.

b. Treasurer – David Johnson

i) **Monthly Income & Expense Report** – Mr. Johnson reported: \$20,340 has been received from the State of Vermont for a Better Back Roads grant; the Solid Waste Labels Sold amount of \$16,042 is through December 27th and is over half the budgeted amount; in the expense categories, there is nothing big or out of the ordinary; the Hauling & Disposal Expenses amount of \$23,677 does not include Casella's December bill.

c. **Mount Holly Planning Commission Update – Jon McCann** reported the Planning Commission continues to work on the town plan with a focus on the utilities and facilities section, turning next to transportation. Mr. McCann stated input from the Select Board and the community is always welcome.

d. **Mount Holly Conservation Commission Update – Annette Lynch** reported that given the holidays, the work of the Commission was at a slower pace, but nonetheless continues.

e. **Mount Holly Volunteer Rescue Squad** – Anna McGee Hanson reported the Squad has an individual soon to finish training to become a full EMT. Jennifer Mathews asked about the low response rate of 76%. Ms. McGee Hanson replied a 76% response rate to calls is good for an all-volunteer squad.

6. Ongoing & Old Business

a. **Traffic Study Review & Ordinance – Devon Neary, Rutland Regional Planning Commission** – Mr. Neary reviewed the results of the study, stating that the data supported the speed limit changes desired by the Town. Discussion ensued about various roads and speed limits, signage, crash history, enforcement, costs. Mr. Neary stated that speed limits alone would not change behavior; strategic enforcement would be necessary to do so. Mr. Turco thanked him for the study.

b. **Star Lake Bottom Barriers Permit – Phil Leonard** asked the Select Board for a motion in support of the application on behalf of the Town for two bottom barriers to be used in the swimming and

boating areas of Star Lake to control vegetation and improve recreational opportunities. Mr. Chase made a motion to support the Bottom Barrier Permit application, seconded by Ms. Matthews, unanimously approved.

c. ARPA Funds Requests –

i) **Mount Holly Volunteer Rescue Squad (MHVRS)** – Mr. Chase made a motion to approve \$4,279 in ARPA funds for use by the MHVRS per the schedule submitted, seconded by Mr. Turco, unanimously approved.

ii) **A/V Technology for Hybrid Meetings** – Ms. Matthews made a motion to approve the use of up to \$10,000 in ARPA funds for the purchase of A/V equipment to support hybrid meetings, seconded by Mr. Chase, unanimously approved.

iii) **Land Records Digitization Project** – tabled.

d. **Junk Ordinance Enforcement** – Municipal ticket mailed to VT Route 103 property owner by Constable Paul Faenza on January 7, 2022. Property owner has 30 days to clean up property. Otherwise, a second ticket and fine will be issued. Health Officer Tim Bickford gave a report on the property.

e. **Mask Recommendation – Municipal Properties** – Given the huge spike in COVID numbers in town, Mr. Chase made a motion to implement a mask mandate for all municipal properties through March 31, 2022, seconded by Mr. Turco, unanimously approved.

f. **Board of Adjustment** – tabled until the February meeting.

g. **Planning Commission Appointment – One Term to November 2024** – Three letters of interest received by the Monday, January 10th @ Noon deadline: one from David Martin, one from Anna McGee Hanson, and one from Andrew Seward. Based on the right demographic, Mr. Chase made a motion to appoint Andrew Seward to the Planning Commission for a term running to November 2024, seconded by Mr. Turco. Mr. Chase and Mr. Turco voted yes in support of the motion; Ms. Matthews voted no.

h. **Other** – There was no other Ongoing & Old Business this evening.

7. New Business

a. **Application Fee Schedule – Refunds** – Mr. McCann reported the Planning Commission resolved to ask the Select Board to make a change to the Fee Schedule in order to put applicants on notice and to give the Planning Commission clear guidance on whether or not a subdivision fee can be refunded. Discussion ensued. Mr. Chase made a motion to add this information to the Application Fee Schedule: “Application fees are non-refundable unless the application is withdrawn before the Planning Commission begins consideration of the application,” seconded by Ms. Matthews, unanimously approved.

b. **Set Date & Time to Sign Annual Town Meeting Warning** – Meeting is set for Thursday, January 20th at 4:00 pm at the town office. Information and costs to program the ballot machine will also be on the agenda.

c. **Annual Town Meeting Attendance Guidelines** - Meeting in the Mount Holly School gym will be a hybrid meeting with both in-person and Zoom attendees. For in-person attendees, masks will be required, and seating will be at six-foot intervals except for couples or members of the same household. Moderator Andy Tanger will put together Zoom guidelines for the meeting.

d. **Act 60 Changes** – Ms. Matthews reviewed a few of the pertinent changes to the Act 60 election law, made by the Vermont Legislature last year in response to the pandemic: the Board of Civil Authority (BCA) can vote to authorize an outdoor and drive-up polling place; the Select Board can vote to mail a ballot to all registered voters for municipal elections, with cost covered by the town (VT Secretary of State mails ballots to all registered voters for the November election); the BCA can vote to process ballots during the 30 days preceding an election with processing into tabulator done by the town clerk and two BCA members, one from two different parties, during normal business hours.

e. **Other – FY’22/23 Budget Approval** - Mr. Turco stated Select Board members went through the budget line-by-line, decreasing some figures where possible, thereby keeping the municipal budget to a 1.4% increase. Discussion ensued about including the cost for law enforcement of the new speed limits once an ordinance is passed. It was agreed to add \$2,500 to a Speed Enforcement line to the budget. A request for \$500 from NeighborWorks was also received, and it was agreed to add that to the Social Service Requests. Mr. Turco made a motion to approve the FY’22/23 budget as presented with these additions, seconded by Mr. Chase, unanimously approved.

8. **Citizen Comments** – Stephen Michel noted the town roads were well maintained with all the ice storms. Mr. Turco thanked the road crew and all residents who helped out.

9. Announcements/Other Business –

a. Town Office Closed: Monday, January 17, 2022

b. Candidate Consent Forms & Nominating Petitions due in Town Office by 4:00 pm, Monday, January 24th – Mr. Johnson stated this was a mistake; by law, the forms are due by 5:00 on Monday, January 24th.

10. Review & Sign Orders – To be signed by Select Board members.

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

12. Adjourn –Meeting adjourned at 8:23 pm.

Respectfully Submitted: Jennifer Matthews

Approved: 2.8.2022