

Mount Holly Select Board Meeting

February 8, 2022

Minutes

In-Person with Zoom Meeting: 898 6126 5487

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

Town Officials: Dennis Devereux, Fra DeVine, Carol Garrow-Woolley, Diana Garrow, David Johnson, David Martin, Jon McCann, Christine Pratt, Renee Sarmiento, Andy Schulz, James Seward, Bridgid Sullivan, Clinton Woolley

Members of the Public: Paul Barton, Caitlyn Boyle, Timothy Fair (Vermont Cannabis Solutions), Zena Gates, Casey Hodge, Marianne McGee, Stephen Michel, Jeb Porter, Donna Seward, Sue Starr-Adams, Amy Turco, Ron Unterman

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

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

3. **Changes and/or additions to the agenda** – Jennifer Matthews asked to add the approval of Harry's Restaurant liquor license and the approval of the annual Geese Depredation Permit to the agenda. It was agreed to do so under New Business. Jeff Chase asked to add an ARPA funds request from the Mount Holly Community Historical Museum. It was agreed to do so under the ARPA Funds Request agenda item.

4. **Retail Cannabis Informational Session** – Ms. Matthews introduced Timothy Fair from Vermont Cannabis Solutions. Mr. Fair gave a presentation on the benefits of voting for the retail sale of cannabis in Mount Holly (jobs, young people in town, additional revenue, tourism, increase in property values, etc.). A number of residents spoke against allowing the retail sale of cannabis in town (increased drug use, gateway drug to harder drugs and sale of those drugs, addiction problems, law enforcement issues, new cultivation and processing of marijuana in town, etc.). For full discussion, please see: [Videos | Okemo Valley TV](#)

5. **Approval of January 11th, 2022 Meeting Minutes & Special Select Board Meeting Minutes of January 20th, 2022** – Mr. Chase made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Mr. Turco, unanimously approved.

6. Reports

a. Highways & Transfer Station Update –

i) **Monthly Update - Clinton Woolley** reported: it's been busy in town this month; at the Rutland Region Transportation Advisory Committee meeting, it was said that rules on use of ARPA funds for matching funds for road and bridge grants are loosening; at the Rutland County Solid Waste District meeting, a quorum was not present.

ii) **Retreatment Plan for Spring/Summer – Jeff Chase** discussed repaving Hortonville Road from the town line to Shunpike Road at a cost of \$351,680. He noted paving grant applications to VTrans are due in early April, and he hopes the Town will receive a grant to help cover these costs.

b. Treasurer – David Johnson

i) **Monthly Income & Expense Report** – Mr. Johnson reported: all the property taxes are booked; there is no change in the interest amounts as the January bank statements have not yet been received; the third quarter payments from the State have been received for State Aid to Roads (additional \$30,200) and for Special State Aid – Roads (additional \$3,342); the Solid Waste Labels Sold amount of \$18,386 is through January 20th, so two-thirds of the budgeted amount has already been received in less than two-thirds of the year; the Hauling & Disposal Expenses amount of \$27,546 does not include Casella's January bill. Ms. Matthews asked about the Judiciary Fees, and she noted that the Cott System Research Fees received by the town continue to increase each month.

c. **Mount Holly Planning Commission Update – Jon McCann** reported: the Planning Commission welcomed new Commissioner Andrew Seward; they continue to do work on the utilities and facilities section, and transportation section of the town plan; the Commission voted unanimously to serve as the Board of Adjustment, if asked to do so by the Select Board.

d. **Mount Holly Conservation Commission Update** – Fra DeVine reported: the Commission is in the midst of restructuring; Annette Lynch has moved out-of-town and resigned from the Commission; he and Phil Crane are serving as co-leaders temporarily; the Commission is reviewing their policies and procedures; the work on the shade tree preservation plan is progressing, as is the Star Lake bottom barriers permitting process; work continues on the natural resource inventories with teams responsible for different ones; and, the Commission is working with the Planning Commission on any information they need from the natural resource inventories. The Select Board agreed to post the current opening on the Conservation Commission.

7. **Ongoing & Old Business**

a. **Traffic Ordinance** – Mr. Chase reviewed the traffic ordinance he drew up using VLCT's model and the traffic study information from the Rutland Regional Planning Commission. Discussion ensued about speed limits on various roads, town highway numbers, school zone speed, historic village and other signage, amongst other items.

b. **Junk Ordinance Enforcement** – The Select Board agreed to issue another municipal violation with an additional financial penalty to the property on VT Route 103 North, which continues to be in violation of the Junk Ordinance. The property owner will have 30 days to clean up the property before another violation and penalty are issued.

c. **ARPA Funds Requests** –

i) **Land Records Digitization Project** – Mr. McCann presented the Select Board with a thorough but concise history of this project, which started in 2020 with the grant application and award of \$29,132 (\$10,000 more than requested) and the completion of the first part of the project. He reviewed what needs to be done next to continue to digitize and preserve the Town's land records. He also reviewed the proposals and costs to do this work. Discussion ensued about costs, need, computer access, methods, amongst other items. Mr. Chase made a motion to approve the use of up to \$11,800 to continue the work to digitize and preserve 40 years on town land records, seconded by Ms. Matthews. Mr. Chase and Ms. Matthews voted in favor the motion; Mr. Turco voted against it.

ii) **Mount Holly Community Historical Museum (agenda addition)** – Mr. Chase presented an email request for funds to cover the costs of a water line. Discussion ensued. Mr. Turco made a motion to approve the use of up to \$3,400 in ARPA funds for the water line costs, seconded by Mr. Chase, unanimously approved.

d. **Board of Adjustment** – Ms. Matthews presented the town attorney's recommendation that the Town of Mount Holly establish a Board of Adjustment in order to be in agreement with town regulations and to be in compliance with State Statutes (laws). Discussion ensued about the need for an in-town appeal process, the Environmental Court, legal costs to the town, the role of the Administrative Officer, the subdivision process, the composition of the Board of Adjustment and the number of its members, amongst other items. Mr. Turco made a motion to create a Board of Adjustment with up to seven members, seconded by Ms. Matthews, unanimously approved.

In most towns, the Board of Adjustment is comprised of the Planning Commission members, a model which has proven to work. Mr. Johnson suggested a Board of Adjustment made up of the Planning Commission members plus two other residents. The exact composition of the Board will be decided at the March Select Board meeting.

e. **Other** – Ms. Matthews asked about the current status of the **financial audits** as RHR Smith has not yet presented the Select Board with final audit results for the fiscal years ending June 30th, 2019 and 2020. Per the RFP, this was to have been done by the end of December. She will contact them regarding this.

8. **New Business (agenda additions):**

a. **Geese Depredation Permit** – Ron Unterman explained it was time to renew the annual permit to keep the beach area of Star Lake clean of goose poop. He noted this is the 12th year of the program. Ms. Matthews made a motion to approve the Geese Depredation Permit, seconded by Mr. Turco, unanimously approved.

b. **Harry's Restaurant Liquor License Renewal** – Mr. Turco made a motion to approve the liquor license renewal for Harry's Restaurant, seconded by Mr. Chase, unanimously approved.

9. **Citizen Comments** – There were none this evening.

10. **Announcements/Other Business –**

a. **Town Office Closed: Monday, February 21st for Presidents’ Day**

b. **Annual Town Meeting, Monday, February 28th @ 7:00 pm at the Mount Holly School Gym & via Zoom**

c. **VOTE on Tuesday, March 1st @ Town Office from 10:00 am to 7:00 pm**

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

12. **Adjourn** –Meeting adjourned at 8:35 pm.

Respectfully Submitted: Jennifer Matthews

Approved: _____

DRAFT