

Mount Holly Select Board Meeting
March 8, 2022 Minutes
In-Person with Zoom Meeting: 898 6126 5487

Present: Select Board: Jeff Chase, Diana Garrow, Mark Turco (Chair)

Town Officials: Carol Garrow-Woolley, David Johnson, Mary Surething, Jon McCann, Dennis Devereux, Christine Pratt, Fra DeVine, James Seward, Brigid Sullivan, Philippe Crane, Clinton Woolley

Members of the Public: Paul Barton, Zena Gates, Donna Seward, Stephen Michel, Rebekah Ferreira, Barbara & Steve Hazelton, Marianne McGee

1. Call to Order by Mark Turco at 6:29 pm.

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

Following the Pledge Mark Turco thanked outgoing Selectboard member Jennifer Matthews for her time and effort she put in for the Town of Mount Holly as a Selectboard member and welcomed new member Diana Garrow to the Selectboard.

3. Consideration of any changes and/or additions to the agenda: Dennis Devereux made a request to move article 8. g. COVID Mask Requirement on Municipal Properties to the beginning of the meeting. Mark Turco said we will do that after Consideration of any changes and/or additions to the agenda, not hearing any moved on to COVID Mask Requirement on Municipal Properties. Diana Garrow moved to remove the COVID mask mandate on Municipal Properties seconded by Mark Turco, unanimously approved.

4. Approval of February 8th Minutes: Jeff Chase made the motion to approve the February 8th minutes as written, seconded by Mark Turco, unanimously approved.

5. Reorganization:

a. Select Board Chair: Jeff Chase made the motion to accept Mark Turco for Chair, seconded by Diana Garrow, unanimously approved.

b. Tree Warden: Jeff Chase made motion to reappoint Phil Crane as Tree Warden, Mark Turco, seconded, unanimously approved.

c. E911 Coordinator: Mark Turco made motion for Carol Garrow-Woolley to continue as E911 Coordinator, seconded by Diana Garrow, unanimously approved.

d. 911 Measuring Responsibilities: Mark Turco made motion to have David Johnson and the Listers to continue in the 911 measuring responsibilities, seconded by Jeff Chase, unanimously approved.

e. RCSWD Representative & Alternate: Diana Garrow made motion to have Clinton Woolley continue as representative with Jeff Chase as Alternate, seconded by Mark Turco, unanimously approved.

f. Designated Employer Representative: Diana Garrow moved to have Jeff Chase remain as Employer Representative, seconded by Mark Turco, unanimously approved.

g. Newspaper of Record: Jeff Chase made the motion to keep The Vermont Journal as Newspaper of Record, seconded by Diana Garrow, unanimously approved.

h. Assistant Town Clerk(s): Town Clerk Carol Garrow-Woolley appointed Diana Garrow, Susan Covalla and Nancy Conor as Assistant Town Clerks.

i. Assistant Town Treasurer: Town Treasurer David Johnson spoke we would have to leave that open for another month as Diana Garrow cannot continue being Assistant Treasurer now she in on the Select Board. Mark replied we will revisit it on next month's agenda. David thanked Diana Garrow for serving as his Assistant Treasurer since 1996.

j. Set Day & Time of Regular Meeting: Mark Turco made motion to keep the meeting on the second Tuesday at 6:30 pm of each month, Diana Garrow seconded, unanimously approved.

k. Name Two (2) Public Posting Places for Agendas: Jeff Chase made motion to continue with the Mount Holly and Belmont Post Offices as two (2) Public Posting Places for Agendas, seconded by Diana Garrow, unanimously approved.

l. Signer for SB Orders & Authorization for Orders: Jeff Chase moved to have Diana Garrow as signer for SB Orders & Authorization for Orders, Mark Turco seconded, unanimously approved.

Jeff Chase moved to continue the policy to allow Treasurer to add to the SB orders as necessary through the week, Mark Turco seconded, unanimously approved.

m. Conflict of Interest Policy – Sign: Mark Turco made motion to continue with the existing Conflict of Interest Policy, Jeff Chase seconded, unanimously approved.

6. Reports:

a. Highways & Transfer Station Update – Clinton Woolley:

i. Road Posting: Clinton stated the roads were posted on Monday March 7th, and that we were down an employee for the road crew and that residents please bear with us. The Transfer Station is still going well.

Clinton reported TownLine Equipment has a rubber-tired excavator, a Volvo EW55B with 3 buckets, for \$38,500, that is pending sold. He stated the past few years we have rented a excavator for at least 2 months per year to complete ditching, small culvert replacement, and Grants in Aid stormwater improvements. He would like the Selectboard to consider purchasing a excavator in the near future. Treasurer David Johnson stated we do have the funding for a used unit and it wouldn't affect the budget for purchasing other equipment down the line. Mark told Clinton if it should come available to let the Selectboard know and a special meeting could be called.

ii. Paving Grant Application – Hortonville TH-1: Jeff Chase mentioned last month's meeting he spoke about the paving grant for Hortonville Road from Shunpike Road to Shrewsbury townline with the budget as of last month but the price of asphalt is going up. Jeff said he will send the application in seeking the full amount of the grant. The deadline to apply for the grant is April 2nd. He mentioned the asphalt prices will be going up as fuel costs are rising. Clinton was talking with Tom Fuller who suggested to reclaim the road this year because of the rising costs and pave next year. Hopefully by this fall the cost will start to come down. Mark thought it a good idea to reclaim and let set over the winter which would give it a chance to settle. The grant is good until June of 2023. Jeff will take some pictures of the road condition to be include in the grant application.

iii. VTrans Structures Grant – Summit Road Box Culvert Replacement – Bid Results: Jeff Chase stated we got five bids late January which are good for 60 days, set expire on 3/14/22. The low bid was G&N Excavating \$231,832 and the highest was Markowski \$469,913. G&N has recently successfully completed similar work in Shrewsbury according to Otter Creek Engineering. risks. The grant is for \$180,000, with the town portion being \$60,000-\$70,000 including Otter Creek Engineering costs. We do have funds in Culvert Fund of approximately \$60,000 and maybe able to use some ARPA funds based on current information from VLCT and RRPC. Mark state we should confirm that ARPA funds could be used for matching funds for box culvert. We will hold a Special Meeting when have more information. Jeff will call G&N to see if they are willing to hold their price till the Special Meeting. Clinton mention has reached out to the VTrans for a hydraulic studies for Perry Road culverts, as they will likely be next ones we need to consider replacing.

b. Treasurer – David Johnson – Monthly Income & Expense Report: David gave a report on the income and expenses with copies of the report handed out for the Select Board. He also said the audit is on track to finish the FY 20 audit and the Auditor would like to be present at the April 12th select board meeting.

c. Mount Holly Planning Commission Update – Jon McCann: The Planning Commission has been reaching out to people with knowledge of the plan utilities and facilities of the town for the Town Plan. They have had letters come in from Fire and the Library with more to arrive soon. They have other coming in on the transportation plan. They will present a draft in April. Jon McCann stated there is a public hearing coming up on March 16th. Mark asked Jon how many Subdivision permits have they had this year and he replied 3 with one withdrawal. One had 3 lots to begin with but reduced to 2 lots.

d. Mount Holly Conservation Commission Update: Francis DeVine spoke on behalf of the Conservation Commission. He said as there were people traveling this month they were not able to

hold an official meeting but did hold an informational meeting. The agenda for this month was tabled and will be held next month. It includes the ongoing organizational restructuring of the Conservation Commission the review of the policy and procedures. He stated the shade tree preservation plan continues and will have a report next month.

Diana Garrow asked Francis DeVine in compliance of Open Meeting Law the Conservation Commission should provide the Town Office with hard copies of all meetings minutes from start to present as we have had inquirers of these minutes at the town office by folks who do not have computers to gain access to them. Fra stated he would contact the person responsible to have them emailed to the Select Board.

7. New Business

a. Set Start Date for Spring & Summer Transfer Station Hours – Confirm: Clinton Woolley reported the summer hours will begin after April 3rd being the last Sunday and Wednesday April 6th from 4:00 pm – 7:00 pm the start of summer hours and Saturday remains the same 8:00 am – 2:00 pm.

b. Town Office Telephone and Internet – Change Provider: Mark told us the free service we have present with Comcast will no longer be available and the cost to continue service through them would be more than going through VTel. After some discussion of the different options Jeff Chase made a motion to go with the Double Play with VTel at 500 Mbps internet, seconded by Mark Turco, unanimously approved. Mark will have Carol call VTel tomorrow as there would be a 2 – 3 week wait to get service.

c. Packer Cemetery Agreement – Transfer to Town – Sign: Dennis Devereux spoke on the maintenance of Packer Cemetery and will contact the Tree Warden and Clinton Woolley as there are some trees needing attention or removal. He also stated lot prices are really low so will need to revisit pricing. There is \$8,000 coming over from Packer Cemetery ear marked for care of that cemetery only and about 30 or more lots to be sold with some lots to be sold for urns only. There are some unmarked graves and the cemetery was never mapped out so location of unmarked graves is unknown.

Mark Turco moved to transfer Packer Cemetery and its assets and holding to the Town of Mount Holly pursuant to 18 V.S.A. 85439, Jeff Chase seconded, unanimously approved.

d. VT DEC Grants in Aid – Aquatic Nuisance Grant – Lake Ninevah Application 2022 – Sign: Jeff Chase made the motion to sign the Aquatic Nuisance Control Environmental Stewardship Program Grant for FY 23, Diana Garrow seconded, unanimously passed.

e. Job Description for Highway Department Opening – Review and Post: Jeff Chase said he would post the job for Highway Department opening in the Vermont Journal, Mount Holly Chit Chat and the town unofficial website if Diana would send to the NewsFlash for a closing date of March 31st. David said there are applications available. There will be special meetings as well as interviews.

f. Reassignment of Planning Grant Municipal Authorizing Official: Previously this position was handled by Jennifer and transferred over to Jeff with a form to fill out and he would continue. Mark Turco made motion to have Jeff Chase assume office of Planning Grant Municipal Authorizing Official, seconded by Diana Garrow, unanimously passed.

h. VTrans Annual Certification of Compliance for Town Road and Bridge Standards – Sign: Jeff Chase made motion to sign Annual Financial Plan for town highways form TA60 for coming year, Mark Turco seconded, unanimously approved.

Jeff Chase made motion to accept the Certificate of Compliance for Town Road and Bridge Standards, Mark Turco seconded, unanimously passed.

8. Ongoing & Old Business:

a. Traffic Ordinance – Final review: Jeff Chase mentioned the town Lawyer wanted the Selectboard to make sure road numbers were called out along with the road names on the Ordinance.

Jeff had a conversation with Devon Neary of Regional Planning about extending the 35 mph from Frost Hill Road up to Gates Road on Belmont Road explaining the residents there had livestock with horses and site distances were limited. Devon agreed that there was justification to lower speed in this section.

Dennis Devereux said he will mark up a map of the town to plot out the signs for placement to be cleared by Clinton Woolley and the Select Board.

Jeff said he received an email from Mike Blais about concerns on Old Turnpike Road from VT Route 103 to Hortonville Road and requested consideration of the lower posted limit, 25 or 30 mph. Mike Blais is also concerned with sight distance on that portion of the road and suggested raising of the approaches to improve visibility. The Selectboard will visit the site to see how raising approaches would affect existing ditches, discussion was tabled till next month on this issue. He also provided cut sheets for the streetlight he plans to put up outside the ROW. Mark Turco made motion to accept Traffic Study Ordinance with final review with the one change of going to 30 mph on Old Turnpike Road from Route 103 to Hortonville Road, Diana Garrow seconded, unanimously approved.

b. Junk Ordinance – Violation Update – Route 103 Property: Mark Turco stated a second notice was sent out with signed receipt of acceptance to the Route 103 property. The Health Officer has reached out to the State and has two conflicting stories. The Health Officer was able to get copies of receipts of septic pumping a couple months back but where that stands now we do not know. Mark will follow up with the Health Officer to get more information on the gray water and septic pumping receipts that were reached out to the State. We will have to proceed with the next level of action with a registered letter. Will need to contact Paul with another notice with additional fines of \$2.00 per day with other actions to be served.

c. Select Board Admin. Assistant Position – Review Applications: Mark Turco said he has two applications at this time one from Millicent R. Johnson and one from Caitlin Boyle. We set up a date for a Special Meeting on Tuesday March 15th, to meet at 3:00 pm and 3:30 pm. Mark will call both to set up appointment times.

d. Conservation Commission Appointment – Letter of Interest due by 3-7-22: No letters of interest have been received so will repost for next month.

e. ARPA – Historical Museum Water Service – Additional Request due to Water Test Requirement: Stephen Michel spoke on the issue as the State requires for the water to be tested at an additional cost \$250 to be added to the water line of \$3,400 which was approved last month. Jeff Chase made motion not to exceed \$3,800 for Museum water service use of ARPA funds, Mark Turco seconded, unanimously approved.

f. Board of Adjustment – Assign Members: Diana Garrow stated we may have to table this until next month upon receipt of a lot more information to be read through on the Board of Adjustment. Some of the information talks about Development Review Board rather than a Zoning Board of Adjustment. Dennis Devereux had reached out to Secretary of State's office for information as well as the Leagues of Cities and Towns to provide the select board with more information. It was tabled until next month.

9. Citizen Comments: Jim Heald was recognized he wanted to know about the Structure Grant for Summit Road, where is that a problem? Mark stated it was about the culvert that Clinton had put in. Clinton said the culvert was only a temporary fix. The state mandated they would give us two years to replace with a box type structure. He also asked about the cell tower? It is still being worked on with transmitters attached and will need the tree branches to be installed yet. Jim also asked about the speed limit on Belmont Road and what the speed limit was and how far it went? The speed limit is 35 mph and will be from Gates Road down to Route 103. He also asked how many people we were looking for highway maintenance. Mark stated only one and Jim came back you should be looking for two employees with all the equipment we have now and the work load the road crew have.

Mary Surething was recognized to speak, said she overheard some conversations there are people who would be interested, that we could depend on, who would like to work for the town but can't as they make so much more working in other towns that they don't want to take a cut in pay to come work for Mount Holly. What can we do to get a pay raise for the guys who work for the town now and entice others to come work for the town? These are people we depend on every day of the year and now there is only two. Mark spoke it's all part of the budget it would have to go into the budget. Jeff spoke we are at 7 1/2% inflation loss everybody can't react fast enough. Mark said he and Clinton did talk about a fourth part time person we could draw on for extra work.

Mary asked do you have written employee standards for people who don't come to work, or don't call in and are out for days at a time. Any disciplinary actions are confidential Mark said and can't bring any of that up and we do have an employee handbook that is nearly completed. Everyone is struggling to keep employees or to hire employees in any work force in the current situation.

10. Announcements/Other Business: Nothing.

11. Review & Sign Orders:

12. Executive Session: Title 1 V.S.A. S 313(a)(3) – personnel (if needed) Mark asked if there was a need for Executive Session. Clinton said he would like to have an Executive Session. At 8:10 pm Jeff Chase made a motion for Executive Session for Title 1 V.S.A. S 313(a)(3) Mark Turco seconded, unanimously passed.

13. Adjourn: Mark Turco called adjournment at 8:45 pm

Respectfully Submitted by Diana Garrow, Select Board Date Approved: