

**Select Board Meeting  
@ Town Office  
July 12, 2022  
6:30 pm**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**Present:**

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

**Town Officials:** Caitlin Boyle, Philippe Crane, Dennis Devereux, Carol Garrow-Woolley, David Johnson, Jon McCann (via Zoom), Christine Pratt, James Seward, Laura Swartz, Clinton Woolley

**Members of the Public:** In Person: Chad Farrar, Zena Gates, Amy Turco. Via Zoom: Kelly Beerman, Francis and Carol DeVine, Barbara Hazelton, Steve Hazelton, Jessica Metcalf, Renee Sarmento, Jonathan Washburn

1. Call to Order at 6:30 pm
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Consideration of any changes and/or additions to the agenda. Mark Turco noted a request to add Cota & Cota Capped Price at Office Program to the New Business section.
4. Approval of June 14th minutes. Diana Garrow made a motion to approve the minutes as written, seconded by Mark Turco, unanimously approved.
5. Reports
  - a. **Highways & Transfer Station Update - Clinton Woolley**
    - i. Mr. Woolley noted that the road crew has put about 130 hours on the excavator, ditching and doing culvert installation, since its purchase. The Highway Department also received the FY23 grants in aid of \$31,000. He noted that he has also installed most of the new speed limit signs and will finish the project in the coming days.
    - ii. Mr. Woolley is interested in putting an RFP out for reclaiming a section of Hortonville Road.
    - iii. Mr. Woolley noted that the scrap pile is getting big at the transfer station, and Tim Hubbard has volunteered to pick it up at no cost, as has been done for the past few years. He also has a call into E-cycle to empty that container.
  - b. **Treasurer Monthly Income & Expense Report - David Johnson**
    - i. Mr. Johnson noted that we are at the beginning of the new fiscal year as of July 1.
    - ii. There is a newly established account for the Conservation Commission Fund.
    - iii. In reviewing the Profit and Loss Statement, Mr. Johnson noted that this is the first year in a number of years that the delinquent tax has not met the budget; usually it is over. The payment from the Forestry Receipts is more than expected. He also noted that the fees for the records fund were \$6,697 but research fees are only \$399. Solid Waste label sales are over what was budgeted; officers' salaries are \$15,000 under

budget. Additional Star Lake expenses was the annual dam registration with the state; he anticipates additional bills for mowing around Star Lake and cemeteries. Overall, Transfer Station is under budget. The school was paid in full. Vehicle repairs are under budget. The fuel budget is over by \$5,800.

iv. Overall, the budget is in fine shape.

**c. Town Clerk Update:**

i. All Cott Systems updates are up to date.

**d. Mount Holly Planning Commission Update - Jon McCann**

i. Mr. McCann reported that the Commission is still working on the Town Plan; it is currently looking at the Flood Resilience Plan component.

ii. He also reported that Verizon will co-locate on the new cell tower.

**e. Mount Holly Conservation Commission Update - Fra Devine**

i. The Conservation Commission received a \$1,000 grant from Northford Timber Framers.

ii. Divers are coming to town the week of July 11 to put down the bottom barrier in Star Lake until October.

iii. Star Lake E-coli level is currently 3-4 times the level the state allows. The divers putting down the bottom barriers will be made aware of whether this week's testing results affect their decision to enter the lake.

iv. The Conservation Commission is working toward giving a brief presentation on the history of the lake and what can be done to restore it, possibly on Mount Holly Days.

**f. Lake Nineveh Update - Kelly Beerman**

i. This year, the Town of Mount Holly was awarded \$12,050 from the state for both aquatic surveys from an aquatic ecologist, and to facilitate visitor greeters at Lake Ninevah and Woodward Reservoir.

ii. Lake Nineveh has had three infestations of eurasian water milfoil, and the lake will be evaluated again this summer for signs of infestation.

iii. The Select Board does need to sign off on the state's DEC grant to the town for Lake Nineveh. The next time she will need a signature from the SB is at the end of the grant period, in October, when the final findings and write-up will come due to the state.

**6. New Business**

**a. Establishment of the FY'23 Tax Rate**

i. Tax dollars to be raised by the Town are \$1,058,075. As divided by the Municipal Grand List, this equals a tax rate of .3734 cents. A Tax Rate of 37.54 would raise \$1,063,753. The Homestead Rate would be 1.9038 and the non-homestead rate would be 1.8724. This represents a minor decrease from FY22.

ii. Diana Garrow made a motion to accept the tax rate as presented. Jeff Chase seconded; unanimously approved.

**b. Presentation of and Select Board Vote on Shade Tree Preservation Plan - Phil Crane**

i. Mr. Crane reminded the Select Board that shade trees are defined in the state statutes as trees that are in the town right-of-way or on municipal land, and were planted by the town. There are remarkably few of these trees in Mount Holly, but there are a number of additional trees that the Conservation Commission would like to consider as shade trees for the purposes of this plan. Including trees in the plan would enable the town to preserve or protect trees with cultural or agricultural value and to possibly secure funding for their preservation. The plan does not obligate the town

to do anything beyond what is already being done, and it does not obligate individuals to include trees on their property; it also does not require any fiscal commitment from the Town. In their initial surveys of property owners, the Commission has received positive feedback from property owners with shade trees on their properties. Neighboring towns, including Shrewsbury, are also embarking on similar shade tree plans.

- ii. Chad Farrar raised a question about whether conifers would be included in the plan, because they tend to grow quickly and exacerbate muddy road conditions in the spring. Phil Crane noted there are currently no conifers designated as shade trees.
- iii. Mark Turco also noted that a town citizen wondered whether the plan would affect his ability to manage trees on his own property; Mr. Crane noted that the plan is not binding; there is a path to appeal decisions to cut down or preserve shade trees once a plan is adopted. The Plan is not an ordinance nor a policy; it is merely a plan that establishes a protocol for managing shade trees.
- iv. Amy Turco noted that utility companies do not need to contact the Town if they need to manage trees for the purposes of maintaining power lines.
- v. Jeff Chase made a motion to accept the Shade Tree Preservation Plan as written; Diana Garrow seconded; unanimously approved.

**c. Board of Listers Opening**

- i. There is an opening for the open Board of Listers position, following the resignation of Carol Garrow-Woolley. The Select Board Clerk will post the request for letters of interest for the position on all usual channels, including website, *Chit Chat*, and Mount Holly Newsflash. Mr. Johnson noted that the Town will seek a new Town Appraiser in time for the Town's next reappraisal. Mr. Turco noted that anyone interested in being a lister should send a letter of interest to the Select Board; they should have some computer experience. It would be a temporary appointed position until the next election; the term is three years.
- ii. Mr. Turco made a motion to accept Ms. Garrow-Woolley's resignation as submitted; Jeff Chase seconded; unanimously approved.

**d. Town Health Officer Appointment (due to State by 7/31/22)**

- i. The State requires that Towns appoint a new Health Officer by July 31, 2022.
- ii. Two letters of interest were received by the Select Board, from Town residents Jim Corven and Chad Farrar. Letters of interest were read into the record by Mark Turco.
- iii. Dennis Devereux noted that both candidates were qualified and wished the Select Board good luck in making a decision.
- iv. Diana Garrow made a motion to recommend Chad Farrar to the position of Town Health Officer for the Town of Mount Holly; Mark Turco seconded; unanimously approved.

**e. Rutland Regional Planning Commission Rep and Alternate Appointments**

- i. Two letters of interest were received; one for representative and one for alternate.
- ii. Jeff Chase made a motion to appoint as RRPC Representative Jessica Metcalf and as RRPC alternate Jon McCann. Diana Garrow seconded; unanimously approved.

**f. Addition of Healdville Road Sign at Intersection with Church and Lake Roads**

- i. Dennis Devereux noted that a couple residing in Belmont pointed out that there is no road sign for Healdville Road at the intersection of Church and Lake Roads, and asked that a sign be added at the intersection. The Select Board and Road Foreman agreed.

**g. Coverage of Cemetery Volunteers and Commissioners Under Existing PACIF Policy**

- i. Dennis Devereux asked for the Select Board's views on distributing a volunteer waiver to cemetery volunteers so that they are aware of the possible risks of groundskeeping in cemeteries, as recommended by the town's insurer. The Select Board acknowledged that the existing policy indeed covers volunteers up to \$50,000 each, in case of accident. Caitlin Boyle will provide copies of the waiver to Mr. Devereux to distribute.
- h. Cota and Cota
  - i. Mark Turco made a motion to accept the Cota & Cota Capped Price at Office Program; Jeff Chase seconded; unanimously approved.

## 7. Ongoing & Old Business

### a. Dog License Registration for Unregistered Dogs

- i. Animal Control Officer Laura Swartz will conduct calls to check in with owners of previously registered but currently unregistered dogs. She will come to the next meeting with an update on her progress.

### b. Installation of Speed Limit Signs and Enforcement Support

- i. Jeff Chase shared the proposal from the Rutland County Sheriff's Office, to offer enforcement support for the new speed limits established in Mount Holly.
- ii. Dennis Devereux noted his thanks to the Select Board for addressing the issue.
- iii. The Select Board noted they will request minor changes to the submitted contract to include an update to the stated fuel-price cap, but assuming that change is accepted, that they would approve the contract.
- iv. Mark Turco made a motion to accept the contract with the revisions indicated above; Diana Garrow seconded; unanimously approved.

### c. Select Board Vote on Removal of TH-15 Scampsville Road from Town Highway Map

- i. Jeff Chase noted that he has sought input from the state regarding removing Scampsville Road from the town highway map.

### d. Junk Ordinance Enforcement Updates

- i. Property owner Will Hunter has confirmed that trash bags will be removed from the Blue Spruce House this week.
- ii. Grover Taylor called the Select Board to confirm he is working on removing junk vehicles from his father's property.

### e. Citizen Comments

- i. Dennis Devereux suggested that the Select Board may wish to research whether VTrans can reassess the intersection of Rt 103 and Belmont Road; the rise in the road reduces visibility to drivers and poses a risk to drivers taking a left onto Rt 103 heading S from Belmont Road. Mark Turco and Jeff Chase noted they can draft a letter to VTrans to ask for an assessment.
- ii. Kevin Plew wrote a letter to the Select Board regarding road maintenance on and culvert maintenance on Shunpike Road. Mr. Woolley noted that he did touch up on Shunpike on July 11. He also noted that the roads get graded in early August, but because it's so dry, he has been reluctant to do much grading because of the amount of dust it creates. Regarding the culvert, there have been efforts to clear the culvert, and there are current efforts to trap the beaver that are repeatedly damming the culvert.
- iii. Jeff Chase noted that there is an update on the Summit Road Culvert; work is progressing there.

**8. Announcements/Other Business**

- a. The August 9 Select Board meeting needs to be rescheduled due to state primary elections. Mark Turco made a motion to reschedule the August 9 meeting to the following day, August 10 at 6:30 pm. Jeff Chase seconded; unanimously approved.

**9. Review & Sign Orders**

**10. Executive Session: Title 1 V.S.A. S 313(a)(3) – personnel (if needed)**

- a. No executive session needed.

**11. Adjourn:** The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 pm.