

**Select Board Meeting
Mount Holly Town Office
November 14, 2022
6:30 pm**

Attendance: Diana Garrow, Mark Turco, Jeff Chase, Cash Woods, Amy Turco, Randall Dapron, Andy Shulz, Jon McCann, Russ Garrow, Joan Garrow, Megan Litwhiler, Christine Pratt, Carol A Garrow-Wooley, Clinton Woolley, Billy Austin, Elizabeth Karle, Zena M. Gates, David Johnson, Dennis Devereux, Stephen Michel, James Seward, Donna Seward, Phil Crane, Caitlin Boyle, Steven Hazelton, Barbara Hazelton

1. **Call to Order at 6:30 pm.**
2. **Pledge of Allegiance**
3. **Consideration of any changes and/or additions to the agenda.** There are three additions: the purchase of highway department radios; consideration of position for transfer station attendant; and the addition of a junk ordinance complaint.
4. **Approval of October 10, and October 26, 2023 Minutes.** Diana Garrow made a motion to approve the minutes as drafted; Mark Turco seconded; unanimously approved.
5. **Reports**
 - a. **Highways & Transfer Station Update.** Road Foreman Clinton Woolley noted that the Summit Road Box Culvert project has been completed and guardrails installed. He noted that the Town should begin to look for another truck, as the 2014 Western Star is needing a lot of expensive repairs. Fuller Sand and Gravel has completed the paving work on Belmont Road. At the transfer station, Mr. Woolley noted that residents need to comply with the posted signs, particularly regarding the scrap wood and scrap metal piles. Mr. Turco noted that the Town may need to implement a “see attendant first” policy before disposing of materials in the scrap wood and scrap metal piles, as has been done in the past. He noted that violations at the transfer station could result in high fines from the state, and ultimately, closure of the Transfer Station. Ms. Garrow noted that a resident had inquired about whether Class Four roads must be maintained by the Town. Mr. Turco noted that the Town does not have a policy of maintaining or repairing Class Four roads at this time. Ms. Garrow noted that the property owner who is inquiring may be able to apply for FEMA reimbursements for Class Four road damage that was incurred during the July floods. Mr. Chase noted that he wanted to verify that the Select Board has no objections to the G&N Excavation work at the Summit Road site. The Select Board had no objections that would derail payment of the final invoice.
 - b. **Town Treasurer Update.**
 - i. **Monthly Income and Expenses Report:** Ms. Karle noted that the Town has continued to receive the majority of the tax payments over the course of October; the tax delinquency process has begun for taxpayers who have not paid by November 1. This rate is low at 5%, which is comparable to past years. She noted that the Town received an advance quarterly payment of state aid for the roads, as it did last month, and that the Town has begun to purchase winter salt and sand. Ms. Karle further noted that the 2014 Western Star repair costs have been \$8,000 this year to date. Hauling for solid waste is slightly over budget to date, but due to seasonal variations, this is not of concern. The biggest unanticipated expense for the year is from flooding and storm damage; the Town has realized \$397,000 in expenses thus far. As of October 31, the disaster inventory has been completed with FEMA; there are estimates of \$1.6 million dollars of flood-related damage in the Town, almost all road-related.
 - ii. **Municipal Equipment Loan Fund Update:** The Town applied for this loan for the new loader; the state is doing due diligence and will notify the Town in December.

- iii. E-Payments for Future: Ms. Karle noted that there are some minor upcoming changes in the processing of ACH and other electronic payments; the Town will not incur costs due to these changes.
- iv. Budget Requests for FY2025: Ms. Karle reminded the community that social service requests and other budgetary requests to be put before the town at Town Meeting Day should be submitted.
- v. Mr. Turco asked what was remaining in the vehicle replacement fund for the highway department; Ms. Karle noted this amount is \$170,000.
- c. Mount Holly Planning Commission Update: Ms. Garrow noted that there are two seats whose terms are due to expire in November, and that to allow more time for candidates to apply for appointment or reappointment to these seats, she is recommending that the term be extended until December. Mr. McCann noted that the final requisition for the FY23 MPG and it was accepted; the grant has been officially closed and satisfied all requirements. Mr. McCann also submitted the FY24 MPG application; the Town can expect a decision this month. He noted that the Town Plan hearing is set for November 15, at 6:00 pm, at the Town Office.
 - i. Two Seat Term Extensions to December 12: Ms. Garrow made a motion to extend the term of the current members by one month, until December 12. Mr. Turco seconded; unanimously approved.
 - ii. Town Plan Update: Regarding the draft Town Plan, Mr. Turco asked whether there was a change to the Town's Class Four Road policy. Mr. Chase noted that work to create a Class Four Road policy was begun about 18 months ago; a formal policy has not been adopted by the Town. Mr. Johnson noted that the current draft language is worded: "The town is legally responsible for the maintenance, repair, and safety of Class Four roads even though they may be closed during the snow season," but this is not the case.
- d. Mount Holly Conservation Commission Update:
 - i. Mr. Crane noted that the Planning Commission has one open seat and one interested candidate, Megan Litwhiler. Ms. Litwhiler shared that she has a background in ecology and is interested in supporting the Town through the Conservation Commission. Mr. Turco made a motion to appoint Megan Litwhiler to the Conservation Commission for a term of three years; Diana Garrow seconded; unanimously approved.
 - ii. Ms. Garrow also requested that the Conservation Commission provide an updated list of members and their terms, and that it be sure to provide its monthly meeting minutes to the Town Clerk for reference in the Town Office.
 - iii. Mr. Crane noted that the MHCC is interested in applying to three grants on behalf of the Town, for conservation-related work. These grants would be for solid waste diversion activities; ash borer control; and invasive species control, respectively. The Select Board Clerk also inquired about whether the MHCC would be completing the Aquatic Nuisance Control Permit Annual Reporting Reminder; Mr. Crane indicated that Phil Leonard would complete this report.

6. New Business

- a. **Purchase of Highway Department Radios:** Mr. Woolley noted that he has received a quote for the annual cost of new radios for the Highway Department; the quote is \$3,132 before installation. The current radios are not working effectively; the Town highway crew has been using personal cell phones due to radio failure. Ms. Karle noted that there is a purchased equipment line item in the budget for \$3,500, which is not currently spoken for. Mr. Turco made a motion to purchase the radios at the quoted fees, including installation costs; Diana Garrow seconded; unanimously approved.
- b. **Consideration of Mount Holly Volunteer Fire Department Use of MHVRS Building:** Fire Chief Billy Austin noted that the Fire Department has decided to work toward providing a first response team to respond to local 911 calls in collaboration with the Ludlow Ambulance Service. He also noted that two EMS providers who were formerly members of the Mount Holly Volunteer Rescue Service have joined the Fire Department, which enhances the ability of the Fire Department to serve as first responders; additional members will be trained in first response as well. Mr. Austin noted that given these developments, the Fire Department would be very interested in being able to use the former MHVRS building for Fire Department activities. Mr. Turco noted that the Town would wait until the 30 days' "notification of default"

period was over regarding the MHVRS's lease agreement, and would then make a decision regarding the Fire Department's use of the building.

- c. **ARPA Funds Allocation for "Provision of Government Services"**: Ms. Garrow made a motion to utilize the Town's remaining ARPA funds for "provision of government services;" Mark Turco seconded; unanimously approved.
- d. **Generator Grant**: Mr. Chase noted that the Town's FY 2023 State Homeland Security Grant Program application was approved; this grant will cover the purchase of a new generator.
- e. **2024 Rutland Regional Emergency Management Committee (REMC) Appointments**: Mr Turco made a motion to reappoint Jeff Chase as Emergency Management Director and Jon McCann as Emergency Services Representative for 2024. Mr. Turco thanked Mr. Chase for his service as EMD thus far.
- f. **Transfer Station Attendant**: Mr. Turco noted that he'd like to investigate the cost of hiring a third transfer station attendant, to determine whether there is room in the budget for that position. The Select Board Clerk noted that the Board has received some input that a third attendant may help with user compliance, particularly at the scrap metal pile and scrap wood pile. Ms. Karle noted that last-minute coverage incurs overtime costs for the Town, as fill-in attendants are usually town highway workers, who have already worked a full week. She will prepare a report on potential hiring costs and benefits.

7. Ongoing & Old Business

- a. **Updates Regarding EMS in Mount Holly**: The LAS is currently covering EMS in Mount Holly; the Select Board is awaiting a draft contract to review.
- b. **Decision Re: Solid Waste Bids**. Mr. Chase recused himself, since he is employed by a corporation that is connected to one of the bidders. Ms. Garrow made a motion to continue with waste collection and disposal services from Casella Waste Systems; Mr. Turco seconded; unanimously approved.
- c. **Junk Ordinance Complaints**: A resident of Station Road has made complaints regarding two properties on Station Road that the residents believe to be in violation of the junk ordinance. Mr. Turco noted that the Select Board clerk should issue a letter of notification regarding the violation, and that he would make a visit to the property owners. Mr. Dennis Devereux noted that there are additional properties on Route 155 and Shunpike Road that are also in violation of the ordinance. Mr. Turco instructed the Select Board Clerk to issue new letters of notification to all properties.

8. Citizen Comments

9. Announcements/Other Business

- a. Town Office Closed at noon on November 22 and all day on November 23 for Thanksgiving.

10. Review & Sign Orders

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

12. Adjourn

Joining Meetings Via Zoom

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Meeting ID: 821 8665 3362
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