

Select Board Report 2022

As we say goodbye to 2022, the Select Board presents this summary of its efforts in the past year:

- **In January**, the Select Board conducted its annual budget workshop to review the FY23 proposed budget, and approved the proposed budget—at a 1.4% increase from the previous year. The Board reviewed the results of the town-wide traffic study, whose data supported the Select Board’s proposed recommendations for speed limit reductions on key roads. The Selectboard appointed Andrew Seward to the Planning Commission.
- **In February**, the Select Board hosted an informational session regarding retail sales of cannabis, in anticipation of the item being put to voters at the Town Meeting. The Conservation Commission noted a new vacancy. The liquor license for Harry’s Restaurant was renewed.
- **In March**, the Select Board welcomed Diana Garrow as its newest elected member and re-appointed Mark Turco as Select Board chair, Carol Garrow-Woolley as Emergency 911 Coordinator, Phil Crane as Tree Warden, Clinton Woolley and Jeff Chase as Rutland County Solid Waste District representative and alternate, Jeff Chase as Employer Representative, and Susan Covalla, Diana Garow and Nancy Chase as Assistant Town Clerks. The *Vermont Journal* was re-named the newspaper of record. The Select Board also decided to pursue grants for road improvements on Hortonville Road and for culvert replacement on Summit Road, and voted to approve the new Traffic Ordinance.
- **In April**, the Select Board hosted the Town’s auditing firm, RHR Smith, which gave the Town a “clean audit.” The Conservation Commission shared its new slate of officers, including Fra DeVine (Chair); Phil Leonard (Vice Chair); Fred Garrow (Treasurer); and Clerk (Phil Leonard). The Select Board approved the Commission’s request to place a “bottom barrier” in Star Lake to mitigate aquatic nuisance species in the lake; it approved the Annual Local Emergency Management Plan; it approved a renewed liquor license for the Belmont Store; and it approved the hiring of Caitlin Boyle as its new clerk and Bob Knight as a new member of the Highway Department.
- **In May**, the Select Board approved the Conservation Commission’s recommendation that coliform testing be done regularly at Star Lake. It welcomed comments from Two Rivers Supervisory Union representative Anne Gardner, who requested public input on the supervisory union’s spending of recovery funds. The Select Board also decided to delegate census-taking of unregistered/unlicensed dogs to the Animal Control Officer, per VT Municipal Clerks and Treasurers Association guidelines. It adopted the MRPC Mutual Aid Agreement for Public Works for FY23, as well as a revised town Personnel Policy.

- **In June**, the Select Board approved the purchase of a new excavator, and approved the transfer of ownership of a land parcel formerly owned by Michael and Jacqueline Ryan to the Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife, to become part of a proposed 449-acre Wildlife Management Area. The Select Board also re-appointed Clinton Wolley as Road Foreman and Rutland Regional Transportation Council Representative; approved the installation of new speed enforcement signage and historic village signs; and passed a resolution to establish a Board of Adjustment, with appointees designated as Jim Seward, Christine Pratt and Stephen Michel, and Dennis Devereux and David Johnson as alternates.
- **In July**, the Select Board voted to set the FY23 tax rate at .3734 cents, and approved the Conservation Commission's Shade Tree Preservation Plan. It announced a vacancy on the Board of Listers; appointed Chad Farrar as Town Health Officer; and appointed Jessica Metcalf as Rutland Regional Planning Commission Representative, with alternate Jon McCann. After reviewing bids, the Select Board also selected Cota & Cota as its propane provider. It accepted the Rutland Sheriff's Office contract to enforce the new Traffic Ordinance.
- **In August**, the Select Board accepted, with regrets, the upcoming retirement of Town Treasurer David Johnson and the resignation of Constable Paul Faenza. It noted that Fra Devine would step down from his role as chair of the Conservation Commission and reappointed Jeff Chase as the Municipal Planning Grant Municipal Authorizing Official. The Select Board selected a winning bid from Fuller Sand and Gravel for reclamation work on Hortonville Road and repaving on Belmont Road. Sheriff Office speed enforcement efforts began.
- **In September**, road reclamation efforts were begun on Hortonville Road. At the Conservation Commission's recommendation, the Board reappointed Phil Leonard and Fra Devine for new terms of four years. The Select Board approved road closures for Cider Days, and reappointed Laura Swarz-Hoc as Animal Control Officer. It selected Champlain Valley Fuel's winning bid for the provision of heating oil and on-road diesel.
- **In October**, repaving on Belmont Road was completed. The Select Board voted to renew its health insurance at the provider's increased rates, and to approve Treasurer David Johnson's proposed schedule for remittance of the Ludlow Mount Holly Unified Union School District FY 22-23 budget.
- **In November**, the Select Board reappointed Jon McCann as Planning Commission Chair, and noted the Planning Commission's plans for a hearing to update the Town's Flood Hazard Area Regulations and River Corridor Bylaw. The Select Board received a Municipal Planning Grant from the State of Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development and contracted with Community Roots, LLC to collect data to help steer the grant objectives. It voted to continue speed enforcement activities with the Rutland Sheriff's Department; reappointed Jeff Chase and Jon McCann to the Rutland

Regional Emergency Management Committee; and announced that the new AT&T cell tower is now on-line and providing service.

- **In December**, the Select Board voted to approve a contract from NEMRC for the provision of appraisal and assessor services for the Town, following the departure of the Town's previous appraiser. It noted the results of the Planning Commission's hearing on a new Flood Hazard Area Regulations and River Corridor Bylaw, and appointed Jeanmarie Fitzgerald to the Conservation Commission. It also approved the submission of the Conservation Commission's grant application for the Vermont Urban and Community Forestry Program; considered the purchase of AED Devices for Town buildings; agreed to continue speed enforcement with the Rutland Sheriff's Department; and agreed to seek emergency grant funding to repair a slope failure on Branch Brook Road following the storm of December 22.

Transfer Station Update: The town's membership in the Rutland County Solid Waste District brought two Household Hazardous Waste collections to the transfer site in 2022, in fall and summer. Residents continue to make good use of the open-top container and Zero Sort recycling as well as the compost bins for food scraps. The Select Board thanks David Hill and Kevin Stillwell for their service as attendants.

The Select Board meets at 6:30 pm on the second Tuesday of each month, and it encourages citizens to attend meetings in person at the Town Office, or to join via Zoom.

The Select Board may be reached with any questions and concerns at mounthollyselectboard@gmail.com or at the Town Office at 259-2391. A Select Board member and the Select Board Clerk also hold public office hours for citizen questions on Monday mornings between 9:30 am and 12:30 pm.