

**Select Board Meeting
Mount Holly Town Office
September 9th, 2025
6:00 pm**

MINUTES

Attendance: Mark Turco, Jeff Chase, Diana Garrow, Faith Tempest, Clinton Woolley, Liz Karle, David Johnson, Carol Garrow-Woolley, Dennis Devereux, Christine Pratt, James Seward, Donna Seward, June Capron, Stephen Michel, Zena Gates, Robert Herbst, Kevin Winter, David Martin, Kevin Hollobeck, Ron Goldwyn, Ken Saccardo, Craig Fortier, Kevin Plew, Stanton Scott, Norman Cohen, Ron Unterman (via Zoom), Amy Turco.

1. Call to Order 6.02pm
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Consideration of any changes and/or additions to the agenda: Mark Turco proposed addition of a Fire Department update from Clinton Woolley (item 5 d) and the Mount Holly Beer Liquor license application as item 6f.
4. Approval of August 12th, August 18th, September 2nd meeting minutes: Diana Garrow moved to approve the minutes as written, seconded by Mark Turco, approved unanimously.
5. Reports
 - a. Highway and Transfer Station Update - Clinton Woolley: Paving is complete on Hortonville Road though there is still some work to be completed on the intersection. The advertisements for a new Highway Maintenance worker are out. The Highway Department will look for an alternative provider for plowing road locations previously plowed by Shrewsbury Farm and Property Management. Winter sand is now almost all delivered. The Transfer station will switch to winter hours in October, with the last Wednesday opening on October 1st, and first Sunday opening on October 5th.
 - b. Town Treasurer Update - Elizabeth Karle: 82.2% of total tax income, approximately \$5.35m, has been collected and as of now there are no delinquent taxes. While the bank balance is high, most of the funds are for the schools. The Town has been earning interest income on funds for Beaver Meadow culvert repairs, all but \$500 must be sent back to the Federal Government. August Grants in aid expenses will be submitted for payment shortly.
 - c. Conservation Commission Update - David Martin: The current focus is Star Lake, with 3 bottom barriers installed and a plan to install 4 next year. The Commission is working on a permit from the State for mechanical harvesting in areas around the dock and also looking into more improvements to the recreation area, including grants to fund equipment. The Commission is also working with private landowners to identify walking paths. The terms of two members of the Commission are expiring, and they have expressed interest in reappointment. The Commission recommends this is for 3 years to align rotation of Commission members.
 - d. Fire department - Clinton Woolley: The Fire Department would like to hold a coin drop on Saturday 10th Oct from 10am to 4pm on Belmont Road by the cemetery. Select Board members were happy to allow this as long as all appropriate signage is in place. The Department will move the Connex box from the Belmont Station to the Mount Holly Station to repurpose it for training. Select Board members confirmed they are happy with this. Completion of painting of Mount Holly Fire Station this weekend.

6. New Business
 - a. Appointments to the Conservation Commission: Letters of interest were received from both David Martin and Peter Smith to be reappointed to the Conservation Commission. Jeff Chase moved to reappoint them both to a three year term, seconded by Diana Garrow, approved unanimously.
 - b. MHCA request for road closure for Cider Days: Kevin Hollobeck requested closure of Maple Hill Road from 10 to 4 on 11th Oct, 9am-12pm Sunday. Mark Turco moved to accept with the same conditions as in previous years, seconded by Diana Garrow, approved unanimously.
 - c. Act 73 - School District/Supervisory Union changes: David Martin noted that Act 73 introduces a question as to whether to merge Supervisory Unions (which are support organizations) and maintain local control of School Districts or merge School Districts. LMHUSD has resolved to keep the same school district, but merge SU if services can be provided at lower cost. A State appointed Commission will make recommendations in December with the legislature to act later. LMHUSD would like the Select Board to pass a similar resolution. Mark Turco noted the separation between the Town and School District, making it unclear what impact a Select Board resolution will have. Dennis Deveraux noted that students from Mount Holly attend Mill River and Shrewsbury schools so why not consider a different configuration of the District, irrespective of mergers of SUs. Stephen Michel expanded on this, asking if there is a way to consider a school district going north (Shrewsbury, Mill River) rather than only east (Windsor, Bellows Falls). Liz Karle asked if the resolution will sustain a local school? David Martin responded that it will support local control of the decision about future Districts. Amy Turco asked how many Mount Holly students attend Mill River vs Green Mountain? David Martin responded that there is no detailed information on this, but the choice is open. Mark Turco recommended that David Martin report back to the school board on the discussion, and tabled the motion.
 - d. Boundary Line issue: Syria Road: Following consultation with VTrans, it has been clarified that the RoW is the State's, but the road is the Town's. The clerk has asked for more guidance from the State on next steps.
 - e. Belmont General Store curbing proposals: Mark Turco noted that Dave Tilly has provided a sketch of proposals for additional curbing in front of the Store. This is expected to reduce traffic speed and allow for installation of a stop sign. Dennis Devereux supported the idea of a 4 way stop. Stephen Michel asked if a stop light rather than stop sign be installed since parked cars may affect sight lines. Mark Turco proposed starting with a stop sign. Jeff Chase noted the need to clarify the details on site to ensure that head on parking does not reduce visibility, and that there will not be a reduction in parking; he also noted that enclosing the catch basin on the other side of the street would allow more parking. Bob Herbst requested that parking spaces be painted. Jeff Chase asked who would install the curbing, Mark Turco responded that it would be the Town.
 - f. Mount Holly Beer special events liquor license: an application has been received for beer sales at Cider Days, following the same conditions as before. Kevin Plew asked why this was added late to the agenda and not properly warned. Jeff Chase responded that this is technically not a Select Board responsibility. Mark Turco tabled the application until a special meeting is called. Kevin Plew suggested that Mark Turco has a conflict of interest in this matter since he does business with the Belmont Store.
7. Old Business
 - a. Beaver Meadow Culvert repair: Granting access: Jeff Chase made a motion to grant temporary easement access to VTrans for the culvert repair, seconded by Diana Garrow, approved unanimously.
 - b. Vermont Declaration of Inclusion: One message of support was received from Conor McKenzie, and one letter from Don Eatmon questioning the financial implications of the declaration on policies, programs and training. Diana Garrow also questioned the

- implications based on a review of the website for the Declaration. Stephen Michel noted that this is a statement of support for this philosophy, and is already included in the Town's personnel policy. Norman Cohen stated that all towns are different but implementation is about ensuring the principle is known, to spread the word. Jeff Chase, noting that he did not see any drawback, made a motion to adopt the declaration. Ken Saccardo asked why adoption is necessary if the Town is already following these principles? Peter van Gorder noted that the declaration is not for the Town, it is for people who may be looking to move here. Norman Cohen supported this, noting that the declaration is a public statement of who the Town is which speaks to others. Dennis Devereux suggested that the question should be put to Town residents at the Town meeting. Jeff Chase rescinded his motion, and proposed to put the question of adoption of the declaration to Town Meeting in March, seconded by Diana Garrow, approved unanimously.
- c. Land records system: Carol Garrow Woolley reported that she was unable to get NEMRC to attend, but is meeting with Cotts to clarify how the complete records can be transferred.
8. Citizen Comments: Commenting regarding Act 73, Ken Saccardo said he wants to see the elementary school stay open, school choice to remain, and wants the School Board to retain its decision making role. Recalling the discussion at the previous meeting regarding excess donations for the Veteran's Memorial, Dennis Devereux noted that the maintenance was the first for 60 years, and so he again requested that the excess funds be used for a flag pole. Mark Turco agreed that this would be more appropriate. Speaking on his own behalf as a resident of the Town, Mark Turco noted that while he does have business with the Belmont General Store he has no affiliation with Mount Holly Beer and so no conflict in regards to the liquor License application. Craig Fortier thanked the Highway Department for repairing the culvert in front of his driveway. Stephen Michel asked Representative Kevin Winter if he could explain why the school portion of property taxes went up 25%? Mr Winter responded no.
9. Announcements: Town Office closed for Indigenous People's Day, Monday October 13th.
10. Review & Sign Orders
11. Executive Session: Title 1 V.S.A. S 313(a)(3) – personnel. Mark Turco moved to go into executive session, seconded by Diana Garrow, approved unanimously.
12. Adjourn

These minutes are in draft until approved by the Select Board at the next regularly scheduled meeting.