

**Select Board Meeting
Mount Holly Town Office
Oct 14th, 2025
6:00 pm**

MINUTES

Attendance: Mark Turco, Jeff Chase, Diana Garrow, Faith Tempest, Clinton Woolley, David Johnson, Andy Schulz, Stephen Michel, June Capron, Christine Pratt, Jim Seward, Donna Seward, Carol Garrow-Woolley, Ron Unterman, Zena Gates, David Martin, , Dennis Devereux, Savannah Baker (via Zoom)

1. Call to Order 6.06
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Consideration of any changes and/or additions to the agenda. Mark Turco added item 7e, School District/Supervisory Union changes.
4. Approval of 9th September and 23rd September meeting minutes. Mark Turco moved to approve, Diana Garrow seconded, approved.
5. Reports
 - a. Highway and Transfer Station Update - Clinton Woolley
 - i. Winter Salt - Two companies provided quotes (Apalachee \$115 per ton, Cargill \$115.50 per ton); American Rock Salt was asked to quote but has no salt. These prices are approximately 30% higher than last year. The Select Board agreed to continue the contract with Apalachee. The Highway Department has removed 32 dead or damaged trees. The Department is still looking for additional Highway Maintenance Worker.
 - ii. Warming Shed electrical hook up: Replacing the warming shed requires disconnection/reconnection of the electric supply; Jeff Chase will ask Wirenuts Electrical to undertake this. Clinton Woolley noted that he has asked Casella for a 30 yard container for tires; the cost of this is the same as disposing of them at Hubbards.
 - iii. Hortonville/ Shunpike intersection. Weather depending, the intersection paving will be completed this week. The Shunpike Bridge has been repaired and should last for several years.
 - b. Town Treasurer Update - David Johnson (in Elizabeth Karle's absence)
 - i. LMHUUSD Payment: Mark Turco outlined the schedule of payments for FY26, with a total of payment by Mount Holly of \$5,101,010, \$1.1 million more than the previous year, with a payment by Ludlow of \$4,699,201. 52% of enrolment is in Mount Holly, and 49% in Ludlow. Diana Garrow moved to make payments according to the schedule, seconded by Jeff Chase approved unanimously.
 - ii. There is one more month of tax collection, with the two largest tax payers still to be recorded in the balance sheet. Interest income is better than expected, solid waste ticket sales continue to be strong, and the second payment of State Aid for Roads has been received. There is nothing out of the ordinary in general expenses.
 - c. Planning Commission Update - Andy Schulz
 - i. There are three pending subdivision applications, one of which, to amend conditions of a previous subdivision, is scheduled for a hearing next week.
6. New Business
 - a. US 250th anniversary celebrations - Dennis Devereux. Various plans are being made, and the Town has been approached by an organization in New Hampshire about planting a Liberty Tree. 2027 means more to Vermont as the 250th anniversary of the establishment of the State. Mr Devereux will get more information about specific and detailed proposals for celebratory activities.

- b. Emergency Shelters generator question - Dennis Devereaux . Mr Devereux noted that neither the School (the first shelter) or Oddfellows Hall (the second shelter) has a generator, and asked that this be considered, including through grant funding if available. Jeff Chase responded that both Fire Stations have generators, and that the LHMP update due shortly will address this, along with work to ensure appropriate hook up.

7. Old Business

- a. Land records system: Carol Garrow-Woolley. Cott Systems has provided a revised contract with a lower cost and which may be cheaper than NEMRC, although NEMRC provide more support and are more responsive to problems than Cotts; NEMRC can also provide records services beyond land records. A key issue is the transfer of data, which NEMRC could do but at significant cost. Ms Garrow-Woolley proposed signing with Cotts for the three year period, during which she and others could upload land records to the NEMRC system. She also mentioned a number of different aspects of the costs of each system. Andy Schulz noted that the State requires some portion of recording fees to be set aside for ensuring additional databases and asked what portion of funds are put aside? Ms Garrow-Woolley responded that of the \$15 fee per page, \$4 is kept aside for this, but she is not sure how this is handled in the Town budget. Mark Turco asked for a clear statement of the different services provided by each entity, along with the cost. Ms Garrow-Woolley stated that its not a legal requirement to have the records online. Andy Schulz noted that there is a level of convenience to being able to access online. Jeff Chase sought clarification that switching to NEMRC would mean losing the record scans in the Cotts system, confirmed by Ms Garrow-Woolley. Stephen Michel questioned some of the NEMRC costs, including training, and also asked why records which are already in a database and which are the property of the Town would need to be uploaded manually when there is software to do this automatically. Jeff Chase moved to extend the Cotts Contract for \$2210 per year for 3 years, and extend the warranty on the scanner for \$310, seconded by Diana Garrow, approved unanimously.
- b. Dog Licensing. Mark Turco noted a spate of dog biting incidents by unregistered and unvaccinated dogs, stating that penalty actions outlined in the Town dog ordinance should be enforced. Mark Turco proposed updating the ordinance to consider any changes and update penalties. Carol Garrow-Woolley asked that a license fee raise is discussed at the next meeting agenda.
- c. Animal Control. Mark Turco proposed the SB meet with the Sheriff to clarify the expectations of the Town for Animal Control
- d. Grant opportunities: VTrans SFY 2026 Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) and Municipal Highway and Stormwater Mitigation Program (MHSMP) - application deadline Nov 7th. Jeff Chase noted that he already has many grants in hand and does not have the capacity to make this application; he asked Faith Tempest to put together an application for the TAP grant.
- e. School District/ Supervisory Union changes: David Martin provided data in response to the Select Board's request at the previous meeting, specifically where children attend after 6th grade. Of the 82 children in Mount Holly, 48 attend Mill River, 11 at Long Trail school, 4 at Expeditionary School at Black River, 1 at Green Mountain, the remainder across eleven additional schools. Mr Martin reiterated the request of the School Board that the Select Board send a letter to the redistricting commission making three points, that the school is important to the Town, that we want to maintain local control (including whether to continue it or not), and to maintain school choice. Stephen Michel stated that it seems more logical for Mount Holly to join Rutland school district, and for Ludlow to go with Chester as a district. Dennis Devereux asked if the commission would consider dissolving the School District - it is understood that if they expand the District it may extend to Bellows Falls and Springfield. Mark Turco asked why the Board did not make a recommendation on changing the district, David Martin said it was mainly because of the services provided by the Twin Rivers district. Ron Unterman noted that administrative relationships should not supersede the issue of the best education for children and parents. David Martin agreed that since Mount Holly is not in the Mill River District we have no influence, but by moving into that district Mount Holly would lose some autonomy because there are many more schools in

the district (rather than currently just the two of Ludlow and Mount Holly). Jeff Chase noted that joining Mill River would mean less choice. Jeff Chase preferred to wait to weigh in until there is more clarity on specific proposals. Dennis Devereux noted that if we were silent then legislators would not know how town residents feel. Andy Schulz stated that given that the current situation allows choice, maintaining the status quo seems to be better. Jeff Chase thanked David Martin for keeping the Town informed. Jeff Chase stated that it would be useful to send a letter supporting school choice.

8. Citizen Comments: Ron Unterman asked for clarification about the ability of the Select Board to make changes to the agenda. Mark Turco said yes, it is possible.
9. Announcements: Town office closed Tuesday November 11th; dog owners are reminded to ensure their dogs are registered. Taxes due Monday Nov 3rd
10. Review & Sign Orders
11. Executive Session: Title 1 V.S.A. S 313(a)(3) – personnel
12. Adjourn

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