**SELECTBOARD MINUTES**

**MARCH 28, 2022**

**TOWN OF ALBURGH SELECTBOARD**

The Selectboard met in the municipal conference room and on Zoom. The link to view the meeting via Zoom is as follows:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/recording/detail?meeting_id=>

PRESENT: Josie Henry, Russell Duchaine, Donna Boumil, Shawn Creller, Elliot Knight

GUESTS: (in person) Rodney James, Terry Tatro, Carol Behrman, John Clarke, Tara Clarke, George Boutah, Brian Bessette, Charles Kelly, Alton Bruso, George Hakey, Danielle James Choiniere

(Via Zoom) Grace Hasselback, Marlana Valenta

**MEETING AGENDA AND MINUTES**

1. **6:15PM – *Call to Order***
* Meeting was called to order at 6:14PM by Selectboard Chair Josie Henry
1. ***Adjustments to the Agenda for the Regular Meeting***
* Minutes of meetings: add minutes from 3/21/22 Special Meeting
* Letter from ACO – pay increase (add under old business)
* Charles Kelly and Brian Bessette wish to address the board with a position statement (add under new business)
* Marlana Valenta – NRPC to discuss Window Dressers (add under new business)
1. ***Minutes from 3/14/22 meeting and 3/21/22 Special Meeting***
* Motion by Shawn Creller to accept the minutes of the 3/14/22 meeting as written; Seconded by Elliot Knight. Motion carried
* Motion by Elliott Knight to accept the minutes of the 3/21/22 Special Meeting as written; Seconded by Shawn Creller; Russell Duchaine recused himself as he was not present; Motion carried
1. ***New Business***
* **Grace Hasselback – UVM intern**

Introduction – Grace explained that she is an intern for the Center for Research on VT, a local Democracy Project. Her role is to provide extra support to the municipality she has been assigned.

Josie Henry explained that Grace assisted with the ARPA form and presentation at the Town Meeting

* **Marlana Valenta – NRPC, Climate and Energy Planner**
* Window Dressers – community style
* Provide free inserts for windows to provide insulation
* Flyers and posters are on social media.
* NRPC has contacted local organizations such as C.I.D.E.R.
* Information is on the NRPC website
* **4th of July Planning process – the board will discuss the planning process for 4th of July festivities**

Chair Josie Henry stated, in response to comments made on Facebook, that during budget meetings it was decided to not have a line item for the 4th of July. There is no intention of canceling the 4th of July.

* The premise is to have a more organized approach to budgeting and organizing the event
* Encourage more participation from the community (Martha Goodsell, the Legion and Fire Department have been the main organizers).
* Fireworks were not budgeted in FY 22 or FY23. Russell Duchaine explained that the fireworks were donated by Green Mountain Fireworks for FY22.
* Discussion continued regarding budgeting of fireworks and 4th of July festivities with taxpayers’ money. Fundraising for these expenses was discussed. Whatever funding is not fundraised, then the Selectboard can be approached for funds.
* Terry Tatro explained that in 2020 there were no 4th of July festivities due to COVID, therefore there should have been money left over. It is not known if this money was rolled over to FY21.
* There is $1500 in the Holiday Expense line item for FY22
* Terry Tatro explained that there are timeframes for ordering fireworks and applying for permits to close the street (Rte 2)
* Charles Kelly stated that there are stipulations from the state on who can shoot off fireworks. Terry Tatro explained that fire departments are waived from this requirement
* Discussion continued about forming a 4th of July Committee.

Motion by Donna Boumil to form a 4th of July Committee headed by Russell Duchaine; Seconded by Russell Duchaine; Discussion: Russell Duchaine will be the contact person form the Selectboard and will solicit volunteers for the committee. He stated that he has had many people already express interest. Motion carried.

* Motion by Shawn Creller to authorize $4,000 to be expended on fireworks; Seconded by Russell Duchaine; Discussion: Josie Henry requested that she have time to research where this money will come from. Motion carried
* Discussion continued regarding funding the parade. Josie Henry suggested that the Committee formulate a budget and request that amount of money from the Selectboard. The Selectboard will research where this money will come from.
* Russell Duchaine will recruit committee members and bring names it to the Selectboard at the next meeting
* **Municipal Office Configuration – the board will discuss reorganizing the municipal office to accommodate the new position approved for July 1st**
* The Selectboard approved to use ARPA funds for IT and cybersecurity which is $10,000 under the original quote.
* Discussion ensued about where the new Executive Assistant will have an office or desk. This needs to be determined prior to the installation of workstations. It was determined that a meeting of the current staff will be held to determine if there will be a reconfiguration of space.
* **Planning Commission Update – Donna Boumil has several updates for the board**
* Donna Boumil provided an update Municipal Planning Grant for the wetland delineation. NRPC (Northwest Regional Planning Commission) and TCE (Trudell Consulting Engineering) will hold a meeting for the public on March 29, 2022 at 6PM at the Town Office Conference Room to provide an update on the proposal for trails throughout the 90 acres which is owned by the Alburgh Development Corporation, Inc. Diagrams and pricing will be provided during the presentation.
* **Position statement from Charles Kelly and Brian Bessette, resident of SAFD**
* Mr. Kelly thanked the Selectboard for facilitating a meeting with the concerned southwest residents of the SAFD and the Prudential Committee of the SAFD
* Mr. Kelly continued by reiterating procedural errors of the Prudential Committee. (SAFD did not follow by-laws and operating meeting laws, the 5-year plan has not been updated and expired in 2019, residents of the southwestern part of the SAFD were not properly informed of the change in phases)
* Mr. Kelly stated that the Selectboard has the authority to control the SAFD and should step in.
* Chair Josie Henry cited an excerpt on Fire Districts from the Handbook for Vermont Selectboards: “A fire district may be created within a town by the selectboard upon application in writing of 20 or more freeholders or voters who are residents of the proposed district. The selectboard establishes the district and defines its limits. The residents specify in the application the powers the district will have, chosen from those powers listed in 20 V.S.A. §§ 2601 and 2603.” “Once created, the fire district is a body corporate. The last official act of the town selectboard is the calling of its first district meeting and presiding until a moderator is elected. 20 V.S.A. § 2482. The fire district operates like a town within a town, with the selectboard having no more authority, except that it fills vacancies on the prudential committee until an election is held.”
* **Policies – Meeting Procedures, Procurement; Payroll; Accounting, Auditing and Reporting Policy; Fraud Prevention Policy**
* Meeting Procedures- Copies of the proposed Procedures were distributed to the selectboard for review and approval Chair Josie Henry read the Meeting Procedures, which is a review of previously approved selectboard procedures. Motion by Donna Boumil to adopt the Meeting Procedures as presented and read; Seconded by Elliot Knight; Motion carried.
* The remainder of the proposed policies were distributed to the selectboard for review. Approval and discussion are tabled until the next selectboard meeting.

**Public comments:** no comments

**Old Business –**

* **GSA Agreement -border crossing updates at Alburgh Springs**
* A copy of the agreement was previously sent to the selectboard for review
* This agreement was signed last year but is requiring updated approval and signature
* Motion by Donna Boumil for the Selectboard Chair to sign the Operations and Maintenance Agreement between the USA Acting Through Its General Services Administration and the Town of Alburgh, regarding the Alburgh Springs US Land Port of Entry, Vermont; Seconded by Elliot Knight; Motion carried
* **ARPA Funds – the board will discuss reporting procedures and next steps for project priorities**
* ARPA funds must be appropriated by 2024
* Surveys have been distributed and are available via social media and town website
* Some surveys have been received
* VLCT is hosting a webinar on 4/5/22: the final rule, compliance and reporting. Josie Henry and Donna Boumil have signed up for this.
* A list of the categories covered under ARPA funds expenditures was distributed to the Board
* Josie Henry will consolidate the surveys that have been received to date and will provide this at the next meeting for discussion.
* **Missile Base – the town is working on potentially selling the property**
* Jimmy Blair is interested in leasing or purchasing this property
* There are Brownfield restrictions for this property – Donna Boumil to send to the Board
* Shawn Creller will contact Jimmy Blair to discuss what Mr. Blair wants for usage of the property and whether he is interested in leasing or purchasing
* Discussion: Rodney James expressed that the highway department uses this property for storage of equipment (off season)
* The selectboard will have to research the process to sell town property
* **Solar Panel lease at the Missile Base – board will discuss the status of the lease**
* Josie Henry reported that the lease has been paid on track
* **Electric Vehicle Charging Station –** Norwick EV has a grant to partner with the town to install an EV charging station. The ideal location will be discussed.
* Discussion ensued regarding potential locations for charging stations: behind the museum, which is fire department property, a letter from the planning commission was received with suggestions (behind the museum and on Industrial Park Road)
* Josie Henry suggested that the charging stations be placed on private property as there are no restrictions against this. She suggested the upcoming coffee shop or laundromat
* Russell Duchaine suggested that the charging stations be placed on the property of 317 South Main (discussion continued – see next topic)
* No decision was made
* **317 South Main Street – the board is deliberating over a way ahead for the property**
* Russell Duchaine mentioned a previously discussed idea for a Park & Ride and green space with the potential of having the Charging Stations installed
* The town is paying for village water and sewer
* There has been approximately $29,000 spent on cleanup of the property
* The Board will research the legality of transforming this space and keeping it and the process of selling it
* **Highway Crew – the board will discuss the requirements and review applications**
* Rodney James submitted to the Board information on grants that the highway department has (mulcher, standard grant for ditching and culverts)
* Road Commissioner Russell Duchaine will continue to work with Mr. James on these grants. Replacement of a mulcher is required by June 30, 2022 which is an 80% reimbursement.
* Rodney James, Interim Foreman, stated that he will take on this position permanently.
* Rodney James stated that the highway department is in need of another operator due to the fact that there are only 2 people staffed out of a 3-person department.
* Discussion ensued regarding hiring an operator: Russell Duchaine will coordinate with Rodney James on an ad for an operator to be posted ASAP. Consideration of contacting applicants who applied for the foreman position to see if they are interested in an operator position
* Motion by Elliot Knight to advertise for an operator or similar position; Seconded by Shawn Creller; discussion: Rodney and Russell will write a job ad; Motion carried
* Applications will be reviewed at the next selectboard meeting
* **Transfer Station Issues – hauling fee increase and personnel turnover**
* Personnel issues:

Brendon is no longer working at the transfer station (he gave Town Clerk Donna Bohannon a 2 weeks’ notice)

Nick is on vacation;

Shawn Creller spoke to a high school student who is interested in working on weekends and summer**.** An application was completed and reviewed by the selectboard. Motion by Josie Henry to hire Colby Hemond to work at the transfer station beginning immediately based on Shawn Creller’s recommendation; Seconded by Shawn Creller; Discussion: rate of pay will be the same as the last newly hired employee and on probation in accordance with the employee handbook

* Hauling fee increase – Josie Henry and Shawn Creller spoke with Jimmy Blair regarding the increase in hauling fees due to the rise in fuel costs. The rate will be $100 load or $5,000 total for the year
* The compactor is broken – Shawn Creller gave an update: the motor has been removed from the old compactor and from broken compactor. He is waiting for the oil to be drained before reinstalling.
* **Vermont Outdoor Recreation Communities Grant (VOREC) – Alburgh was not selected**
* **Animal Control Officer questions –** This is being tabled due to not receiving this letter prior to the selectboard meeting.

**Public comments –** no comments

**Budget and Other Administrative Items**

* **Hiring Process for Executive Assistant to the Selectboard**
* This position was funded in the new budget
* Hiring as of July 1st
* Advertisement to be worked on and presented at the next selectboard meeting on April 11, 2022
* **Municipal Planning Grant change of Municipal Authorizing Official**
* A form needs to be completed and signed transitioning the Municipal Authorizing Official from Lee Kimball to Josie Henry for purposes of access to request reimbursement of grant funds
* Motion by Donna Boumil to change the Municipal Authorizing Official to Josie Henry; Seconded by Elliot Knight; Motion carried
* **Liquor License Renewal for Maplefields:**
* Motion by Donna Boumil to approve the Liquor License Renewal for Maplefields; Seconded by Elliot Knight; Motion Carried
* **Treasurer’s Report**
* A report was not received by the Selectboard
* Town Auditor Carol Behrman stated that the block of checks which were either duplicated or missing for November 2021 is being researched and rectified by the treasurer. Wednesday, March 30th the newly elected auditor will meet with the auditors
* **Warrants**

**Adjournment:**

Motion by Elliot Knight to adjourn at 8:50PM; Seconded by Shawn Creller; Motion carried

Respectfully submitted,

Donna J. Boumil, Board Clerk/Selectboard Member

Please note that these minutes are in draft form. Minutes are approved at the next selectboard meeting when them become official minutes.