

SELECTBOARD MINUTES
July 11, 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:

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

ABSENT: Russell Duchaine

GUESTS: (in person): Matthew LaFleur, Alton Bruso, Terry Tatro, Angela Prefontaine, Richard McAroy, Danielle James-Choiniere, Braunwin Profit-Higgin

MEETING AGENDA AND MINUTES

1. 5:05PM – Call to Order

There is 1 applicant for an interview for the EA position.

Motion by Donna Boumil to enter into Executive Session at 5:06PM, in accordance with 1 VSA 313 (3)(a)(3); Seconded by Elliot Knight; Motion carried

Motion by Josie Henry to exit Executive Session at 5:47PM; Seconded by Elliot Knight; Motion carried

Motion to take a short recess until 6:00PM, Seconded by Elliot Knight; Motion carried.

Meeting called to order at 7:01PM

2. *Adjustments to the Agenda for the Regular Meeting*

- Add to end of New Business: Windmills on Route 2 – consideration of board to make an official statement
- Add to beginning of New Business: FD#1 – request for ARPA funds – Angela Prefontaine

3. *Minutes from 6/27/22 Meeting*

- Motion by Shawn Creller to approve the minutes as amended; Seconded by Elliot Knight; Discussion: Add Terry Tatro and Tom Jacobsen as attendees. Also add under Planning Commission “motion to remove a member” that it was a unanimous motion; Motion carried

4. Department/Committee Updates:

a. Highway Department

- Road Commissioner Russell Duchaine is absent, therefore items are tabled

- Culverts
 - Chair Josie Henry provided an update from Foreman Rodney James.
 - The Greenwoods Culvert project was done on time. Other municipalities helped wherever they were needed.
 - Josie and Rodney will work on the grant to get reimbursement of up to \$49,000.

- b. Transfer Station**
 - **Cash Register**
 - Chair Josie Henry reported that part of the cash register system has arrived. Once the entire system is here, she will install it at the transfer station. Josie suggested that the Board consider support help once the register is set up.
 - There is no update from NWSWD
 - Scales: Shawn Creller explained that the scale used for the trash is not accurate. Out of the 4 corners of the scale, only 3 are accurate. The scale is weighing in lighter than what the actual trash is. The town is losing money. Shawn explained that Vermont Weights and Measures calibrates scales.
 - Josie stated that new scales range from \$ 3500-5000
 - Discussion ensued regarding changing the price of trash bags from per bag to weight. Josie will research the history of this decision. NWSWD charges per bag: 15 gal - \$3, 30 gal \$5, 45-55 gal \$8 and 75+ gal \$15.
 - The board will discuss if there will be any changes to pricing in conjunction to setting up the new cash register and the public will be notified if changes are made.
 - **Formal Complaint**
 - A formal complaint was received by Gayle Brown via email regarding an encounter at the transfer station with Dean Tallman. The accusations made in the complaint were read.
 - Selectboard Member Shawn Creller spoke with Dean and Colby, who were both working on this day. Neither employee recalled this situation as Ms. Brown stated. Shawn Creller asked Dean and Colby to put their recollection in writing.
 - The Board discussed a possible policy regarding a “free area” and holding of “free” merchandise for people.
 - This will be further discussed at the next Board meeting, once written statements are received from Dean and Colby.

- c. Town Office**
 - **HVAC Contract –**
 - Josie Henry stated that the A/C in the conference room is not working and the Board decided at the previous meeting to have it looked at. The filters have been changed. The A/C unit has not been serviced in quite a while. The Board is waiting for a quote on repairs from Warren Wright and will discuss a maintenance contract.
 - **Village MOA and Lease**
 - The Village negotiated the IT contract themselves
 - The Village and Town MOA & Lease need to be updated and formalized in writing

- No one ran for Village Clerk at their annual meeting; therefore, they still do not have a Clerk. The Village hours remain the same as the Town. Danielle James-Choiniere continues to serve as the Clerk to SAFD.

d. **Planning Commission**

- Donna Boumil reported there are no updates. The next meeting is Tuesday, July 19th.

5. **New Business**

a. **FD#1 – Angela Prefontaine (Alburgh Springs)**

Ms. Prefontaine introduced herself as FD#1 Clerk and explained the situation that FD#1 is in financially and structurally

- FD#1 is out of compliance
- 28 people on the water system
- The cost per year has already been increased to \$330
- The FD is operating at a loss
- The certified water operator is near retirement and they do not have a replacement
- The FD needs financial backing to make the needed improvements
- Ms. Prefontaine is requesting ARPA funds from the Town
 - Josie Henry explained that the Town has not begun to process and or prioritize the requests from residents of Alburgh for ARPA funds and the Selectboard has already received a request from FD#1 for funds.
- The Selectboard suggested that Ms. Prefontaine talk with SAFD2 and the Village.
- Elliot Knight is the Liaison for the Fire Districts and will provide resources

b. **Applicant for Health Officer**

- Mr. Richard McAroy was present to introduce himself and summarize his application for Health Officer
- Mr. McAroy explained that he is a licensed veterinarian in Vermont and New Hampshire, retiring from the Army shortly and is currently employed with USDA at Highgate.
- Mr. McAroy said he moved to Alburgh a few years ago and would like to be involved in the community.
- Chair Josie Henry explained that this position is an appointment for 3 years and is paid by a stipend.
- Mr. McAroy asked about state training, liability issues, an assistant and law enforcement support.
- Chair Josie Henry will research the above.
- Motion by Shawn Creller to appoint Richard McAroy as the Town Healthy Officer effective July 1, 2022 (the beginning of the fiscal year); Seconded by Elliot Knight; Motion carried.
- Josie Henry will facilitate training and collaboration with Jane Dwinel.

c. Benefits for 30 Hour/Week Employees and Employee Handbook Updates

- A letter from Town Clerk Donna Bohannon was received by the Board and read. The letter is requesting benefits, specifically health insurance, for Asst Town Clerk/Treasurer Danielle James-Choiniere. Also, the letter states that Dean Tallman, who has been working 30+ hours a week, should be enrolled in VMERS.
- Donna Boumil explained a handout provided to the Board which explains current benefits, according to the Employee Handbook, such as vacation, sick time, personal time and holiday pay. The Employee Handbook does not provide for benefits for employees who are part-time, only full-time. Full-time employees are defined as those working 40+ hours a week. Donna Boumil also provided a proposal to change these benefits to include employees who work 30-39 hours a week and to receive benefits on a pro-rated basis.
- Discussion ensued regarding health insurance. At the present time, insurance is budgeted for 5 positions: 3 highway, town clerk/treasurer and the EA. It is not budgeted for other positions. Donna Boumil and Josie Henry indicated that they will work on a proposal for health insurance for part-time (30-39 hrs) employees and the cost.
- The Board will review proposals at the next meeting.

d. Cell Phones- there have been numerous cell phones paid for by the town well after appointee and employee terms ended. The Board will discuss corrective action.

- Chair Josie Henry explained that there are 5 cell phones the Town owns. At the last Selectboard Meeting, the board voted to only allow 1 employee to have cell phones (the highway foreman will possess 2 phones). Therefore, there are 3 cell phones not being used. 2 cell phones are from previous animal control officers, who have not been employed by the town for some time. One of the previous animal control officers returned the phone and one did not. Donna Bohannon disconnected these phones this week. The other cell phone belonged to a former employee who retired last December. The agreement was the phone was going to be kept by the employee and he was going to put it in his name and account when he retired. This was not done.
- A rough estimate of the amount of money that has paid for cell phones that should have been disconnected is ranging from \$700 to a couple of thousand dollars.
- The Board discussed a check in, check out process for new employees and employees leaving. Sign for cell phones or any other property when they are received and returned.
- The cell phone bill is currently paid for by the town credit card and detailed invoices are not provided by the treasurer to the selectboard.
- Motion by Josie Henry to ask the treasurer that the cell phone bill not be paid by the credit card and not autopay for ease of transparency and provide a paper bill and invoices; Seconded by Shawn Creller; Motion carried.
- The board indicated that Donna Bohannon will be asked to disconnect the cell phone being used by the retired employees' spouse immediately. The deadline has passed for it to be transferred.

e. 4th of July Parade – request from multiple residents to return to 11am next year.

- Russell Duchaine, 4th of July Committee Chair, is not present
- Feedback from many residents is that they would like to see the parade start time returned to 11am.
- Terry Tatro stated to his recollection, the parade has always started at 11am even if the 4th was on a Sunday.
- There will be more discussion at the next meeting
- The selectboard thanked the committee for a job well done.

f. Welcome Signs-request for reimbursement for flowers

- Darlene Mercier submitted an invoice and request to be reimbursed for \$64.00 for flowers she purchased for the Rte 78 (East Alburgh) and Rte 2 (South Alburgh) Welcome Sign flower containers.
- Discussion ensued regarding who has taken care of the flowers in the past. The recollection is that the Eastern Stars provided the flowers and upkeep for many years but has recently stopped. Donna Boumil stated that she purchased flowers, planted and maintains the flowers at the Rte 2 (Bay Flats) sign. The Jesbergers mow the area around the sign.
- Motion by Shawn Creller to reimburse Darlene Mercier for \$64 for reimbursement for flowers; Seconded by Josie Henry; discussion: Josie will notify Ms. Mercier that she will be reimbursed and, in the future, to please ask for permission for reimbursement ahead of time; Motion carried.

g. Windmills on Route 2 – Consideration of the Board to make an official statement

- Elliot Knight stated that Mike Savage approached him asking if the Selectboard would make an official statement of concern about the proposal to install windmills on Route 2 (Bay Flats) heading toward the Rouses Point Bridge. Mr. Savage is concerned the windmills will devalue property.
- The Board discussed this request and determined that individuals should make statements regarding the installation of the windmills and not the Selectboard.
- The Selectboard will provide information on the Town website when a public notice appears in the paper.

6. Old Business

a. ARPA Funding – discussion on process for engaging the public and moving forward

- Chair Josie Henry stated that numerous ARPA Funds Surveys have been received by residents and organizations.
- Josie Henry suggested that an ARPA Advisory Committee be appointed by the Selectboard modeled after the Broadband Committee. This committee should be comprised of a diverse, 5-person volunteer committee who will be appointed by the Selectboard.
- Discussion ensued: this committee will meet on a regular basis, report to the selectboard with recommendations for uses of ARPA funds, engage the public through meetings and public forums.

- Motion by Josie Henry to advertise for volunteers for an ARPA Advisory Committee. Volunteers will submit Letters of Interest by July 25, 2022. Advertisement will be through normal mechanisms (The Islander, website, FB, etc); Seconded by Elliot Knight; Motion carried.

b. Long Term Support Contract

- Motion by Donna Boumil to enter into an Executive Session at 8:40PM in accordance with 1 VSA 313 (A)(1) to discuss contract negotiations for long term IT support; Seconded by Elliot Knight; Motion carried
- Motion by Josie Henry to exit the Executive Session at 9:00PM; Seconded by Elliot Knight; Motion carried
- Motion by Donna Boumil to enter into a contract with C2 for a 1-year IT Support Contract for 13 users effective 8/1/22 based on the quote received; Seconded by Elliot Knight; Motion carried

7. Budget and Administrative Items

a. Budget Actuals

- Chair Josie Henry and Donna Boumil stated that they have not had time to review the budget actuals from the end of the FY. This will be reviewed at the next meeting.

b. Warrants –

- Donna Boumil stated that there are 2 sets of warrants. Those paid out ending FY21-22 and those paid in FY22-23.
- The Sheriff's Contract was presented and it does not stipulate that OT will be paid by the Town of Alburgh.
- Motion by Josie Henry to pay the TCE bill for services for a final invoice ending May 2022; Seconded by Donna Boumil; Motion carried

Motion by Josie Henry to change the name of Executive Assistant to the Selectboard to Town Administrator, re-advertise until the position is filled and to highlight municipal experience; Seconded by Elliot Knight; Motion carried

Adjournment:

Motion by Josie Henry to adjourn at 9:21PM; Seconded by Elliot Knight; Motion Carried

Respectfully submitted,
Donna J. Boumil, Board Clerk/Selectboard Member