

Town of Alburgh
Regular Selectboard Meeting Minutes
Municipal Conference Room
5/22/2023

Present: Donna Boumil, Danielle James Choiniere, Russell Duchaine, George Boutah, Elliot Knight, Mark Martin, Josie Henry, Alton Bruso, Gilbert & Cathy Bohannon, Andrew & Sharon Curtis, Terry Tatro, Ron Kumetz, Dave Rugh

Chair Henry opened the meeting at 6:00 PM.

Agenda Adjustments

Strike 4c, bank access, off agenda for its resolution. Brendan Deso could not attend this meeting, so no input from him on 5a. Russell Duchaine had a paving update. There was a revision to the mowing invoice. Ron Kumetz had a request of the board regarding town property, the Poor Farm Cemetery fund request was added, and comment on recent transfer station deposits.

- **Russell Duchaine motioned to approve the adjusted agenda. Donna Boumil seconded, all in favor. So approved.**

Approve 5/8 Minutes

- **Donna Boumil motioned to approve these minutes. Elliot Knight seconded, all in favor. So approved.**

Municipal Matters

a. Poor Farm Road Cemetery Fun Request- Auditor Alton Bruso spoke with cemetery board member Cathy Bohannon on their funds. The balance in town records corroborates with the cemetery board's records. The select board can pay out that balance for next meeting.

b. Grand List File Extension- Lister Dunn asked for an extension to 7/4 instead of 6/4 just in case town listers need it.

- **Josie Henry motioned to approve the extension. Elliot Knight seconded, all in favor. So approved.**

c. Fire Chief Kumetz asked if Fire School on June 3-4 could utilize the Bell House the town owns for search/rescue and ladder training. No fires involved. They have their own insurance policies.

- **Russell Duchaine motioned to approve Fire School training on town grounds. Josie Henry seconded, all in favor. So approved.**

d. Center Bay Beach Boundaries- The surveyor replaced a pin which had been removed. The highway department placed concrete barriers to help delineate town property. Josie Henry will ask the State of Vermont for written approval for their deeded right of way to the town.

e. Cleaning Municipal Office- The winning bidder for the new fiscal year resigned. The town hadn't yet re-bid but did receive inquiry from Island Touch LLC for \$575 per month for weekly cleaning.

- **Josie Henry motioned to have Island Touch LLC clean for one week at the office, ask if they could do a bi-weekly quote, while the town formally re-bids. Elliot Knight seconded, all in favor. So approved.**

f. Revised Mowing Quote- Mark Martin said he's adjusted his mowing quote to remove any town properties mowed by others.

- **Donna Boumil motioned to approve revised annual mowing fee to \$9,801.00. Elliot Knight seconded, all in favor. So approved.**

Deso Development HoA Discussion

a. Development owner Brendan Deso could not attend. The board summarized his position with his HoA and their limited funds and means of enforcing their own bylaws. There is one property (DD008), owned by Rainville and Curtis, with rats, trash, no utilities, multiple animals, minors, etc. Andrew Curtis summed up his presence/history at the residence and how he moved out after a restraining order was filed against him and the residents thereafter did not pay bills or maintain the property. Co-owner Tammy Rainville recently moved out and the property is under foreclosure. As a part-owner, Andrew gave an eviction notice to the person still on site. The Curtis' are willing to work with the Town on a course of action as they're able to provide.

Town attorney Dave Dugh mentioned the town can draft a Notice of Intent that a sheriff can serve. After hearing about protocols, the Notice can turn into a Health Order which has a compliance schedule. Condemnation is also an option but will take a court process and the court may not rule in the town's favor. Usually, Condemnation is reserved for a municipality making road or sidewalk improvements, not for eye sores or rats.

Property DR041 also has possible junk and nuisance violations. The attorney recommended their office issue a warning letter while the town tries to compile info on whether the plethora of vehicles are registered. Mark Martin wondered if those vehicles were properly drained. George Boutah asked about parts cars and HoA fees. Terry Tatro commented about an agreement with Richard Deso about things the development said they'd do (sidewalks, a playground) that never were honored.

Treasurer's Report/ Financials / Permits/ Warrants

- a. Treasurer's Report- Scheduled for first meeting of the month.
- b. Feasibility for Free Dump Day- Russell Duchaine recommended limiting C&D and tires and enforce all residency stickers. The board leaned toward Sunday June 25th and will work on approving a flier and more details and keeping the highway department informed.
- c. The last deposits for 5/20 and 5/21 were \$490 short, confirmed by NorthCountry and the town office. The board will reach out to Dean Tallman to see what happened.
- d. Employee Vacation Payout Request- Current policy in the personnel handbook is $\frac{1}{4}$ of unused vacation is paid for if unused at the end of the fiscal year. Russell Duchaine was in favor of paying any remaining vacation out, while Donna Boumil voiced employees should be encouraged to take breaks unless extenuating circumstances prevented them from taking time off. Josie Henry commented that the board did not budget for full payouts. Danielle James Choiniere said she may qualify for some not being used in addition to some highway employees.
 - **Elliot Knight motioned to roll over unused vacation for George Hakey and Irving Wetherby to next fiscal year. Donna Boumil seconded, all in favor. So approved.**
 - **Josie Henry motioned to include Danielle James Choiniere. Elliot Knight seconded, all in favor. So approved.**
- e. Employee Pay Raise Request- Colby Hemond should now be earning VMERS retirement. The board may research, with the treasurer's help, the ability to provide employee gift cards or bonuses as budgets allow.
 - **Russell Duchaine motioned to provide a \$2 raise for Colby Hemond to \$18 per hour. Elliot Knight seconded, all in favor. So approved.**
- f. 4th of July Funds- Russell Duchaine has been working with other holiday committee members and didn't know if parade funds took effect 7/1 in the new fiscal year or not. The board said there is money either way to make purchases. Some vendors will invoice instead of needing upfront payment. Danielle James Choiniere said Russell Duchaine could use her town assigned debit card for these purchases instead of holiday committee members using their own money.
 - **Josie Henry motioned to have a three-minute recess at 8:02 PM. Russell Duchaine seconded, all in favor. So approved.**

The meeting was called back to order at 8:08 PM.

Municipal Matters Continued

- a. Vacancies:
 - Town Clerk: Assistant Town Clerk Danielle James Choiniere expressed interest for the role after Clerk Bohannon's resignation takes effect 5/27.
 - **Josie Henry motioned to appoint Danielle James Choiniere for Town Clerk effective 5/27. This tenure will be until Town Meeting election in March 2024. Elliot Knight seconded. Russell Duchaine abstained from voting. All others in favor. So appointed.**
 - Town Administrator- Conversation about the position occurred pertaining to duties and salaries. FY 2023-24 budget rolled Town Clerk, Asst. Clerk, Treasurer and Town Admin. salaries into one \$135,000 figure. Russell Duchaine thought salaries could be \$45K for Clerk, \$60K for Admin Assistant, \$30K for Treasurer. Benefits amounting to \$25K would be included. Perhaps the Town Administrator could be assistant to the Town Clerk and vice versa, several ideas were cast.
- c. Paving- Highway Foreman Rodney James has provided paving quotes/schedules for FY 2023-24, most of them in the village. More info at a future meeting(s).

- d. Warrants- Invoices signed. The sheriff's department would like to speak to the board at the next meeting.
- e. Mark Martin was asked to leave Center Bay beach by a resident(s) when he last mowed for the town. The board said to hold off for now until they give the go ahead to return.

- **Josie Henry motioned to enter executive session per 1 V.S.A. § 313(f) confidential attorney-client communications made for the purpose of providing professional legal services to the body; at 8:45 PM. Donna Boumil seconded. All in favor, so voted.**

Audience members left. Josie Henry, Russell Duchaine, Elliot Knight, Donna Boumil and Danielle James Choiniere remained.

- **Josie Henry motioned to leave executive session at 9:40 PM. Russell Duchaine seconded. All in favor, so voted.**
No motions were made except to adjourn:

Adjourn

- **Elliot Knight motioned to adjourn at 9:41 PM. Donna Boumil seconded, all in favor. So adjourned.**

Respectfully Submitted,
Danielle James Choiniere

Zoom recording:

https://us06web.zoom.us/rec/share/8ba4OZbVualqhuMaN_3GaWQxi1m44Btc5w9J0Ey8ciwGk2v3uJE00KrSPzVD4IL.Pqb9Z1jDQj2Uws-F?startTime=1684793085000

~~ These are draft minutes not slated for approval until the next regular board meeting ~~