

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
THE STRAFFORD BOARD OF SELECTMEN
October 8, 2014

Pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 312 (b) (1) Selectboard meeting minutes include

- (A) All members of the public body present;
- (B) All other active participants in the meeting;
- (C) All motions, proposals and resolutions made, offered and considered, and what disposition is made of same; and
- (D) The results of any votes, with a record of the individual vote of each member if a roll call is taken.

Although meeting minutes have complied with 1 V.S.A. § 312 (b) (1), any additional information is included as a courtesy.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Members of the public body present:

Rod Maclay, Chair, Brian Johnson, Steve Marx, Brent Cadwell, and John Freitag, Select Board Members

Other active participants:

Lisa Kendall, Town Clerk, Jane Prescott, Recording Secretary Jennifer Brown, Reporter Herald of Randolph

Citizens present: : Janet Hardy, Marie Ricketts, Lee Volkamer, Corky Scott, Roz Finn, Martha Walke, Tim Briglin

Meeting called to order at 7:00 p.m.

CITIZENS CONCERNS: Janet Hardy asked the amount the town pays Orange County Sherriff and wants to know how often they are paid and how many hours they are here each week and how is it determined where they sit. Lisa stated they are paid once a month based on the annual contract of \$27,000 for 2014. Orange County returned \$3000 to pay Ed Eastman. Orange County picks their own hours of when they patrol in town. Janet is concerned that the Orange County Sheriff is patrolling near Town Garage but not patrolling Route 132 past Tyson Road. Rod stated that the Select Board brought the Route 132 situation to their attention and Orange County Sheriffs are planning to patrol over the weekend during the early hours of the morning. Roz spoke about the speed coming into town past the Catholic Church, as well as people speeding through the village, and the need for Orange County to patrol in different places around town, and not just choose one place to patrol. John spoke with Orange County and they are patrolling around town on Route 132 on both sides of the village. Brent stated Orange County Sherriff is going to work near Tyson Road, and, Martha Walke stated she saw them in the area recently.

MINUTES: Rod presented the September 24, 2014 and September 30, 2014 minutes to the Select Board for their approval. In the September 24, 2014 minutes, the following change was noted under the Town Garage Update – change to state repairs may cost over one hundred thousand dollars to fix. Brent move to accept the September 24, 2014 minutes with the revision and to accept the September 30, 2014 minutes as written. Steve seconded. Both sets of minutes are approved.

GENERAL:

HS-122 Homestead Filing –Lisa did more research on homestead penalties that are currently assessed. She forwarded the policy to VLCT (Vermont League of Cities and Towns) and Paul Gilles, the town’s attorney. VLCT clarified that you cannot change the penalty that it’s in statute that it is 3% or 8%. You have to do 3%, 8% or 0% but, you can’t access a different penalty. Lisa distributed a proposed policy to the Select Board. Lisa stated that the Select Board can’t adjust the penalty for this year, but, if the Select Board decides to make changes, it should be for the next year. John is disappointed that the state doesn’t allow towns to set their own rates. If we adopt the proposed policy, the penalty amount is based on our tax rate. Brent moves to adopt the policy as written. Lisa recommends adopting the policy because the Town cannot loose possible revenue, as has happened in past years. . John stated that if we adopt this policy, we write an amendment to a representative asking the state to pass a law that towns can assess their own penalty. Steve seconded. All approved. New policy accepted.

Noise Ordinance – Lisa distributed information to Select Board; model ordinances and state law. The current state statute allow for people to be ticketed for noise after 10:00 p.m. 13VSA1022 – A state statute that deals with noise in the night time and it would relate to noise concerns and we can use it to address issues in our town. Ed Eastman also suggested that if you hear noise at night to call the State Police.

Budget – Deficit reduction – The Select Board reviewed the budget that was distributed by Lisa. John asked about the deficit reduction. The Select Board reduced budget and line items to reduce deficit. \$77,998 is money we are raising in taxes this year. Steve Marx and Lisa Kendall went to the State budget workshop and from it, he learned that if the town implements a capital budget it would reduce the need for large tax increases in the future. A capital budget committee was formed and worked on in the past with Steve Willbanks, Betsy Ruml and Tori Lloyd. Lisa has a file from the committee and she will send it to Steve.

Pay Scale adoption – The Select Board decided to table it for a future meeting.

Auditor’s Meeting Update – Lisa met with Sperry Wilson, Ann Kynor and Nellie Pennington. The auditors are trying to take a more active role. The group will talk with William Hall, a VLCT consultant and the audit company to find out how often they recommend we have an audit and the cost for an audit. Also, want to meet with Ann Simone of OWSU, because there is duplication of work in bank statements. Auditors always recommend updating user accounts and passwords and programs and each account and password should be unique to each member.

Sign State Contract – Contract for Ed Eastman’s monitoring of Justin Morrill Homestead. We pay Ed \$750.00 for the 3 year period of Sept. 22, 2014 to Sept. 21, 2017 to monitor the Homestead. Ed provides reports to the State. John made a motion that the Select Board sign the contract. Brent seconded. All approved.

TOWN HIGHWAYS:

Sidewalk Maintenance to Bid – Willis Phelps’ contract to maintain the sidewalk in South Strafford village is expired. Lisa updated the bid to maintain the sidewalk in the winter and it will be put out to bid.

Driveway Culvert Policy – Jon MacKinnon is sick and Lisa doesn’t have any data on it. B71 Standard is what the state uses. John Freitag feels we should have a culvert policy.

Equipment Lease – Brent distributed a spreadsheet with the equipment schedule budget for 2014. The idea of the budget and equipment schedule is to have a fixed amount of money that you spend every year on equipment and it enables you to keep your equipment up to date, including maintenance. The backhoe and the loader are both due to be updated this year and next year. Brent and Jon MacKinnon have been talking with John Deere and Caterpillar. Each piece of equipment costs around \$100,000. Currently, we keep our equipment for 10 years, and repairs are costly after year 5. Backhoe quote is \$138,000. Loader quote is \$150,000. Trade-in value is \$30,000 for the backhoe and \$60,000 for the loader. The net cost of the 2 pieces of equipment is \$198,000 for 5 years. The grader is brand new, and they would incorporate it into the same plan as needed. From an equipment standpoint and the usage they get it’s worth updating for the town and the taxpayers. This plan would enable newer equipment with less maintenance. Brent looked into it and wanted to bring before the board and discuss before we get into the budget season. Brent also discussed the mower, but, it is scheduled to last a lot longer. John asked about equipment fund. Brent said the hourly rate for equipment does not cover the cost of replacement. Lisa suggested asking Nellie to review the budget for this with the Select Board.

Garage Update – Rod has been working on it with Ted from All Season's Construction. Everything was mailed to an engineer in Rutland and they will hear back from him in a few weeks.

West Windsor Garage Visit Update – John is interested in going down and asked if anyone would join him. Steve and Brian agreed to go.

Bridge #26 bid document. Jon & Lisa reviewed the design build bid document. Lisa sent to Paul Gilles to review. She will advertise by October 15. Non-mandatory pre-bid site visit on October 22, 2014 at 9:00 a.m. Bids are due by 4:00 p.m. on November 12. The Select Board members will open the bids at the Select Board meeting. We have \$175,000 of State money, FEMA money, and the town would contribute 10%. The town already received permission from landowners for a road bypass. Select Board directed Lisa to advertise the bid. Lisa asked for an update on Watson Bridge and it should be completed within 4 to 5 weeks. Lisa will send out close out paperwork to the State on Van Dyke, White Bridge and Bean Bridge.

School – John stated they are beginning their budget process. John asked if the Select Board wanted to have a joint meeting with the School Board. The Superintendent asked to meet

with members of the Select Board. Rod stated that the Select Board is not ready to discuss the town budget. John F. feels that a joint meeting will show the public that they are aware of the concerns with taxes. Rod will asked Chair of school board for a meeting to review both budgets.

Steve moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Brian. All approved. Meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Next meeting; Wednesday, October 22, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Jane Prescott, Recording Secretary