

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE STRAFFORD SELECTBOARD

July 22nd, 2015

Members of the public body present: John Freitag, Stephen Marx, Toni Pippy, Brent Cadwell, Brian Johnson

Other active participants: Lisa Kendall, Town Clerk, Jennifer Brown, Herald of Randolph Reporter, Jon MacKinnon, Road Foreman, Ed Eastman, Constable, Bill Burden, Emergency Management Director, Lee Vormelker, Deputy Emergency Management Director

Meeting called to order in the Town Office at 600p.m.

1.) **Citizen Concerns:** There were no citizens' concerns.

2.) **Correspondence:**

Letter from The Vermont Nurse and Hospice for Vermont and New Hampshire announcing plans to formally explore an affiliation with Dartmouth Hitchcock.

3.) **Minutes:** Brent moved and Steve seconded a motion to adopt the minutes of July 8th. Minutes were approved unanimously.

General-- The orders on the agenda were agreed to be adjusted and proceeded as follows:

Selectboard Representative at ribbon cutting for Wolfe Energy Solar Project at the Maclay property -- Brian and Steve attended.

Selectboard letter of support for wood energy -- This month the Public Service Department has been reviewing their Renewable Energy Plan and seeking public comment. John drafted a letter for the Board to consider being included in those comments showing our support for wood energy. The Board reviewed the letter (attached). Toni moved and Brian seconded to approve sending the letter. All approved.

Cell phone and VTel update - Steve said he is still working to get answers to the connectivity questions regarding the CoverageCo cell phone units along Rte. 132. Steve feels that he is beginning to make some progress and asked to be allowed some more time before the Board takes any action. John reported that from the pole installed on Turnpike Road, VTel will be offering broadband internet services over the VTel Wireless LTE Network by August 1st. John will follow-up with VTel to for a press release describing the services.

EPA Superfund update meeting on July 30 and report on their work - John received an email from Project Manager Ed Hathaway regarding a public meeting on July 30th, 7 p.m. at Barrett Hall. The EPA meeting will provide an update on current activities as well as a plans for continued work. Ed Hathaway provided a 2014 Elizabeth Mine Site Update (attached). The state of Vermont delisted the Ompompanoosuc River and Lords Brook from the impaired water list in 2014. Some changes to the cleanup approach for the South Mine and South Open Cut will be discussed with an estimated cost of 10 million dollars, 90% from EPA and 10% from the State. John will contact Ed Hathaway to see if a site visit can be arranged before the meeting.

New England Municipal Clerk Institute and Academy - Lisa reported on the classes she took last week in Rhode Island at the academy. She attended 42 hours of class time with home work for the evenings and found it to be very useful. This was year one of a three year series of courses. The cost was partially covered by a grant and money budgeted for training.

Broken Window/Old City Falls mowing - Tim McCormack reported that a rock from his mower broke a window in a car parked at the Old City Falls Nature Preserve. The Board voted to cover the cost of the repair which was around \$275.

Budget Update - Lisa reported that the figures for June are being finalized and when complete will email them

to the Board for review and then discussion at the next meeting. When asked she said that we are still on track on the budget.

Setting tax rate - Lisa presented a handout showing the calculation of the 2015 Town tax rate. Toni verified the calculations.

Town Tax Rate	\$.6823
Education Tax Rate Resident	\$1.4947
Education Tax Rate Non Resident	\$1.4284

Combined Town and Education Resident Tax Rate \$2.1770
Combined Town and Education Non Resident Tax Rate \$2.1107

This represents for residents an increase of \$.0422 over 2014 (Town decrease of \$.0029; Education increase of \$.0451).

Brent moved and Steve seconded a motion to accept the tax rates as presented by Lisa. All voted in favor. Lisa would like to have the tax bills in the mail by the end of next week.

Dog Incident on Brook Road - The Board received a letter from Rocky Fuller regarding an incident when three dogs living in 348 Brook Road chased his motorcycle on his way to and from work and unable to avoid it, hit one of the dogs. In his concern for safety he requested that the dogs be kept under control. The Board agreed that this was a serious situation and a letter will be sent to the owner noting the violation of the Town Dog Ordinance, a first offence penalty and that the dogs must be leashed when not on the owner's property and their under control. Dog Officer Ed Eastman requested that if more follow-up that required a visit to the property an Orange County Deputy be involved. The Board agreed and John will check with the Sheriff to make sure they would be willing.

Dog Kennel Update – There was nothing new to report. Brent and Steve will continue to follow-up.

Park and Ride Policy – Ed noted that a car had been in the Park and Ride in the same place for over a month. He said it had an outdated inspection sticker and temporary plates. He asked if the Board would like him to have Orange County do a check. He also asked the Board consider a policy on the use of the Park and Ride for long term storage. The Board agreed with his request and John will follow-up with the Sheriff and contact the League of Cities and Towns regarding model policies for Park and Rides.

Body Camera Update - John reported that Alan Donohue, our Town Agent, has volunteered to see if a policy for the use of a body camera by our Dog Officer and Constable could be created to meet the limited needs in Strafford. John contacted Mike Tisdale, our computer consultant regarding the technical needs for storage and access of the videos. The Board will consider what to do when the report is in. In the meantime the body camera will not be used by Town officers.

Meeting Schedule - Lisa noted that there is sometimes a scheduling conflict when both the Selectboard and Development Review Board (DRB) meet at the same time and the DRB must meet upstairs. The DRB meets once a month on the third Wednesday following the third Monday. The Selectboard decided to keep their regular schedule of meeting the second and fourth Wednesdays but will change the location of our meeting to allow for the DRB to meet in the downstairs of the Town Office. Upstairs is too hot in the summer and cold in the winter.

5.) Town Highways

Highway and Equipment update – Jon updated the Board on road and equipment conditions. No major problems. Jon reported that there was no word yet on grants for work on the guard rail and reinforcement for the bridge and bridge area at Old City Falls. The Board felt and Jon agreed that as a safety issue and to meet the

request from the State for an upgrade from wire to a metal barrier, even if we did not get a grant a new guard rail should be put in before winter.

Jon brought up that the 1-ton truck was scheduled for replacement next year. He would like to start collecting information and putting together a proposal. John explained that this would need to follow the Bid Policy adopted by the Board last summer. Toni questioned the budget implications of a new truck. Lisa pointed out that there was an equipment replacement plan. Steve mentioned that if need be we could list purchase of a new truck as a separate line item on the Warning. The Board thanked Jon for bringing this to the Board's attention and that there is no need for an immediate decision. Jon will develop specifications on what type of truck would best serve the needs of the town.

Jon reported that someone had left two bags of garbage inside the Town Garage over the weekend. There was no indication of who left the bags. It was suggested that Jon change the access code to the garage.

Tracking vacation and personal/sick time – The board discussed the practice of not keeping track of vacation and personal/sick time of salaried personnel supervised by the Selectboard. Standard practice is to track these hours. Brent moved and Brian seconded to change the current practice and start tracking salaried personnel supervised by the Selectboard. All voted in favor. Jon said that as of January 1, 2015 he has had taken 1 sick day and 40 hours of vacation time.

Jon had a personnel issue that he said he would like to talk with the Board about in executive session. Brent moved and Steve seconded to go into executive session at 8:30p.m. The Board came out of executive session at 8:57 p.m. The Board scheduled an executive session for July 29 at 6 p.m. In the Town Office.

6.) Other

VT-Alert which is Vermont All-Hazards Alert and Notification system-- Bill and Lee informed the Board that VT-Alert is available for use, but we need to have a training session before we can use it. He requested that some members of the Board also be trained. Toni, Brian and Brent have agreed to be trained, Bill and Lee will coordinate the training.

Toni made a motion to adjourn and Brian seconded. All approved and the meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

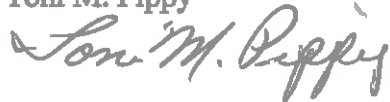
Next Meetings:

Special Board Meeting at town Office on July 29, 2015

Regular Board Meeting at Town Office on August 12, 2015 at 6 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Toni M. Pippy



Letter of Wood Energy Support

Dear Public Service Department,

The people and Town of Strafford have been leaders in the promotion of renewable solar energy. This week there will be a ribbon cutting at a new 91 Kw solar project which will supply power to our town, school and community buildings. At our last Selectboard meeting we passed a letter of support for a proposed solar project at the Elizabeth Mine site that would be the largest solar power facility in our State. In addition many individual citizens have put in solar power at their own homes. Strafford is a leader in this source of renewable energy.

At the same time Strafford is one of the most heavily wooded towns in the State. Our community has many employed in the forest product industry. Vermont forests not only provide renewable energy but ongoing renewable jobs. With changes in the paper industry there are now fewer markets for lower grades of wood. These lower grades are ideal for producing power and the appropriate thinning of poor quality wood also allows for the growth of higher grade species and helps meet the requirements of many current use management plans.

It is therefore important when updating the Vermont Energy Plan sufficient attention be given to the promotion of wood power energy plants and wood pellet plants. Having regionally located plants that use wood would not only provide a renewable source of energy, but would also reduce the amount of trucking needed and as a result the amount of fossil fuel being used in transport. At the same time this type of renewable power will create ongoing good jobs not only at the plants themselves but for the foresters, loggers and truckers of our State. We urge you to make the responsible use of Vermont's woodlands to provide more renewable power a priority in the 2015 Update to the Vermont Comprehensive Energy Plan.