

Selectboard Meeting Minutes

Monday, February 22, 2021 at 6:30 pm via Zoom conference call

Present: Denise Wheeler (Chair), Sharon Winn Fannon (Vice Chair), John Brabant (Member), Rose Pelchuck (Member), Clif Emmons (Member), ORCA Media, Katie Lane-Karnas (Recording Secretary), Alfred Larrabee (Road Commissioner), Sandra Ferver (Town Treasurer), Marc Mihaly, Jamie Moorby, Heidi Thompspon, John Rosenblum, Marge and Steve Sweeney, Peg Tasse, Laura and Patrick Purcell, Colleen Bloom, Virginia Clammer, Eileen Simpson, Beverly Heise, Meg Dawkins, Nick Emlen

1. Executive Session for Personnel Matters: Denise Wheeler made a motion to go into Executive Session at 6:35 pm per 1 V.S.A. subsection 313 (a) (3), personnel matters, and invited Alfred Larrabee (Road Commissioner) to join them. The motion was seconded by Rose Pelchuck, voted on and carried 5-0. The Board resumed Regular Session at 7:00 pm. The Chair had nothing to report publicly.
2. Call to Order: Denise Wheeler called the meeting to order at 7 pm.
3. Public Comment: None.
4. Review, Additions/Changes to Agenda: None.
5. Updates/Reports: Treasurer and Delinquent Tax Collector: Delinquent taxes are coming in; the tax collection effort is going nicely. 2019 delinquent taxes are all but in at this point, except one person in the \$300 range who intends to pay in full. We are looking at collecting most of the 2020 taxes before the end of the fiscal year, which is a better position than usual. The Delinquent Tax Collector described the Town as “on target on all fronts.” The Board also reviewed the Treasurer's report that shows that the Town is currently on track with the budget.
6. Curtis Pond Homeowner's Association (CPHA) and Curtis Pond Dam: Heidi Thompson introduced herself and members of the Curtis Pond Dam Exploratory Group, a seven-member offshoot of the CPHA who have been meeting for a few months. In the early 2000s, a number of people did a lot of work on the issue of the Curtis Pond dam and she updated the group on their work thus far: planning for the future, how repairs would be paid for, ownership and state permitting.

The Exploratory Group has been familiarizing itself with context and are here to inform the Board of their presence and hope to work together to come up with a solution. They also are figuring out issues around the beavers, lily pads, etc., but are feeling more urgency on the dam repair issue (with climate change, another Irene could take the dam down).

John Brabant provided background information: The design drawn up by Dubois & King have been approved by the state. The Town knows the owners are the Fothergills. The Town,

despite not being owners, could apply for and secure the permits which has been done. Upon construction and completion of the dam, once it is done and has engineer's certification, then the Town has agreed to take ownership of the dam and VLCT would then provide insurance coverage going forward. The only thing holding this up is the funding piece (estimated at \$400,000 in the past and likely more now). Marc Mihaly commented that the key issues are that the Fothergills relinquished ownership; the forefront question is what is the best way to resolve the title issues such that title companies can accept it. Possible approaches to dam repair may be available with new leadership at the State level. He said they have an urgency this time and want to work with the Town; there is a general sense including at the State agencies to finally resolve this. He asked permission for the group to return to the Board after they gain more information.

Rose Pelchuck commented that she became involved with the Selectboard in 2003 and she searched the minutes that she kept and she found a 16-page document of historical details of this issue recorded from 2003-2009 minutes which she offered to send to the Exploratory Group and Selectboard members. Marc Mihaly added that there is a dam design approach available to the situation now that would not have been an option in the past. Many details from the original discussion in the past were recalled. John Brabant stated his interest in the state allowing dredging the pond material that is causing the pond to be on its way to becoming a wetland (its end state as a pond). Peg Tassey noted the dredged material could be used for garden compost and John Brabant agreed that it could be marketed as a fundraiser.

7. Debrief on Town Meeting Informational Hearing: The Chair thanked Clif Emmons for his efforts behind the scenes organizing and launching the meeting last weekend. There were 12 panelists and 48 attendees, a good turnout. The Zoom recorded video is published on the Town website; the Chair will announce this to the Town on Front Porch Forum and it will also be posted on YouTube. Sharon Winn Fannon got feedback that it went impressively well and Denise Wheeler also received feedback about it going smoothly. The Zoom webinar format was a huge asset to running a large public meeting and the license expires in a month but could be repurchased if needed. One feature of the webinar is that the "attendee" role can not see the names of other attendees. The Q&A text has been archived.
8. Other Updates
 - *CVSWMD*: John Brabant updated that the glass dumping case was settled. In his professional role he did a public records request and found TJ Donovan changed a process that had been in place for decades; John questioned his political motivation for the way the process was handled. John has been testifying regarding these issues and the person who directed the dumping testified they did nothing wrong. The waste has not and will not be required to be cleaned up. Calais's District did all they could and John noted his approval of their efforts which resulted in a better settlement agreement than they had contemplated. The \$400,000 penalty hopefully got CSWMD's attention; the next objective may be a legislative review of the current state of affairs in terms of recycling and waste management so we see better systems put into play to reach goals of reduction and reuse.
 - *Town Hall*: The election is being held at the Town Hall on March 2, 2021. It will be cleaned in advance according to COVID-19 guidelines. Andy Felice is handling snow removal and automatic door closers are being installed.

- *Friends of Town Hall:* The next meeting is scheduled for March 11, 2021 and will work toward revising the management agreement.
- *IT Update:* We are coming up to contract renewal time with rbTech; the Board will invite Rubin to an upcoming meeting to discuss process and planning. A “check-in” on how it’s going and recommendations from RbTech is part of our contract with them. The LGER grant laptop computer acquisition is still underway; the website update (also funded by LGER) is moving slowly but has made it through design and into content and should be done asap. Nick Emlen and the Town Clerk will present the work at a future meeting.
- Sharon Winn Fannon noted that this is the last meeting of the session and the next regular scheduled meeting will be the organizational meeting after Town Meeting and she stated her hope that the organizational meeting will focus on ground rules on how we work together as a board, wiping the slate of assumptions about how we work together, and generally hitting the “reset” button. John Brabant agreed it is in the interest of the whole Town to do so, and that the document Sharon circulated captures the way the board intends to be working together, but as a practical matter we tend to slip in our habits. Rose Pelchuck commented that she read the document Sharon circulated and thought it was thorough and captures a good path.

9. Review and approve minutes, warrants

- a) The Board has delegated review and approval for processing of invoices and orders to Clif Emmons, Denise Wheeler, and Rose Pelchuck.
- b) Rose Pelchuck moved and Denise Wheeler seconded to approve the minutes of the 2/8/2021 meeting, with the changes as noted; the motion passed 4-0 (Sharon Winn Fannon abstained).

Rose Pelchuck moved and John Brabant seconded to approve the minutes of the 2/15/2021 continued to 2/17/2021 special meeting, with the changes as noted; the motion passed 5-0.

10. Executive Session for Personnel Matters: Denise Wheeler made a motion to go into Executive Session at 8:06 pm per 1 V.S.A. subsection 313 (a) (3), personnel matters. The motion was seconded by Clif Emmons, voted on and carried 5-0. The Board resumed Regular Session at 8:34 pm with a motion from Clif Emmons. The motion was seconded by Denise Wheeler, voted on and carried 5-0. The Chair had nothing to report publicly.

11. Other Business/Old Business/New Business: Denise Wheeler reported the Selectboard is very sorry and sad to see Rose Pelchuck leave after so many years of dedicated service to the town. The Board gave Rose a resounding *thank you!*

12. Adjournment: In her final act as a member, Rose Pelchuck made a motion to adjourn at 8:36 pm. The motion was seconded by Denise Wheeler, voted on and carried 5-0.

Date: 2/25/2021 Respectfully Submitted, Katie Lane-Karnas, Recording Secretary
Approved by the Selectboard at the 5/10/2021 meeting

Click on the link below to view documents associated with this agenda:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1X-6Oqti15nfY1gkCds0yOy0yj9CPM55q?usp=sharing>