

Selectboard Special Meeting Minutes

Monday, April 19, 2021 at 7 pm via Zoom conference call

Present: Denise Wheeler (Chair), Sharon Winn Fannon (Vice Chair), Clif Emmons (Member), John Brabant (Member), Rick Kehne (Member), Katie Lane-Karnas (Recording Secretary), Rebecca Davin, Kari Hetrick, Judy Fitch Robert (Town Clerk), Alfred Larrabee (Road Commissioner)

1. Call to Order: Denise Wheeler called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm.
2. Public Comment: None.
3. Review, Additions/Changes to Agenda: None.
4. Notice of Vacant Positions: Sharon Winn Fannon made a motion, which Denise Wheeler seconded, to approve the notice of Town Clerk and Selectboard member vacancies (the Town Clerk will check the accuracy of the embedded link in the document). The motion was voted and passed 4-0. The Town Clerk position is from July 1, 2021 until March 7, 2023 (Town Meeting Day): the Selectboard member position is from July 1, 2021 until March 8, 2022 (this is a three-year term that began in 2019).

Denise Wheeler made a motion to appoint Clif Emmons to fill the interim Selectboard position to be voted on at a special town meeting, the term of the appointment to end in March 2022. Rick Kehne seconded the motion which was voted and passed 4-0. Sharon Winn Fannon thanked Clif Emmons for being willing to serve as an interim until the special election; this particular circumstance lines up nicely as a special election is quickly approaching. In the future the Board may take a different approach. The Town Clerk administered the Oath of Office to interim Selectboard member Clif Emmons.

Clif Emmons made a motion to approve the Special Town Meeting Warning for the special election scheduled June 30, 2021. The motion was seconded and passed 5-0.

5. Hardwick Electric ROW #2021-01: The Road Commissioner commented that Hardwick Electric's representative will not be able to join. Applicant Rebecca Davin joined the meeting. She is in the process of getting a pole put in to reestablish electricity to the house. The Road Commissioner visited the site and reviewed the design. He reported they are putting another pole in line with the existing line and a wire to go to the house. They already have a right of way (there are existing poles). Tree Warden Neal Maker commented that there are a couple of trees on the house side of the road that probably need to be removed (a dead elm and a partially dead maple); both are hazardous and on private property. The applicant thanked the Board for accommodating her timing. Denise Wheeler made a motion to approve ROW application #2021-01 for Hardwick Electric to add an additional pole to cut down on the span of a wire and remove two hazard trees as identified by the Tree Warden, who will mark them with flagging to be removed. Rick Kehne seconded, and the motion was voted and passed 5-0.

6. Selectboard Rules of Procedure: The Board picked up at Item F(4). The Chair addresses guests during the meeting to learn if they are there for a particular item or if they have a public comment. “UP TO fifteen minutes for public comments” is for a total number of minutes, regardless of how many people attend; if there is a lot of comment on an item, that issue can be included as a warned agenda item at an upcoming meeting. The Board agreed on not wanting to discourage public participation and tweaked language to clarify how the public can participate at the open public comments at the top of the agenda or at the end of the meeting, or on agenda items as time allows. John Brabant emphasized that the precedent should be set that public comments on agenda items are permitted ahead of the vote. The group agreed this work is to establish good practices that outlive this iteration of Selectboard membership and to protect public participation on agenda items into the future. Members agreed that they have witnessed and have been discouraged by boards where agenda item discussion disallows public participation. Sharon Winn Fannon will provide edits to the shared document for future review.

7. Executive Session for Contract Matters: Denise Wheeler made a motion to go into Executive Session at 8:40 pm per 1 V.S.A. subsection 313 (a) (1) (A), contract matters. The motion was seconded by Clif Emmons, voted on and carried 5-0. The Board resumed Regular Session at 9 pm. The Board will again meet on May 10, 2021 beginning at 6pm to continue contract discussions in executive session.

8. Other Business/Old Business/New Business: None.

9. Adjournment: Rick Kehne made a motion to adjourn at 9:02 pm. John Brabant seconded the motion which was voted on and carried unanimously.

Date: 4/20/2021 Respectfully Submitted, Katie Lane-Karnas, Recording Secretary
Approved by the Selectboard at the 6/28/2021 meeting

Click on the link below to view documents associated with this agenda:
https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1RHkJlbOmvpagu_dYOwMsDuDOHke5SPU?usp=sharing