

**East Montpelier Selectboard Meeting APPROVED (05/04/15) Minutes
April 13, 2015 at the Town Office**

Selectboard members present: Carl Etnier (recording secretary), Seth Gardner, Casey Northrup, Steve Sparrow, Kim Swasey; Bruce Johnson (town administrator).

Others present: Bruce Chapell, Gina Conn (Times Argus), Mike Garand (road foreman), Karen Gramer (delinquent tax collector), Jason Hoover (Green Mountain Mapleworks).

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Seth Gardner called the meeting to order at 6:37 pm.

B. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

Discussion of letter from Washington Electric Co-op.

C. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

D. DELINQUENT TAX COLLECTOR REPORT

Delinquent Tax Collector Karen Gramer reported that delinquent taxes are up over this time in recent years, both in numbers of properties and in amounts outstanding. She provided the following table:

Year	# of properties	Total Outstanding
2015	29	\$67,338.55
2014	27	\$38,091.04
2013	22	\$41,257.58
2012	25	\$47,339.63

Four properties are on track for tax sale. Another one with a high outstanding balance has a signed purchase and sales agreement, contingent on receiving all relevant state and local permits. Two other lots with a high balance are promised to be paid off in their entirety next week.

Ms. Gramer's next appearance before the Selectboard will be June 15.

**E. DISCUSSION WITH JASON HOOVER OF GREEN MOUNTAIN MAPLEWORKS
Regarding Overweight Vehicles & Mud Season**

Road Foreman Mike Garand showed a copy of the town's mud season road posting, which is at 18,000 lb. for a three-axle truck. He described the three-axle trucks of Green Mountain Mapleworks (GMM), which he and Mr. Gardner said weigh around 20,000 lb. empty.

Mr. Garand said GMM takes a shortcut through East Montpelier with 4300 gallons (nearly 35,000 lb.) of sap, driving Quaker – Lyle Young – Templeton – County. They could take Towne Hill Road to County Road and stay on the pavement the whole way. GMM also collects sap in EM, just off of Horn of the Moon.

Jason Hoover of GMM had told Mr. Garand that GMM's agricultural plates make them exempt from town road postings. Mr. Garand contacted Vermont State Police to verify this interpretation. As a result of that conversation, a weight inspector from the Department of Motor Vehicles explained the laws to Mr. Garand and Mr. Hoover.

Last Saturday, after Lyle Young and other roads had been graded, Mr. Garand saw a fully loaded GMM truck on Lyle Young.

When Mr. Hoover arrived at the meeting, he said he did not drive GMM's trucks. He wants the trucks on the dirt roads only when they can take it without damage, and he said his drivers have the same understanding.

Mr. Gardner told Mr. Hoover he had seen the GMM truck on a muddy road. Mr. Hoover said GMM drives on roads in worse shape in Marshfield and Calais. Mr. Hoover also said that GMM has an agreement with Marshfield to pay for putting gravel on the roads they use and which become unpassable.

Mr. Hoover also said he had spoken with Mr. Garand about using the roads, and that they had been off the Lyle Young – Templeton route since the previous Tuesday. Upon questioning, he acknowledged that a driver had taken a fully loaded truck that route on Saturday, and he apologized.

Mr. Gardner said that East Montpelier may be more particular about its roads than Marshfield or Calais. He said the town does not want to call DMV enforcement. EM just wants GMM to work with Mr. Garand and only use the dirt roads through town when Mr. Garand says it's OK.

Horn of the Moon Road is a different case; the only option GMM has of collecting syrup from 3,600 taps at Elliot Morse's property is by driving on Horn of the Moon. Mr. Hoover said they tried to collect when the road was frozen or, if it is not in good shape, to make two half-full trips rather than one trip with a full truck.

Mr. Gardner said he understood that GMM has no option at Horn of the Moon and reiterated that Mr. Garand is the point person for decisions on when to drive on which EM roads with overweight vehicles when the roads are posted.

F. DISCUSSION ON TOWN OFFICE COMPUTER NETWORK STATUS

Update on Server Replacement and Review of System Backup Methods

Mr. Johnson reported that the new server is entirely up and running. The old server is still on site, for safety's sake, but disconnected.

Email is not going through the central server. It's being backed up at each of the work stations for now. And we don't have more than the seven email addresses.

For backup, two sets of hard drives will be purchased and rotated off site. This is in addition to other backup for key information.

Consideration of NEMRC Annual Disaster Recovery Contract:

The contract covers the nightly off-site backup of the NEMRC financial modules and the CAMA database. The price is \$633.39, up 3% from last year's \$614.9.

Motion: I move to renew our contract with NEMRC for disaster recovery. Made: Mr. Northrup. Second: Mr. Etnier. 5-0.

Mr. Johnson complimented rbTechnologies on their perseverance in addressing issues with the server upgrade, without extra charges to the town.

G. DISCUSSION ON TOWN OFFICE BUILDING ISSUES AND CREATION OF TOWN BUILDING COMMITTEE

The SB considered recently a complaint about possible mold in the town office. Ms. Swasey presented a flyer from the Vermont Department of Health saying that testing for mold "is not necessary or recommended."

Mr. Johnson reported that Town Clerk Terri Conti said today she has no complaints about mold in the office.

Ms. Swasey also raised the possibility of establishing a committee to consider a long-term plan for the town office. The SB assented in principle and plans to revisit the topic at a later time, perhaps July.

H. CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT 2015 TOWN MEETING MINUTES

Mr. Etnier and Town and School Moderator Michael Duane suggested changes to the draft minutes, and Town Clerk Terri Conti revised them accordingly. The SB signed the revised minutes.

I. EXCESS WEIGHT PERMITS

Motion: I move to approve Excess Weight Permits EW-15-28 through EW-15-34, as presented. Made: Mr. Sparrow. Second: Mr. Northrup. 5-0.

J. WARRANTS

Signed.

K. MINUTES

Motion: I move to approve the minutes of March 30, 2015 as amended. Made: Mr. Sparrow. Second: Mr. Northrup. 5-0.

L. OTHER BUSINESS

- SB members are invited to attend the 350 Vermont Carbon Risk Forum, April 28th, 6:30 p.m. (dinner at 5:30) at the Montpelier Unitarian Church.
- WEC has again offered the town a Level II charging station for the proposed Park 'N' Ride. This is a limited time offer. It is difficult for the town to respond affirmatively when WEC is blocking the construction of the Park 'N' Ride by not transferring the land for it to VTrans.
- Central VT Regional Planning Commission plans public hearings on amendments to the 2008 Central VT Regional Plan:
 - May 12, 2015, 7:30 p.m. at the Central VT Chamber of Commerce conference room
 - June 9, 2015, 7:30 p.m. at the Central VT Chamber of Commerce conference room
- Applications for VTrans structures grants for Murray Road & Quaker Road culverts and VTrans paving grant for an engineering study of the Quaker/Vincent Flats/Dodge/Lyle Young/Templeton Roads Class 2 stretch have been submitted.
- Update on Capital Improvement Committee status:

- The CIC would like to see the committee become a standing committee under the SB
- The CIC reported this conclusion to the PC; the PC would also like to see the CIC become an SB committee. The PC suggests the committee be made up of the town treasurer, a SB member, a PC member, an at-large member, and one wild card. The PC and the CIC are planning to write letters to the SB with their recommendations; the SB will await the letters before acting.
- Update on Planning Commission invitation to meet with the SB to discuss future directions for PC efforts to tweak the town zoning scheme:
 - The PC would be happy to meet with members of the SB on May 7th after the PC public hearing on the proposed zoning regulations. The hearing is at 7 p.m.; regular meeting will start at the conclusion of the hearing.

M. DISCUSSION REGARDING THE WASHINGTON ELECTRIC CO-OP'S REQUEST FOR THE TOWN TO CONVEY THE CHURCH STREET AREA TO WEC

WEC would like to own the publicly owned Church Street in front of their offices, to increase the number of parking spaces they control. Previous Secretary of Transportation Brian Searles had in a letter (Sept. 20, 2012) left open the possibility of WEC making this request to the town. However, he cautioned that VTrans had "significant public policy concerns with transferring public property to a private entity" in general, and particularly in this case, where eminent domain was used to acquire the property and the property is serving a public purpose.

Town officials met with VTrans to discuss this possibility. If the town wishes to transfer Church Street to WEC, VTrans would need to approve the transfer—and that is unlikely. Furthermore, the town would have to refund to state and federal agencies the cost of the property development. No estimates about this cost were produced at the meeting, but it seems likely to be significantly greater than \$100,000.

The town drafted a letter declining WEC's request for the transfer. The letter also points out the advantages to WEC of the construction of a Park 'N' Ride facility on the WEC property across Route 14 from Church Street, which would take away parking pressure on the Church Street parking spaces. Constructing the Park 'N' Ride would also remove the possibility of the Green Mountain Transit Authority's bus stop being moved to Church Street, which would reduce parking spaces available there. The Park 'N' Ride construction has been delayed for several years, as WEC has not transferred the property to VTrans.

Motion: I move to authorize Seth Gardner to sign the letter drafted April 13, 2015 to Washington Electric, along with any minor changes that he may find appropriate. Made: Mr. Etnier. Second: Mr. Sparrow. 5-0.

N. PERSONNEL MATTERS

Discussed.

O. ADJOURNMENT

Motion: I move to adjourn. Made: Mr. Sparrow. Second: Mr. Northrup. 5-0.