

**East Montpelier Selectboard Meeting APPROVED (08/17/15) MINUTES
August 3, 2015 at the Town Office**

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

Others present: Gina Conn (*Times Argus*), Mike Garand (road foreman), Michelle McFadden (Kelton Road resident), Derek Pryce (Kelton Road resident).

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Seth Gardner called the meeting to order at 6:48 pm.

B. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

Canon Copier Maintenance Agreement

**Memorandum of Understanding with East Montpelier Fire Department Regarding Town Use of
Templeton Road Fire Station**

Exploring Town Policies Regarding Running Businesses Out of Homes

C. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

**D. DISCUSSION ON PHASE ONE OF PLAN FOR KELTON ROAD ROADSIDE BRUSH
REMOVAL/TRIMMING AND DETERMINATION OF NEXT STEPS**

Mr. Gardner recused himself as chair for this agenda item; Mr. Etnier and Mr. Sparrow asked Ms. Swasey to chair.

The SB conducted a site visit before the meeting. Mr. Gardner wants the trees cleared on the town right of way. Mr. Pryce is concerned about safety of his kids in getting on and off the school bus. Ms. McFadden wants to go to the next phase, clearing the brush.

Road Foreman Mike Garand reported that Tree Warden Paul Cate would like to be conservative with further trimming, because he'd like to see speeds kept down on rural roads.

For the next step, the town will trim brush at the corner. Possibly 3" and smaller; Mr. Garand and Mr. Cate will discuss the appropriate size for the cut-off. The SB will make a site visit before its Aug. 31 meeting and determine whether more cutting is needed.

E. SETTING OF 2015/16 PROPERTY TAX RATE

Mr. Gardner resumed chairing the meeting. The rates are determined by the town budget and the grand list value; the difference between residential and non-residential rates is determined by town and state decisions on education funding.

Resident (homestead) tax rate is up 0.1937 (8.19%) from last year; non-resident tax rate is up 0.1170 (5.58%) from last year.

Motion: I move to set the residential tax rate at \$2.5579 and the non-residential tax rate at \$2.2134 per \$100 of assessed value. Made: Mr. Etnier. Second: Ms. Swasey. 4-0.

F. CONSIDERATION OF HOMESTEAD FILING PENALTY WAIVER

The town is allowed to assess an 8% penalty for residents who file their homestead declaration late. Or it can waive the penalty for everyone. There are also certain hardship exemptions.

At this point, there are 11 known residences that have filed a homestead declaration late, with about \$3,500 in total penalties. The town has chosen to waive the late-filing penalty in the past, for a number of reasons: 1) The penalty only affects those who do file but file late; those who are required to file but don't file are not penalized if they are not caught; 2) The town's revenues are not affected by whether someone declares a homestead in town or not; 3) It is in the town's interest to encourage accurate information about who is a resident here, and waiving the penalty encourages people to file a homestead declaration, even if it is late; 4) For a time, the state allowed a homestead declaration to remain in effect until the land owner rescinded it; the SB does not see a good reason for reverting to a system requiring filing each year.

The SB determined that they had seen no new information that would cause a reconsideration of the decision from previous years.

Motion: I move to waive the homestead declaration late filing penalty. Made: Ms. Swasey. Second: Mr. Sparrow. 4-0.

G. CANON COPIER MAINTENANCE AGREEMENT

The annual maintenance agreement for the copiers covers a certain volume of copies and copier service. The new agreement includes an increase in the base cost of 10% (\$504 last year; \$554.40 this year). Mr. Johnson said the agreement is still a bargain given the overall lease cost, but color copy charges need to be watched. The town received 10,000 free color copies and so hasn't yet seen any such charges, but that will change this year.

Motion: I move to authorize Town Administrator CBJ to complete the Canon Copier Maintenance Agreement. Made: Mr. Etnier. Second: Ms. Swasey. 4-0

H. MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH EAST MONTPELIER FIRE DEPARTMENT REGARDING TOWN USE OF TEMPLETON ROAD FIRE STATION

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is to allow the East Montpelier Fire Department (EMFD) and the Town of East Montpelier to share use of the Templeton Road fire station, while holding the Town of Calais (which participates in EMFD) harmless for any costs of the shared use. The SB finds the draft acceptable; it will go to Calais for their meeting next week, and the SB will review it again at the next regular meeting.

I. EXPLORING TOWN POLICIES REGARDING RUNNING BUSINESSES OUT OF HOMES

At Ms. Swasey's request, Mr. Johnson summarized the policies for "home businesses" and "home industries" as set out in the zoning regulations.

J. EXCESS WEIGHT PERMITS

Motion: I move to approve excess weight permit EW-15-44. Made: Mr. Etnier. Second: Mr. Sparrow. 4-0.

K. WARRANTS

Signed.

L. MINUTES

Motion: I move to approve the minutes of the July 13, 2015 meeting as submitted. Made: Ms. Swasey. Second: Mr. Sparrow. 4-0.

M. OTHER BUSINESS

Town office building maintenance

Chair Gardner met with Justin Campbell, G Street Works LLC, to discuss potential fix for connection of town office building entryway roof with main building. He also looked at possible entryway roof replacement. This year, the fix will be done, at a cost of \$1,275. He would also do whatever foundation repair work needs to be done, at \$45/hour. The contractor who would do the entryway roof is booked solid this year.

Motion: I move to authorize Chair Seth Gardner to sign the proposal from G Street Works to repair the Town Office roof. Made: Mr. Etnier. Second: Ms. Swasey. 4-0.

High Risk Rural Roads

Mr. Etnier, Mr. Garand, and Mr. Johnson met with VTrans personnel to review the preliminary report on the grant-funded High Risk Rural Roads program evaluation of County Road to consider signage that would improve safety.

Mays Way Issues

The concerns regarding the Mays Way family persist. No one is living actively on site right now. Domestic animals are still there. Constable Conti is checking on the animals regularly. It appears that the couple is looking for takers for the various animals.

VLCT Town Fair

October 8th at Killington Grand Hotel. Mr. Etnier offered to attend on behalf of the Town.

ANR's State Government Municipal Day

It is September 9th at National Life complex.

Zoning Administrator Report

No permit applications for period July 13 – August 3, 2015; activity remains historically slow. Sanfacon/Pollock Environmental Court Action took place July 29. A ruling is expected by October. Next DRB meeting will be on August 4, 2015: Shanley (950 Sparrow Farm Rd) request for variance.

N. DISCUSSION ON POTENTIAL TOWN INTEREST IN 3035 US RTE. 2 PROPERTY SUBJECT TO AUGUST 12 FORECLOSURE AUCTION

No action taken.

O. CONTINUATION

Motion: I move to continue the meeting in the Town Office at 6:00 pm on Tuesday, August 4. Made: Mr. Sparrow. Second: Ms. Swasey. 4-0. Meeting recessed at 8:39 pm.

P. CONTINUATION OF DISCUSSION ON POTENTIAL TOWN INTEREST IN 3035 US RTE. 2 PROPERTY SUBJECT TO AUGUST 12 FORECLOSURE AUCTION

The meeting continued at 6:00 pm on Tuesday, August 4.

Motion: I move to authorize a warrant of \$10,000 for Town Administrator Bruce Johnson to bid at the August 12 foreclosure auction on 3035 US Rte. 2, subject to an upper limit set by the SB. Made: Mr. Etnier. Second: Mr. Sparrow. 4-0.

Q. ADJOURNMENT

Motion: I move to adjourn. Made: Mr. Sparrow. Second: Mr. Etnier. 4-0. 6:23 pm.