

**East Montpelier Selectboard Meeting APPROVED (12/07/15) MINUTES  
November 16, 2015 at the Town Office**

**Selectboard members present:** Carl Etnier (recording secretary), Seth Gardner, Casey Northrup, Kim Swasey, Gene Troia; Bruce Johnson (town and zoning administrator)..

**Others present:** Paul Cate (tree warden), Jessica Heinz (town resident), Phillip Heinz (Recreation Board), Mark Lane (Planning Commission (PC)), Michael Lazar (AG Solar, Charlotte), Mike McCarty (town resident), Bruce Mekkelsen (town resident), Ray Stout (town resident), Andrew Thomas (solar contractor Bullrock Deutsche-Eco LLC), Jean Vissering (PC).

**A. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Seth Gardner called the meeting to order at 6:35 pm.

**B. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA**

None.

**C. PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

**D. CONSIDERATION OF NEMRC ANNUAL SUPPORT AGREEMENT**

We pay an annual fee for maintenance and support agreement for our suite of NEMRC (New England Municipal Resource Center) database modules. This year it is \$1,291.36, a 3.00% increase over last year.

**Motion: I move to authorize the expenditure of \$1,291.36 to continue the NEMRC annual support agreement. Made: Mr. Northrup. Second: Mr. Troia.**

**E. CROSS VERMONT TRAIL RECREATION FACILITIES GRANT APPLICATION**

Cross Vermont Trail Association (CVTA) intends to submit a grant application to help fund the stretch of trail along US Rte. 2 between the proposed Winooski River bridge and the town-owned Benton parcel.

CVTA would like a letter of support from the Selectboard. Neither the letter nor successful obtainment of the grant by the CVTA obligate the town to furnish any funds.

**Motion: I move to authorize Chair Seth Gardner to sign a letter of support for the Cross Vermont Trail Recreation Facilities Grant Application from BGS. Made: Mr. Etnier. Second: Mr. Northrup. 5-0.**

**F. DISCUSSION ON WINSTON/SILBERBERG PROPERTY CLOSING**

Closing is set for Tuesday, November 17th at 10:15 a.m.

**Motion: I move to authorize Town Administrator Johnson to represent the Town at the closing on the Winston/Silberberg property and to approve a warrant for the amount needed at closing, up to \$217,000. Made: Ms. Swasey. Second: Mr. Troia. 5-0.**

## **G. DISCUSSION ON PROPOSED POLICY FOR SOCIAL ORGANIZATION FUNDING REQUESTS**

At the Funding Request Study Committee's meeting last Wednesday the members decided to recommend that both Montpelier Senior Activity Center (MSAC) and Central Vermont Home Health and Hospice (CVHHH) be placed on the 2016 Town Meeting Warning as separate articles. For future years, the committee would like the board to establish a process/policy whereby requests over \$5000 be reviewed by the committee and then, with Selectboard approval, placed on the warning as separate articles for voters.

MSAC (\$5,000) and CVHHH (\$5,500) have both submitted level-funded requests for FY2017. MSAC had a separate article last year whereas CVHHH was included in the funding request article. Both dwarf the next highest request (Community Connections at a level-funded \$2,500).

The SB accepts the recommendation of the Committee for MSAC and CVHHH to be warned as separate articles for town meeting 2016. The SB will consider the policy request at a future date.

## **H. DISCUSSION ON PROPOSED SOLAR ARRAY ON CASSANI PROPERTY**

Andy Thomas and Michael Lazar, Project Representatives

There is a 500 kW solar array proposed for the 6-lot, 8.36 acre parcel located just to the west of US Rte. 2 across the road from the East Montpelier Home Center. The facility will need to receive a Certificate of Public Good from the Public Service Board. We are in the middle of the 45-day pre-application filing period, which is a good opportunity to speak with the project representatives. The town will receive official notice of the right to comment directly to the Public Service Board on the actual application once it is filed.

Points that emerged during discussion:

- Mr. Lazar has an option to buy the six lots. He initially received an option on four lots, but neighbors said they would like the array to be further back from the property line. He bought an option for the other two parcels, which preserves a field of lupines the neighbors wanted to keep looking at and also preserves a sledding hill. He is open to a proposal to graze sheep or goats among the solar panels.
- The array would be located in the designated growth area for East Montpelier village.
- It would be built over an area that has been designated as having septic capacity for six homes; limited septic capacity is a constraint on development in the village.
- The value to the town's grand list would be higher if houses were built on the lots—but the lots have remained unsold after ten years on the market.
- The array would be built with Vermont workers, and some consultation with German experts.
- The worst safety issue Mr. Lazar envisions is an electrical fire. He intends to contact the fire chief to talk about it.
- Once built, there will be three scheduled visits to the site a year, for mowing, equipment maintenance, and oversight.
- When asked what incentive the town has to endorse the project, Mr. Lazar said it would be to align itself with state energy goals.

The Planning Commission will also be discussing this project, according to PC chair Jean Vissering.

No action taken.

## **I. DISCUSSION ON POTENTIAL AMENDMENTS TO ZONING REGULATIONS AND NOVEMBER 30TH PUBLIC HEARING**

The hearing will go ahead as planned. The SB will meet immediately afterwards, as well.

## **J. DISCUSSION WITH RECREATION BOARD ON RECREATION FIELD TREE CLEARING PLAN AND BIDS**

Phillip Heinz said the Recreation Board has called around and received three bids for the clearing of the buckthorn and underbrush in the area between the recreation field and East Montpelier Elementary School.

One potential bidder was at the meeting and had not been contacted.

Of the three received bids, Mr. Heinz recommended Sylvan Tree Service: Good price, arborist mentality. Mr. Heinz, however, acknowledged that some potential bidders may not have received notice.

The SB asked Mr. Heinz to put the project out to bid more openly; he will work with Mr. Johnson to do so on Front Porch Forum. The SB directed Mr. Heinz to distribute to the bidders the (now public) information on previously received bids.

There will be a walk-through on Friday, with a bidding deadline 11/30. The SB will decide that night.

## **K. WARRANTS**

Signed.

## **L. MINUTES**

**Motion: I move to approve the minutes of November 2, 2015, as amended. Made: Mr. Troia.  
Second: Mr. Northrup. 5-0.**

## **M. OTHER BUSINESS**

*November 16th Installment #1 Property Tax Deadline*

The Town Treasurer provided an update on receipts, which were very comparable to last year.

*Town Party for Volunteers*

Mr. Gardner proposed a change in concept, location, and date. The SB agreed.

*Potential Request to Shift Selectboard Regular Meeting Timing*

Mr. Etnier has been elected to the Hunger Mountain Coop Council, which meets on the first Monday of each month. He spoke earlier with the SB about the possibility of moving the SB meetings to the 2nd and 4th Mondays, which the SB did not rule out. The SB prefers to maintain its longstanding tradition of 1st and 3rd Mondays; Mr. Etnier will attend the Council's organizing meeting on Dec. 7 and ask them to change the date they meet. He will notify the rest of the SB so they can act upon a potential request to move the date, if the Council opts to remain on the first Monday.

*VT Land Trust Conservation of Ormsbee Parcel*

The long-planned effort to conserve the 171-acre Ormsbee parcel on Center Road is now complete. Fairmont Farm now owns the bulk of the land; the Vermont Land Trust (VLT) owns the development rights for the entire parcel; the East Montpelier Trails Association has various trail easements.

The current warrant has the VLT request for the Selectboard-sanctioned \$15,000 payment from our Conservation Fund.

*EMES Planning Forum and Free Spaghetti Dinner*

The School Board invites townspeople to the November 18th event

*Central Vermont Community Solar Forum*

The Randolph Energy Committee invites town officials to the November 21st Randolph Center event

*Lake Champlain Phosphorus TMDL Requirements for Municipalities*

We have received a fact sheet laying out the requirements on municipalities in the coming years as the Department of Environmental Conservation develops the rules to implement H.35; the cost of the necessary stormwater permits is somewhat daunting

*Update on Park 'n Ride:*

Progress has been made on the WEC property purchase by VTrans for the town; it appears that a closing will be scheduled in the near future.

*December 3rd EMFD Budget Presentation*

TA Johnson will not be in attendance.

*Planning Commission Vacancy*

Advertised with November 19th deadline for submission of letter of interest to the PC.

*Caldwell Delinquent Tax Sale*

One third mile north of Powder Horn Glen Road on the west side of County Road.

Sale is set for Tuesday, December 1st, 10 a.m. at the town office.

Laundry tax sale (2726 Horn of the Moon Road) is still on hold as our attorney deals with the estate and probate aspects of the ownership interests.

*Meeting Schedule*

November 30th	7:00 pm	Public hearing on zoning regulation amendments at ESF; special SB meeting follows
December 3rd	7:00 pm	EMFD FY17 budget presentation at ESF
December 7th	6:30 pm	Regular SB meeting and joint budget meeting with Calais
December 21st	6:30 pm	Regular SB meeting

*Zoning Administrator Report*

On November 13th Mr. Clement and Ms. Buck applied for a permit to allow use of their Mays Way camper as a shed; site visit is scheduled for November 20th.

No Development Review Board meeting will be necessary in December.

**N. ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion: I move to adjourn. Made: Mr. Troia. Second: Mr. Northrup. 5-0. 9:44 pm.**