

# Minutes of the East Montpelier Selectboard

December 16, 2013

SB Members Present: Seth Gardner (Chair), Carl Etnier, Casey Northrup, Steve Sparrow, Kim Swasey

Others Present: Bruce Johnson (Town Administrator), Kristi Flynn (Recording Secretary), Don Welch, Erik Esselstyn, Sandy Conti, Patty Richard, Mike Garand

**Call to Order:** 6:36pm

**Additions to the Agenda:** None

**Public Comment:** Sandy Conti (Animal Control Officer) came to the SB to talk about some aggressive dogs owned by the Thornton/Kelly family on North Street. A towns person was bitten by one of the dogs on a trail west of Upper North Street. Mr. Conti will serve the owners with a citation and a fine. These three dogs have been bothering people and other dogs on North Street and the trail system.

## **Meet and Greet New WEC General Manager Patty Richards**

Ms. Richards came by to introduce herself to the SB. Topics that were discussed included:

- Net metering – WEC is at 10%, when the state cap is 4%; WEC will be an active participant in the upcoming legislative effort to tweak the existing net metering regulatory system
- WEC is very concerned about the limited amount of parking it owns/controls around its office building
- The proposed park 'n ride for the WEC garage property is moving forward; WEC will likely hear from VTrans soon regarding the potential purchase of that property on behalf of the town

## **Road Foreman Report – Mike Garand**

The Lo-Pro is at Clark's right now, it is leaking antifreeze; needs an EGR cooler and there is an issue with the turbo.

Mr. Garand presented a draft FY15 highway budget:

- Sand – restock the pile at end of season; the cost tends to be split over two fiscal years
- Weather reporting – the town now strictly uses Roger Hill
- Paving – Vincent Flats, Quaker Road and Gallison Hill; priority is Vincent Flats – shim/overlay might last 3 years; Mike will get solid numbers on the options
- Lo-Pro replacement - \$97,000 for new TerraStar, fully-loaded AWD, low-profile truck bed; a more durable 6-wheeler that is not AWD is \$125,000 with equipment; the trade-in value for the Lo-Pro is possibly \$27,000
- VTrans Structures Grant – the town will receive \$175,000 in grant money to rebuild the Bennett Brook Dodge Road culvert; needs to be reset in a full cradle with headwalls.

## **Consideration of Captain Kidd Road Layout as Class 3 Road**

The Selectboard approved the takeover of Captain Kidd Road as a Class 3 public road contingent on Developer Duane Wells providing an updated survey of the road and transferring title to the town. All the requested documents have been filed with the town clerk.

**Motion: I move to accept Captain Kidd Road as a Class 3 town highway as the road owner has provided an updated road survey and transferred clear & satisfactory title of the road to the town.** Made: Mr. Sparrow, second: Ms. Swasey

**Vote on Motion:** Passed 5-0

## **Consideration of Purchase of Replacement Town Pickup**

The Selectboard preliminarily approved the purchase of a 2013 GMC Sierra HD pickup along with the trade-in of the town's Chevrolet Silverado pickup as an unwarmed agenda addition at its special meeting on December 9, 2013.

**Motion: I move to accept the Purchase Agreement on the GMC Sierra truck.** Made: Mr. Northrup, second: Mr. Etnier

The Road Foreman noted that the town should consider adding a snow plow to the truck, possibly next year

**Vote on Motion:** Passed 5-0

## **Consideration of Grant of Revolving Loan Funds to Benefit the East Montpelier Senior Living Initiative (EMSLI)**

The Revolving Loan Advisory Committee recommended a grant of \$20,000 from the East Montpelier Revolving Loan Fund to allow EMSLI to do preliminary engineering and permitting work on the proposed senior housing facility to be located on the Cassani property off of US Route 2 across from the East Montpelier Home Center. The grant converts to a loan should the project comes to fruition.

**Motion: I move to offer the grant to EMSLI under the terms laid out in the Grant Agreement.** Made: Mr. Etnier, second: Mr. Sparrow

**Vote on Motion:** Passed 5-0

**Discussion of Possible 2014 Town Meeting Article on State Bank**

Mr. Esselstyn came to the SB for further discussion on the State Bank issue. Topics that were discussed included:

- King Arthur Flour vs Walmart models
- Study of potential impact of state bank in VT – study was independently funded
  - See <http://1wvofvt.org/Banking.html> , a League of Women Voters website with a link to the study and more information on the issue
- Vermonters can decide the loan priorities of the bank
- Bottom line – municipal money stays and works in VT
- Bank has influence on economic development, similar to VSAC, VEDA, etc.
- Loan liabilities – North Dakota state bank has lower default rate
- Smaller banks would flourish with support of state bank
- Concern – state will run banks, schools, etc., and politics will be involved

**Motion: I move that the SB put an advisory article regarding the creation of a state bank on the 2014 Town Meeting Warning, with the following language:**

Whereas the establishment of a Public Bank in Vermont will help towns reduce the local tax burden by offering low cost bonds for public works and a depository for their accounts with competitive interest,

Whereas a Public Bank that makes loans and investments in Vermont’s people and our economy will help create jobs, income, and economic security for all Vermonters,

We call on the State Legislature to create a Public Bank for Vermonters that enhances the work of the Vermont Economic Development Authority, the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation, the Vermont Housing Finance Agency, the Municipal Bond Bank, and Vermont chartered community banks and credit unions by accepting deposits from state and municipal governments and making loan programs available for students, homeowners, municipalities and enterprises to make Vermont economically stable, self-reliant, and successful.

Made: Mr. Etnier, second: Mr. Sparrow

**Vote on Motion:** Passed 5-0

**Consideration of Acceptance of Municipal Planning Grant**

The town received a 2014 state Municipal Planning Grant to develop fluvial erosion hazard regulations. The town intends to hire the Central VT Regional Planning Commission to assist the Planning Commission with this work.

**Motion: I move to authorize the Town Administrator to sign the Grant Agreement between the State of Vermont Department of Housing and Commercial development and the Town of East Montpelier.** Made: Ms. Swasey, second: Mr. Northrup

**Vote on Motion:** Passed 5-0

**Update on Conflict of Interest Ordinance and Town Charter**

Mr. Etnier has been in contact with some attorneys regarding language for the conflict of interest ordinance. The public hearing will be on 1/13/14.

**FY2015 Budget Development**

Paving is major element of the budget; \$280,000 is currently in the draft budget to complete the Selectboard’s accelerated repaving schedule; the 3 remaining roads (Gallison, Quaker, and Vincent Flats) will likely require more funding to fully repave. There was discussion of an alternate model for provision of property assessment services (essentially a combination of elected listers and a hired assessment professional); SB will continue to investigate. The EMFD budget is up slightly. The SB believes the town budget can be relatively level-funded. SB agreed to meet each Monday in January for budget discussions.

**Preliminary Review of 2014 Town Meeting Warning**

If the proposed town charter appears on the 2014 Town Meeting Warning, it will be voted on by Australian Ballot and copies of the document will be available in each voting booth. Similarly, if the proposed conflict of interest ordinance appears on the 2014 Town Meeting Warning, it will be voted on the floor and copies of the document will be available to all voters.

**Appointments**

Gene Troia has agreed to serve as the Acting Zoning Administrator for another year. The Acting ZA steps in when the ZA has a conflict, is on vacation, or is otherwise unavailable.

**Motion: I move to appoint Gene Troia as Acting Zoning Administrator.** Made: Mr. Northrup, second: Ms. Swasey

**Vote on Motion:** Passed 5-0

**Warrants**

Signed

**Treasurer's Report**

Treasurer Don Welch provided a current budget status report; the town is in very good financial shape.

**Review of Minutes**

December 2, 2013

**Motion: I move to approve the minutes as amended.** Made: Mr. Northrup, second: Mr. Sparrow

**Vote on Motion:** Passed 5-0

December 5, 2013

**Motion: I move to approve the minutes as presented.** Made: Mr. Sparrow, second: Mr. Etnier

**Vote on Motion:** Passed 5-0

December 9, 2013

**Motion: I move to approve the minutes as presented.** Made: Ms. Swasey, second: Mr. Etnier

**Vote on Motion:** Passed 5-0

**Other Business**

Town Administrator (TA) Report

- Employee Health Insurance – VLCT arranged for the town to enroll all employees (those who accepted the town's offer of health insurance) in the BCBS Platinum Plan effective January 1, 2014; no employee choice in 2014; Health Savings Accounts cannot be added to after December 31, 2013
- Jacobs Road curb cut request for Kaiman property – on 1/6/14 agenda
- Town Clerk's Office Holiday Schedule update – 12/24 close at noon, 12/25-12/27 closed, 12/31 close at 2 pm, 1/1 closed; employees are operating on regular schedule with December 25<sup>th</sup> and January 1<sup>st</sup> off
- Reminder for VT Public Records & Open Meeting Laws webinar
- Review of November VT State Police report
- Upcoming schedule –
  - 1/6 – SB Regular meeting; 6:30 pm at town office
  - 1/6 – Mike Liff meeting with Mr. Gardner and Mr. Sparrow; 1 pm at Liff residence
  - 1/13 – Hearings on charter and conflict of interest & SB special meeting following; 6 pm at ESF
  - 1/20 – SB Regular meeting; 6:30 pm at town office
  - 1/27 – SB Special meeting (Warning approval); 6:30 pm at town office

Zoning Administrator Report

- One new permit – Twin Valley Senior Center at Blueberry Hill Commons

End of Month Warrant

**Motion: I move to authorize the Chair to sign the end of month warrant.** Made: Mr. Etnier, second: Ms. Swasey

**Vote on Motion:** Passed 4-0, Chair recused himself

**Motion to adjourn.** Made by Mr. Sparrow; seconded by Ms. Swasey. Passed 5-0. Meeting adjourned at 9:55 pm.

*Respectfully submitted by Kristi Flynn, Recording Secretary*

**Approved: January 7, 2014 East Montpelier Selectboard meeting**