

East Montpelier Selectboard Meeting APPROVED (08/20/18) MINUTES
August 6, 2018 at the Town Office

Selectboard (SB) members present: Carl Etnier (recording secretary), Seth Gardner, Kim Swasey, Gene Troia, Amy Willis; Bruce Johnson (town and zoning administrator, collector of delinquent taxes).

Others present: Treasurer Don Welch; state senate candidate Andrew Perchlik

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Seth Gardner called the meeting to order at 6:36 p.m.

Additions to the agenda
Vermont Land Trust Offer
Park and Ride Update

Review of Minutes: July 23, 2018

Motion: I move to approve the minutes of July 23, 2018 as submitted. Made: Ms. Swasey. Second: Ms. Willis. 5-0.

Public comment
None

B. CONVERSATION WITH VERMONT SENATE CANDIDATE ANDREW PERCHLIK

Mr. Perchlik described his history with town government and as a member of the fire department in Marshfield, and he discussed with the SB various local issues that have or could come before the legislature.

C. SETTING OF THE 2018/2019 PROPERTY TAX RATES

Treasurer Don Welch presented an unaudited budget report from the end of FY2018. The unaudited fund balance for the year is at \$85,203. The auditors will be doing their work next week.

The Grand list is rounded to \$3,034,000.00, which is up \$35,000 (1.2%) from last year. The reason for the rounding is the expected loss of grand list value as adjustments are made to the grand list in the coming weeks; the actual number right now is \$3,034,595.44.

The resident (homestead) tax rate is calculated at: 2.5329; up 0.0284 (1.1%) from last year
The non-resident tax rate is calculated at: 2.2599; up 0.0407 (1.8%) from last year

The SB at this point has no choices to make that would affect tax rates; its role is to ratify calculations of the tax rates based on previous decisions made by town voters (in approving the FY2019 municipal budget), Town Listers (in maintaining the grand list), the board itself when it makes fund balance allocations, and at the state level (education tax determinations).

Motion: I move to set the 2018/2019 property tax rates at 2.5329 for resident (homestead) properties and 2.2599 for non-resident properties. Made: Mr. Etnier. Second: Ms. Willis. 5-0.

D. CONSIDERATION OF HOMESTEAD FILING PENALTY WAIVER

State law allows the town to assess an 8% penalty for residents who file their homestead declaration late. Or it may waive the penalty for everyone. There are also certain hardship exemptions.

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 at all 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; and, 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.

Selectboard members 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: Mr. Etnier. Second: Mr. Troia. 5-0.

E. REVIEW OF TREASURER'S FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Mr. Welch presented a Financial Management Questionnaire that he fills out annually in response to a legislative mandate. The form calls for a signature to acknowledge the SB has received it.

The SB discussed the new measures in place for town handling of Recreation Board finances.

Motion: I move to authorize the Chair to sign the questionnaire. Made: Mr. Troia. Second: Ms. Swasey. 5-0.

F. DISCUSSION ON FUTURE CAPITAL PROJECTS QUESTIONNAIRE

The Capital Improvements Committee (CIC) has called for ideas for projects that it could consider for adding to the capital budget. The goal is to anticipate major funding needs and have some reserves to address them, so they do not need to be financed entirely through bonds or one-time spikes in tax rates.

The only response to the May 24, 2018 call came from Planning Commission (PC) chair Julie Potter. Ms. Potter said the PC would like to see the capital budget include money for future village water and/or wastewater systems, as identified in the Town Plan.

The SB declined to ask the CIC to act on the request. The SB sees water and wastewater issues in the village as identified problems, without associated plans, current work to create plans, or signs of a champion who is willing to do that work. Furthermore, some future village infrastructure work could potentially be funded through the Opportunity Fund, which the Town is currently adding \$20,000 to annually. And the Capital Reserve Fund is healthy.

The SB discussed the Town Garage, which could benefit from work in the next five years including improving the heating system and insulation. Mr. Gardner filled out the CIC's new-project questionnaire and submitted it to CIC member Gene Troia.

Ms. Swasey gave Mr. Troia a list of projects the SB has talked about, or which she thinks would be helpful to the town, and which are not currently in the capital budget.

The CIC issues its call for ideas annually and is disappointed at the general paucity of responses.

G. DISCUSSION ON PROPOSED GRAND LIST ARCHIVE PRESERVATION PROJECT

The state requires the town to retain old grand list materials in perpetuity. Town Clerk Rosie Laquerre has received a quote for the preservation of the grand list materials in the vault: \$63,000 to protect the pre-1987 lists.

It is not clear to the SB what use old grand lists are to anyone. The SB declined to take action on preserving the grand list materials.

Land records, on the other hand, are used often, and the SB views preserving old land records as an important project. The SB previously considered, but did not authorize the addition of past years to the town's computerized land records system, which only reaches back to December 2000. The SB may want to consider a

committee to examine the land records needs. For all the town's old land records, the cost would be approximately \$200,000 to fully digitize and index them.

The SB took no action at this time other than directing TA Johnson to see to the repair of the broken land record book, Vol. 26.

H. CONSIDERATION OF EASEMENT OVER TOWN-OWNED HUDSON PARCEL TO ALLOW CRYSTAL SPRINGS WATERLINE RELOCATION

As part of the EM Village sidewalk project, the cross-US Rte. 2 culvert running from the Rolland property to the town-owned Hudson parcel needs to be replaced. Prior to the replacement, the Crystal Springs waterline on the east side (Hudson parcel side) needs to be relocated onto the town property. A formal easement from the town to benefit the water system is required.

Motion: I move to authorize the Town Administrator to sign the warranty deed of easement for Crystal Springs. Made: Mr. Troia. Second: Ms. Swasey. 5-0.

I. CONSIDERATION OF EASEMENT OVER TOWN-OWNED HUDSON PARCEL TO ALLOW CONSTRUCTION OF VTRANS CROSS-US ROUTE 2 CULVERT REPLACEMENT PROJECT

This is another element of the culvert replacement: VTrans has taken over responsibility from the town for the project and, hence, needs right-of-way permission from the town and a waiver of any compensatory payments for the part of the Hudson parcel affected by the culvert project. Much of the same territory will be used by the town for the sidewalk project's drainage components. VTrans is not asking for formal paperwork, just permission from the SB in meeting minutes.

The SB acknowledges that the State and their contractor may, in conformance with the culvert project design plans, access any Town-controlled East Montpelier Village property reasonably needed for the culvert project and that the Town waives its right to just compensation.

J. DISCUSSION ON VCRD VERMONT COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

The Vermont Council on Rural Development is offering one free slot at the October 1 Vermont Community Leadership Summit for a Selectboard-recommended established or emerging community leader.

Alice Dworkin, a recently appointed member of the Development Review Board, is an emerging leader whom the SB would like to encourage by offering this slot to her. Mr. Etnier will approach her.

K. ACCESS PERMIT

Permit 18-032, 139 Daggett Road

The Coburn family is looking at subdividing off a building lot for family use at its compound at 139 Daggett Road. A previously established curb cut (03-071) will be used, so the application is for a shift from single to multi-residential use; Road Foreman Perry recommends approval.

Motion: I move to approve access permit 18-032. Made: Mr. Etnier. Second: Ms. Willis. 5-0.

L. VERMONT LAND TRUST (VLT) OFFER TO PRESENT AN UPDATE

Britt Haselton of the VLT recently sent the SB a letter and map describing the current status of the second conservation project planned for Fairmont Dairy (the Fairmont Farm offshoot that owns the Rappaport/Lylehaven properties). The Town had previously objected to the VLT about receiving too little information, too late in the process, in connection with the first conservation project at Fairmont Dairy. On this new project, VLT has already met with the PC twice. In this latest communication to the SB, Mr. Haselton also offered to meet with the SB to present an update in person.

The SB appreciates the timely and abundant information from VLT and asks TA Johnson to invite Mr. Haselton to a SB meeting this fall.

M. PARK AND RIDE UPDATE

The Park and Ride in the village was opened earlier this year. However, VTrans and the town have not been able to issue the construction contractor a final acceptance of this project because of significant variances between the as-built conditions and the plans and specifications for the project. VTrans and the town consider both the contractor and the consultant inspector responsible for remediating the deficiencies. VTrans has drafted and signed an order from itself and the town, ordering both parties to submit for approval the existing as-built conditions and a mutually acceptable corrective action plan by August 20, 2018. A signature from the town is required.

Motion: I move to authorize the Town Administrator to sign Written Order No. 1 regarding the Park and Ride, to Richard Seymour of John Turner Consulting and Chip Percy of Dale Percy Inc. Made: Ms. Swasey. Second: Mr. Troia. 5-0

The contractor has now closed the Park and Ride to public use and has been observed doing work at the site.

N. WARRANTS

Signed.

O. OTHER BUSINESS

Town Administrator Report

Update on *Smith v. Montpelier and East Montpelier*, a lawsuit regarding ambulance service to a specific East Montpelier residence: The case against Montpelier has been dismissed; the judge found the city owed no duty to a non-resident. East Montpelier was not a part of Montpelier's motion to dismiss, but the town has submitted its own motion to dismiss, and other motions; the judge has not yet issued a decision on those motions.

Road Project Updates

The Quaker Road culvert replacement is underway; the road is closed through August 24, 2018.

The VT Rte. 14 S temporary bridge will be closed August 8-10 and again during the week of August 13 mid-week for four days.

Meeting Schedule:

August 20	6:00 pm	Recreation Field site visit
	6:30 pm	Regular Selectboard meeting
September 10	6:30 pm	"Special" regular Selectboard meeting
October 1	6:30 pm	Regular Selectboard meeting

Zoning Administrator Report

There have been two new applications since the July 23 SB meeting; 33 total so far this year.

The next Development Review Board meeting is scheduled for August 7, 2018, with two formal hearings and three reviews. The first hearing: Washington County Mental Health Services is proposing to change the use of its group home parcel at 225 VT Rte. 14 S to a maintenance/office facility, removing the existing structures and constructing a nearly 12,000 sq. ft. building. The second hearing involves the re-establishment of a used car sales and service use on the Crossroads Garage parcel, 2952 US Route 2.

P. ADJOURNMENT

Motion: I move to adjourn. Made: Ms. Willis. Second: Mr. Troia. 5-0.

The meeting adjourned at 8:26 pm.