

**East Montpelier Selectboard Meeting APPROVED (09/23/19) MINUTES  
September 9, 2019 at the Town Office**

**Selectboard (SB) members present:** Carl Etnier (recording secretary), Seth Gardner, Amy Willis; Bruce Johnson (town and zoning administrator).

**Others present:** Karen Horn, Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT); Kimberly Jessup, state representative; Paul Erlbaum, Lindy Johnson, Jeanne Malachowski, Kate Rader, Funding Request Study Committee.

**A. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Seth Gardner called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.

*Additions to the agenda*

Town Generator

PC Appointment

*Review of Minutes*

**Motion: I move to approve the minutes of August 19, 2019 as submitted. Made: Mr. Etnier. Second: Ms. Willis. 3-0.**

*Public comment*

*None*

**B. CONVERSATION WITH KAREN HORN, DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC POLICY & ADVOCACY FOR VLCT, VERMONT LEAGUE OF CITIES AND TOWNS**

A long-standing part of VLCT's legislative agenda has been for the state to allow more local decision making. Ms. Horn reported on progress towards that goal with the bill S.106, limited self-governance legislation modeled on a pilot program in West Virginia. While the bill passed the senate 21-8, it was amended to exclude so many areas of governance that advocates questioned the benefits of passing it in its current form. Moving forward in the January session, VLCT is considering whether to push for passage of a stronger version of S.106 in the House or to adopt a different strategy, e.g., pushing large numbers of charter changes at town meetings and/or making local decision making an election issue.

She also mentioned a resolution in support of self-governance, which has passed in a number of municipalities.

The SB discussed pros and cons of greater local self-governance. A key question was whether municipalities would have access to experts like the legislature's Legislative Council to draft ordinances or charter changes and evaluate their consequences.

Among the other issues Ms. Horn presented was that VLCT is looking at possible new models for emergency medical services in the future, with the number of volunteers declining.

The SB decided to put the resolution in support of self-governance on the agenda for next meeting and vote on it when all five members are present.

**C. DESIGNATION OF TOWN DELEGATE TO 2019 VLCT ANNUAL MEETING**

The annual meeting will be October 2, 2019 in Killington.

**Motion: I move to designate Carl Etnier the East Montpelier delegate to the VLCT annual meeting. Made: Ms. Willis. Second: Mr. Gardner. 3-0**

#### **D. CONVERSATION WITH FUNDING REQUEST STUDY COMMITTEE**

The Funding Request Study Committee (FRSC) reviews requests from civic organizations for town funding, for a vote on town meeting day. The application packet will go out to 35+ organizations by September 27 with a due date of October 25. The committee will present its recommendations to the SB at the December 16 board meeting.

The total funding recommended last year was \$23,691, which is close to the cap of \$25,000 for appropriation articles with a floor vote (as opposed to Australian ballot). At least one currently unfunded organization is already expected to apply for FY21 funding.

Last year the SB decided to fully remove Central Vermont Home Health and Hospice from the committee process, joining other organizations with requests significantly larger than the median: Montpelier Senior Activity Center, the Kellogg-Hubbard Library, and Green Mountain Transit. These organizations will present requests directly to the SB on December 16, 2019.

The SB thanked FRSC members for taking on the job of vetting these organizations and looks forward to seeing their recommendations on December 16. In response to a question about how to handle late applications, the SB encouraged the committee to ignore applications that came in too late to give sufficient consideration before their first meeting after the deadline.

The town will especially encourage new organizations and organizations asking for increases to show up at the FRSC meeting and talk to them about the request.

#### **E. ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER (ACO) REPORT**

Mr. Etnier submitted a report about what he and Assistant ACO Amber Perry have done and learned in their work. One question for the SB is updating local animal control ordinances. There are two, and they overlap in subject matter, which can lead to confusion. He will make recommendations on consolidating the ordinances.

Also, he is currently required to impound stray dogs with an unknown owner for 10 days before turning them over to the Central Vermont Humane Society (CVHS). He would prefer to turn the dogs over to CVHS immediately. The town has no impoundment facilities other than the ACOs home; CVHS is well equipped to board the dogs and to use social media to find the owner. They board the animal for three days before making the dog available for adoption. The SB is amenable to amending the ordinance to allow this method of handling strays; Mr. Etnier will research whether it is consistent with statute.

#### **F. DISCUSSION ON TRAFFIC FLOW AT US RTE 2/VT RTE 14 S INTERSECTION**

There has been some concern expressed regarding recent signal timing issues at the new intersection resulting in significant traffic backups northbound on US Route 2. A letter from a local driver described a number of incidents of long backups. Mr. Johnson reported the problems described in the letter were already fixed and that when the lights have malfunctioned at other times, VTrans has responded rapidly to complaints, usually fixing the problem within 24 hours.

#### **G. DISCUSSION ON SUBMISSION OF RECREATION FIELD SHED ZONING PERMIT APPLICATION**

In 2015 the town, at the request of the Recreation Board, received approval from the Development Review Board (DRB) to move the existing shed/concession stand at the recreation field to a new location. The project was never completed, and the permit has expired. As part of the ongoing entrance upgrade project, the Recreation Board is once again requesting an approved shed location, this time the plan is to demolish the existing shed and install a pre-built 24'x12' shed, using funding from the \$17,000 approved by the SB last October for the entrance upgrade project.

**Motion: I move to authorize the town administrator to sign and submit the application for the recreation field shed to the Development Review Board. Made: Mr. Etnier. Second: Ms. Willis. 3-0.**

## **H. CONSIDERATION OF WEC FACTORY STREET LINE EXTENSION REQUEST**

Washington Electric Co-op is requesting permission to install a pole and run a line over Factory Street to benefit a new single-family residence under construction at 830 Factory. The pole and line are on and over town right-of-way, respectively, and the work will include cutting, trimming, and chipping trees and brush in the right-of-way.

**Motion: I move to authorize Washington Electric Co-op to install a pole and run a line over Factory Street to benefit a new single-family residence under construction at 830 Factory, in accordance with the permit application and its associated restrictions and conditions. Made: Ms. Willis. Second: Mr. Etnier 3-0.**

## **I. PRESENTATION OF FEEDBACK FOR PLANNING COMMISSION ZONING UPDATE PROJECT**

The SB read a letter from resident Kirby Scarborough with a critique of elements in draft revisions to the zoning ordinance.

## **J. APPOINTMENTS**

The SBs earlier appointments to a Town Garage Facility Improvements Committee inadvertently omitted an interested resident with appropriate skills.

**Motion: I move to appoint Casey Northrup to the Town Garage Facility Improvements Committee. Made: Mr. Etnier. Second: Ms. Willis. 3-0.**

The term for the town representative to the Wrightsville Beach Recreation District expires at the end of the month; the new term runs October 1, 2019 to September 30, 2022. No candidate has expressed interest in the position. Mr. Etnier will investigate whether the current representative is interested in continuing.

There is a vacancy on the Planning Commission (PC): the remainder of Jay Stewart's term, through Town Meeting Day 2020. The PC recommends Clarice Cutler, who is a current member of the DRB and the PC's zoning update project steering committee.

**Motion: I move to appoint Clarice Cutler to the vacant position on the Planning Commission, to serve the remainder of the term, until Town Meeting Day 2020. Made: Mr. Etnier. Second: Ms. Willis. 3-0**

## **K. CONSIDERATION OF TOWN OFFICE GENERATOR QUOTES**

Quotes have been provided by Brook Field Service and Bushey's Generator Sales & Service. Both recommended propane. Neither quote includes any cost to provide the propane service. The sizing of the generator was based on past electricity usage, with the idea that a generator would supply all electricity needed to run the town office, except for a future heat pump; heat during a power outage would be provided by the current oil boiler, which will be retained.

Brook Field Services bid was for a 10 kW Briggs & Stratton Fortress with auto transfer switch, with a 6-year warranty, for \$6,869 including electrical work. Optional items:

- Snow stand (\$385)
- Surge protector (\$195)
- Service Plan 1 (annual service) \$365
- Plan 2 (semi-annual) \$577

Bushey's Generator Sales & Services bid was for a 12 kW Briggs & Stratton Fortress with upgraded auto transfer switch, with a 10-year warranty, for \$5,200 plus an estimated \$1,300-\$1,500 for electrical; the bid includes a snow stand. Optional items:

- Surge protector \$150
- Service (1 level; twice a year) \$385/year

The SB noted that while the bids are similarly priced, the Busheys bid includes a significantly longer warranty.

**Motion: I move to accept the bid from Bushey's Generator Sales & Service. Made: Mr. Etnier. Second: Ms. Willis. 3-0**

#### L. WARRANTS

Signed.

#### M. OTHER BUSINESS

##### *Town Administrator Report*

Town Office IT Work: We're on the far side of the project. New server and workstations are up and running. We are still working through an issue checklist, with no significant problems at all. Meanwhile, both old and new systems continue to operate; the hope is that the changeover will be complete by the end of the month.

##### *Meeting Schedule*

September 23, 2019	6:30 p.m.	Selectboard special meeting
October 2 & 3, 2019	All day	VLCT Town Fair, Killington
October 7, 2019	6:30 p.m.	Selectboard regular meeting
October 21, 2019	6:30 p.m.	Selectboard regular meeting

##### *Zoning Administrator Report*

There has been one new application since the August 19 SB meeting, with 45 applications so far in 2019.

The next DRB meeting is October 1, 2019; the town recreation field shed project is targeted for this meeting.

#### K. ADJOURNMENT

**Motion: I move to adjourn. Made: Ms. Willis. Second: Mr. Etnier. 3-0.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:38 pm.