

**Selectboard Memo**  
**December 21, 2020 SB Meeting**

**Additions to Agenda**

➤ **Discussion on January 7, 2021 Delinquent Tax Sale**

- The tax sale for the Thomas property is scheduled for January 7<sup>th</sup>; the town needs to decide whether it intends to be the default bidder for this property; if so, the board should formally authorize TA Johnson, as delinquent tax collector, to bid
- The unusual aspect with this sale is that the property in question is an unlanded 1987 Skyline Cameron mobile home located at 127 Sandy Pines Road in the Sandy Pines Mobile Home Park
- When this issue came up the last time this property came up for tax sale in January 2018, the board authorized the town to bid despite the likelihood that the town would lose money if the home was not redeemed; the board felt it was important to send a clear message that the town wants to be fair to all its taxpayers by ending situations of chronic non-payment; the delinquency was satisfied prior to the sale date

**Budget Discussion: Green Mountain Transit (GMT) and Rural Community Transportation (RCT) Commuter Bus Routes**

**Jenn Wood, GMT Public Affairs & Community Relations Manager**  
**Lila Bennett, RCT Community Relations Manager**

- RCT is taking over the bulk of the US2 Commuter responsibilities and so the majority of the normal \$8,333 request (\$6,833.06) is going to RCT, with \$1,499.94 to GMT; RCT is also requesting the same \$1,000 it received this year for the Route 14/15 Commuter
- Total request between the two organizations is \$9,333 for FY2022, no net change from FY2021
- Bottom line purpose of discussion is to determine if board will allow the requested articles to be placed on the 2021 Town Meeting Warning

**Budget Discussion: Central VT Home Health & Hospice**

**Sandy Rouse, CVHHH President & CEO**  
**Kim Farnum, CVHHH Director of Community Relations & Development**

- CVHHH is requesting \$6,000 for FY2022, no change from FY2021
- Bottom line purpose of discussion is to determine if board will allow the requested article to be placed on the 2021 Town Meeting Warning

**Budget Discussion: Montpelier Senior Activity Center**

**Janna Clar, MSAC Director**  
**Becca Jordan, Communications & Development Coordinator, Montpelier Community Services Department**

- MSAC is requesting \$9,000 for FY2022, no change from FY2021
- Bottom line purpose of discussion is to determine if board will allow the requested article to be placed on the 2021 Town Meeting Warning

**Budget Discussion: Kellogg-Hubbard Library**

**Carolyn Brennan, KHL Co-Director, Library Director**  
**Jennifer Myka, Town Representative**

- KHL is requesting \$42,022 for FY2022, no change from FY2021
- Bottom line purpose of discussion is to determine if board will allow the requested article to be placed on the 2021 Town Meeting Warning

### **Budget Discussion: Twin Valley Seniors, Inc.**

**Rita Copeland, Executive Director of Twin Valley Seniors**

**Susan Crampton, Twin Valley Seniors Board Member**

- Twin Valley Seniors is requesting \$5,000 for FY2022, no change from FY2021
- Bottom line purpose of discussion is to determine if board will allow the requested article to be placed on the 2021 Town Meeting Warning

### **Presentation of Funding Request Study Committee Report**

- Changes from the FY2021 appropriations:
  - Project Independence (closed its doors June 1, 2020) and RCT (separate article) removed from the article; there are no new organizations this year
  - The committee directed extra funding to three organizations on the front lines of the pandemic: Good Samaritan Haven (up \$150 to \$900); Onion River Food Shelf (up \$200 to \$1,200); and, People's Health & Wellness Clinic (up \$500 to \$1,750; \$250 was requested and an extra \$250 added)
  - Central VT Habitat for Humanity (to \$350) and Winooski Natural Resources Conservation District (to \$600) both received \$100 increases
- Total \$21,466, down 0.3% from last year's \$21,541 – with RCT removed from the process
- If comfortable, board should accept report and set a funding request article for 2022 Town Meeting at the stated appropriation level

### **Presentation of FY2023 Capital Improvement Committee Plan**

- Capital Improvement Committee is presenting an updated, for FY2022, plan for anticipated capital expenditures over the foreseeable future; despite increased annual cost expectations over time (\$8,900/yr), the committee is recommending no increase to the Capital Reserve Fund budget line (\$446,634) for FY2022; the plan anticipates adding that \$8,900 to the budget line starting in FY2023
- If comfortable, board should adopt plan

### **Presentation of FY2020 Financial Audit**

- Final FY2020 external audit has been received & posted to website as statutorily required; two "material weakness" items are noted, dealing with how the town presented information to the auditors revolving around timing elements of grants with respect to invoices and deferred revenue; there are two repeat recommendations that the town conduct a fraud risk assessment and develop documentation of its internal control systems

### **Discussion on FY2022 Budget Development**

- At this point the draft budget anticipates a 2.9% increase overall (1.67 cent increase in the municipal tax rate):
  - Revenues down just under 1% due to the normal decrease in the Calais bond interest payment and a decrease in expected interest income (drop from \$3k to \$1k)
  - Expenses up 2.2%, driven by the \$25,000 net increase in the EMFD lines, \$15,000 for ash tree management expenses and a 7.4% increase in the funding request articles; there remain some unknowns, such as the Washington County dues and the Rec Board & Cemetery Committee requests as well as the highway lines
- The highway budget aspect will be discussed at the January 11, 2020 board meeting
- The Calais Selectboard has not yet approved the proposed EMFD FY2022 operating budget requests for fire and ambulance service; apparently this will be taken up at its December 28, 2020 board meeting

### **Discussion on 2021 Town Meeting Warning**

- Request figures have been added for most of the normal financial articles; it appears that there will be no push for a Conservation Fund item, but still waiting for final confirmation from the Conservation Fund Advisory Committee
- Once again no changes have been included for an all-Australian Ballot concept; town forum, which would take on added importance if we go all-Australian Ballot, remains listed as a Saturday before town meeting event
- There is draft legislation expected to be taken up by the legislature early in January that would provide additional options for holding town meeting-like events
- The draft warning includes potential articles still under consideration:
  - The shift of the constable from an elected to an appointed position; and,
  - The inclusion of a tax payment protocol concept
    - Depending on what the board might want to include in such a protocol, this item may not be needed

### **Consideration of Ash Tree Management Grant Agreement**

- The town applied for a second round of funding from the VT Department of Forests, Parks & Recreation grant program designed to fuel proactive ash tree management to deal with the threat of the emerald ash borer; the town received \$15,000 for a pilot project around U-32 and the Gallison Hill Road area earlier this year; for the second round the town requested \$15,000 for a tree removal project along County Road; we were awarded \$5,000 due to the limited funds available and the much larger pool of applicants this time around; at the request of the program administrator, due to the smaller-than-requested awarded, the Resilient Roads Committee tweaked the scope of work to encompass a smaller section of County Road
- If the board is comfortable with the grant under this revised scope of work, it should authorize TA Johnson to complete the acceptance paperwork

### **Consideration of Recreation Field Ice Rink Operations Policy**

- Selectboard members conditionally approved the concept of an ice rink at the recreation field this winter at its November 16<sup>th</sup> meeting; from the minutes:
  - **By consensus the Selectboard authorized the Recreation Board to pursue this opportunity subject to the requirement that the Rec Board adopt a set of use and maintenance guidelines, including elements covering Covid-19 restrictions, for the operation of the rink that incorporate the advice received from the town's insurer (the VT League of Cities and Towns) and are acceptable to the Selectboard in advance of opening the rink for use.**
- The Recreation Board has provided a set of guidelines that essentially track the guidance document from VLCT, including wording for signage; the rink is installed but not yet flooded

### **Discussion on Town Management in Light of COVID-19**

- Standard statement: There have been no changes since the board's last meeting; the town office remains closed to the public, with researchers/attorneys allowed to access vault materials under the terms originally set up before all in-person actions were banned – one at a time and only by appointment from Town Clerk Laquerre; mandated protocols (masks; health survey; etc.) are in effect for such appointments
- Governor Scott extended the state of emergency to January 15, 2021
- There continues to be chatter about formal mutual aid agreements for highway maintenance; central VT municipalities appear to be coming down on the side of informal arrangements between neighboring towns, essentially as we currently operate

### **Access Permits: 20-053, Curb Cut, Brown Subdivision Lot 2, Factory Street**

- Laura Brown, long time resident at 3205 VT Rte. 14 N, is subdividing her 16.15-acre parcel on the north side of North Montpelier Pond; the intent is to sell Lot 1 of 11.5 acres and existing house while retaining a 4.65-acre building lot along Factory Street
- Road Foreman Perry reviewed the site and recommends approval with the understanding that he be allowed to review the access installations plans prior to construction as there may be an opportunity for the town to work with the landowner to create a better drainage scheme for that part of Factory Street
- If comfortable, board should approve curb cut and authorize Chair Gardner to sign the permit on behalf of the board

### **Warrants**

#### **➤ December 21, 2020 Regular Warrant for Approval**

- Just like other recent warrants, this evening's regular warrant needs to be approved as normal, which generally is shown by a quorum of board member signatures; given our current limitations, the board should once again approve the warrant and authorize Chair Gardner to sign to that effect

### **Town Administrator Report**

- Update on Highway Equipment
  - Sidewalk tractor/snowblower apparatus has successfully handled sweeping of two small, dry snowfalls, and snowblowing of the 4" snow event last week and yesterday/today's slush cleanup
  - The International 6-wheeler is still undergoing tests; unsure of any timeline for return to service; Road Foreman Perry continues to look for alternatives in advance of the expected Christmas storm (anticipated icing issues)
- Update on AT&T Cell Tower Proposal:
  - AT&T has formally submitted the agreement with the town for a minimum 120-day advance notice period from the November 12, 2020 initial filing
  - The public information meeting hosted by the town has been rescheduled to Thursday, January 14, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.
  - The Public Utility Commission approved the 30-day advance notice extension requested by the town – rendered somewhat unnecessary by the subsequent agreement with AT&T
- Meeting Schedule:

○ January 11, 2021	6:30 pm	Selectboard "special" (rescheduled) regular meeting
○ January 14, 2021	7:00 pm	AT&T cell tower public information meeting
○ January 18, 2021	6:30 pm	Selectboard regular meeting
○ January 25, 2021	6:30 pm	Selectboard special meeting

### **Zoning Administrator Report**

- 2 new applications since the December 7<sup>th</sup> SB meeting; 53 total applications in 2020
- The next DRB meeting is scheduled for January 5, 2021; one warned hearing for a 2-lot subdivision of the Brown property located at 3205 VT Rte. 14 N