

Minutes for the East Montpelier Selectboard

DRAFT

Oct 7, 2024, Selectboard Meeting Minutes – Draft

6:29 p.m. Call to Order

In Person Attendees: Seth Gardner, Tom Brazier, Scott Hess, Carl Etnier, Zoe Christiansen, Fire Chief Albert Petrella, Thomas Parker, Rosie Laquerre, & Jennifer Devine

Remote Attendees: Deb Fillion, David Delcore (Media)

Additions to the Agenda EMFD Request for Ambulance & Lister Request a Change to the Grand List and Selectboard to Sign the Error and Omission Form

Review of the Sept 9 and 27, 2024 Minutes

- Moving forward a request was made to use “unanimously” instead of “unanimous” in future meeting minutes
- Moving forward a request was made to include the person who is seconding the motions in future meeting minutes
- **Sept 9, 2024 Minutes Accepted Unanimously**
- **Sept 23, 2024 Minutes Accepted Unanimously**

Public Comment: No public comment

Town Clerk Discussed Building and Election Security

- The Secretary of State's office has been emphasizing security and safety, specifically this year, moving forward, due to several factors, mostly because of election security itself, the scrutiny that's being used on these elections, the way that people are behaving around the country with these elections.
- Town Clerk Training recently handed out Narcan if there is a foreign substance of any kind in ballots that have been sealed and mailed to us, so the office will make new protocols for opening election mail.
- The Center for Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, which is a part of Homeland Security, offers free walkthroughs to make recommendations. So The Town Clerk had a security walkthrough at the municipal office and the school because that's our official polling place for election days. We are not required to do anything that they recommend, but they want to give us recommendations.
- The Town Clerk is having the Vermont State Police coming to make recommendations as well because we have evidence of drug activity across the road on occasion.
- The Town Clerk was given a \$5,000 grant for election security and election supplies which will be used to implement some of these recommendations.

Some Security and Safety Recommendations Include:

1. Install cameras with monitors. The town is required to have a camera on the ballot box, and we currently do not. It's either supposed to be in the Town Clerk's line of sight or on a camera. We need to do this to become compliant with the use of a drop box. Otherwise, we either need to remove the drop box completely, or it must be reconfigured to a different spot.
2. Install a front lobby window barrier for safety and security.
3. Update our keypad codes for locking the outer front and back doors. We've had the same codes for seven years or more. We have found the front door unlocked before. There has been turnover over the last two and a half years. It would be free to update these codes. So, the Selectboard agrees to update the codes and provide individual codes.
4. The Town Clerk plans to discuss the pros and cons of panic buttons with the Trooper and get their opinion. Panic buttons can be programmed so they're good within 60 feet of the building, so if you accidentally wear it home, you're not going to cause an emergency call.
5. For Election Day it would cost \$1,200 to have Washington County Sheriffs there for the whole day, for 12 hours. The Selectboard felt a camera would make sense for Election Day and to also have The EMFD present there as well. The Town Clerk prefers to ask people from the ambulance or the fire department to see if they want to volunteer at the polls and they can park fire truck out front and/or to piggyback on whatever the protocol is at the school already.

Oct 12th Town Garage Harvest Fest Discussion

- There will be an informational meeting/presentation, free lunch and pie contest starting Saturday at 10:00am.
- We need to include on the town's website banner the Oct 12 Harvest Fest ASAP, in addition to the Nov 2nd event, with a direct link to the town garage webpage.
- We can open the pie contest up to all desserts and there is a barbeque available at the school and we will have burgers, rolls from Manghis' Bread, water, cider, condiments, local or Dunkin coffee. The Town Clerk is coordinating the event at the school.
- Zoe will bring a promotion poster to the municipal office.
- The Selectboard discussed the logistics of the event, including food, drinks, and other supplies such as paper products.

FEMA Horn of the Moon Long Term Fix RFP for Design and Engineering Piece

- The Selectboard said they want to see the RFP for engineering and design and then they can approve it once they see the RFP, but construction would happen next year.

EMFD Requested Approval to Purchase a New Ambulance

- The Fire Chief, Albert Petrella, said the goal is to try to replace the ambulances at 15 years of age. He plans to convert the existing ambulance to a utility vehicle instead of taking the \$10k offer.

- The Fire Chief would like to purchase a \$286,000 new ambulance and it would be a 7-year loan. EMFD is coming off a loan now so a new loan would take its place. The \$100,000 down payment would come out of the EMFD capital reserve. Albert Petrella said this is a good price.
- The Selectboard mentioned that undercoating is important to do on a new truck so there is no rust.
- The Selectboard stated that in the past the ambulance revenue was supposed to fund everything for the building, but that did not work out.
- EMFD also needs Calais to approve it.
- The Selectboard approved the Fire Chief to purchase a new ambulance.
- Thomas Brazier Moved, Carl Etnier Second, Unanimously Approved**

Grand List Error and Omissions Form

- A double wide burned to the ground so there was a tax abatement hearing. Brianna Lane, the owner has not paid her taxes yet so it is not too late to amend the grand list by \$50,000 taken off the value of her property. Lister, Deb Fillion did a site visit to the property to confirm.
- The Selectboard approved amending the grand list.
- Scott Hess Moved, Zoe Christiansen Second, Unanimously Approved**

1680 North St. Right of Way Permit

- 1680 North St. the work already started Scott Hess had noticed.
- The Selectboard approved the permit.
- Scott Hess Moved, Carl Etnier Second, Unanimously Approved**

Discussion on Towns Hudson House & Property Behind it regarding Asbestos Abatement and Demo Plan

- Selectboard Member, Zoe Christiansen will follow up with the Planning Commission on what the Town's options are considering the floodplain & the property's location.

Town Administrator Report & Additional Discussion:

- Sanders Circle culvert replacement construction project is due to start this week.
- Towne Hill paving project is going to start this week.
- Thursday, we have the Emergency Preparedness Committee, where we're putting together the LHMP, and that's at 4pm this Thursday at the four corners schoolhouse.
- We have the following events coming up for the Town Garage.
 - The Harvest Fest on October 12th at the elementary school, 10am is the pie contest. 11am to 12:30pm there will be a presentation and pie contest winner will be selected by a three-judge panel and at 12:30 there will be the free lunch.
 - There will be a Town garage tour on November 2, the town garage tour will be 8:30 to 9:45, and then a town garage forum at the elementary school afterward, will start at 10am
 - The Town Garage Vote will be November 5th from 7am to 7pm

Meeting 7:35 p.m. Adjourned

Scot Hess Moved, Zoe Christiansen Second, Unanimously Approved