

Townshend Select Board Meeting Minutes - Jan. 16, 2006

Present:

Henry Martin, chair
Berenice Brooks
Alene Evans

Jeffrey Russ (*absent*)
Irvin Stowell,
Select Board

Participating Members:

Richmond Hopkins, VSP
Robert Crego, Valley Cares
Anita Bean, Town Clerk

Michalina Wasung, Treasurer
Fredrick Hege

At 7:00 PM the chair ***called the Meeting to Order*** recognizing ***Participating Members:***

Vermont State Police (VSP) **Sergeant Richmond Hopkins**; introductions were in order followed by the chairing the Sergeant on past law enforcement issues and services provided by the Windham County Sheriff Department (WCSD) focusing on the continuing, unsolved problem of accountability of Deputy's time, even now they continue to bill for patrolling, after insisting directly to the Sheriff to stop at their Fall meeting. The Board wanted to know what services the VSP troopers would provide; costs, etc. continued Martin as the Board formulating the budgets.

Sergeant Hopkins spoke about the off duty trooper providing "specific services", contracted for a specific amount, such as Newfane who contracts for enforcement of speed control throughout their villages and Town, offering flexibility in times "shifting on the fly" not creating a pattern of protection or enforcement. VSP does not compete with the WCSD, but should some incident, situation, endangerment issue, etc occur, the buck stops with the VSP. Townshend can target the time, location, and activities such as speed control before and after school to patrolling back roads. Hours and cost depends of what a town can afford; it would take about 20 minutes for an available trooper to respond from the W. Brattleboro barracks.

The Sergeant explained the cost of this service of specially skilled and trained personnel - \$40 per hour, plus \$3.50. At the of a shift the officer uses, what he described, as an "antiquated" log — showing times: starting and stopping, cars stopped, people contacted, written notes, documenting all information etc. This information is then plugged into a basic excel spreadsheet for easy understanding and can be provided to the Town.

He questioned, who was Townshend's designated 911 server? Martin added the Board would provide a specific liaison, should the Town contract with VSP. Hopkins left at 7:40 PM

Robert Crego from Valley Cares, dropped off documents for Board adoption relative to their Vermont Community Development Program Grant:

Form MP-1	plus draft Contract for Administrative Services
Municipal Policies and Codes	and Program Management (similar to past
Anti-Displacement and Relocation Plan	town involvement

After minimal discussion *Stowell motioned to have the chair sign Form MP-1 and the draft Contract for Administrative Services and Program Management between the Town of Townshend and Valley Cares, seconded by Evans, unanimously carried by the Board.*

Members expressed their concerns upon completing Valley Cares ACT 250 Municipal Impact Questionnaire — lengthy time was spent in answering and completing each of the town's services that could be burdened upon the completion of this project, also noting the Town would appear at the Hearing. Crego added that the fire Chief, Mitchell Putnam's letter of concern would be included in their ACT 250 packet.

Hege explained how RESCUE, Inc. remedied their many responses to Landmark College in Putney by independently charging the college, as to not impact RESCUE's per capita assessment on Putney residents.

To clarify misinformation on how a Valley Cares room can be reserved Crego reported that he had sent letters to everyone who thought their monetary donation reserved them a room. The process to attain a room will be in a form of a lottery names drawn to fill those rooms not filled by Heins Home residents or by one who has a traveling voucher.

On an unrelated matter and Crego's familiarity and ability to attain grants Martin asked if he would look into available grants to assist in the fire station/department, highway garage, park and rides, etc. Crego left at 8:30 PM

The chair apologized to Anita Bean, Town Clerk and Michalina Wasung, Town Treasurer, for them having to wait so long. The Board wanted to address having an open line of communications between all personnel, stated Martin, as we all have to work cohesively, hand and hand. We all need appropriate communications, everyone needing to know liabilities and wellness of the Town. Wasung's response was that there was too many new people doing to many things which impact the closing of the year; she had more missing pieces and things she had to follow up on: paving expenses vs. general highway for culvert placement; bills that vanish into thin air, etc. And she had to give more of her personal attention dealing with trailer people.

Stowell interjected that he had spoken to 2 different bookkeepers that saw no reason why monthly reports couldn't be ready by the 15th. The Board had to cancel many budget meetings for lack of up to date financial reports. The treasurer asked for a motion to reserve sidewalk monies; questioned the amount charged for gravel at \$4.69/cu yd; the money to support Rescue was not included (raised by taxes) in the tax bills, because she had no amount. Wasung continued explaining that she had pneumonia; because of the complexity in learning NEMRC accounting software, she was uncomfortable in finding part time assistances, but she has started training Carol Redmond, former librarian. She will be trained to pay bills, payroll; but it would be better to have a Townshend person. Brooks understood that this process would take a long time but has she thought about when she retires. Martin added that the Board is always concerned when someone is sick; one should be able to stay home to get well.

Wasung reported that the highway department has acquired a credit card, activated (\$5,000) both she and Bean has the Town's (\$2,000).

The following budget matters were discussed with the Treasurer and acted upon:

- BC/BS rates lowered? Asked Wasung to leave a note of explanation in their basket
- Rescue — Wasung suggested an article dedicated to pay Rescue from the surplus
- Town Clerk's office salary has \$1,000+/- remaining.
- *Martin moved to reserve \$1,000 sidewalk repair, seconded by Evans, carried by the Board.*
- *Martin moved to reserve \$10,000 to the crushing gravel, seconded by Stowell carried by the Board.*
- Wasung reminded the Board on the money remaining for the outside audit; no highway receivables at end of six months, the dynamics in changing equipment fund; if don't post receivable at end of fiscal year, will have lots of money, leap frogging surplus or deficit.

Wasung announced that its time for the Town to borrow money but she did not have, in hand, Banknorth's paperwork. She had received quotes from Chittenden 4.5%; Banknorth 4.4% nothing from Citizen — maturing May⁹. After paying off this note, applying for more money in a tax anticipation note which should have a lower rate and legal borrowing within the 12 months. Martin indicated that tonight's meeting would be recessed.

For discussion Martin relayed road crew member, Walter Royce, request to see if their payroll checks couldn't be available on Wednesday instead of Friday (if plowing, can't get to the bank). Wasung felt that was a little tight, as she didn't get the pay orders till Monday afternoon and most practice's people don't get paid after orders are submitted. Stowell added they have already earned the money and should be paid. Evans asked her to think about it.

Bean reported that she has started the process to purchase a new copier, because of additional Lister usage replacement parts to repair the present copier aren't not available. Bean continued looks like the Town would be purchasing it through a local company who presented a good service agreement.

WEB SITE — Hege asked the Board for a point person, for him to work with; he has submitted his bill and will continue site preparation, monitoring, as he is comfortable with this working arrangement. Requested clarification: when posting all open positions and appointments names should come from legally qualified Townshend voter. Yes, members responded.

In the future, he would like to create pages for Town businesses and organizations, the difficulty being treating everyone equally, having no favoritism. This could result in a double edge sword if not all businesses are represented. The Town Clerk has the advantage of first hand knowledge of some of this information.

He had a submitted for Board approval, a draft memo to be sent to all officers explaining and updating them on the site. Members had no problem with it. Evans interjected that Donelle Barnum gave her permission to use her paintings of the Common on the site.

Hege will continue his search for and create placement of photos. He spoke about the number of WEB site hits' as he continually monitors search engines on the placement of Townshend vs. Townsend.

He recommended that Bean expend \$10 to buy another PDF license in order to convert the Town Warning on line. She has become more familiar in using the bulletin board in posting deadlines.

E-MAILS — Hege reminded everyone that all e-mails are automatically public correspondence. Everyone agreed that each e-mail should have an auto reply, informing the sender that there will not be an *immediate* reply or contract until brought before the Board.

Martin personally expressed to Hege that he had done a wicked, wicked good job. Finished presentation at 9:45 PM

1a. Town Clerk and/or Treasurer: no report at this time

1b. Highway foreman: was not present; Royce called Stowell as he had heard of an accident on West Hill Rd, couldn't contact Bostrom, so Stowell told him to sand the road.

1c. Board of Health: Brooks was informed by walkers that warm water was running out of a pvc pipe from the house above the Walton's on Deer Ridge Rd, she called the chair with this information then saw Craig Hunt, septic compliance officer at the Post Office who had seen the pipe and the water was being discharge from around the house. Members questioned didn't the road foreman address Rob Thomson previously written request to address this culvert issue.

*Martin moved to approve the **Minutes of January 6, 2006**, seconded by Brooks, carried by the Board.*

3. Old Business:

WCSD —Brooks questioned what should be done with Windham County Sheriff's Department's unpaid invoices, when they still haven't accounted for the deputies time, these invoices should be paid and squared off. The Town has not asked for patrolling, only for the Department to respond to Townshend resident's calls, except the Board asked for coverage on Halloween and to assist in the Jesse Lynn Gentlewolf (animal) incident.

CVSP, East Hill Rd —Austin called Martin inquiring where was the signed documents. On Friday he and Stowell will look at the site; Stowell had spoken with Hedge who agreed with the results and placement of the line easement. Davis was instructed to contact Austin for a new plan and deed.

No action taken on - Certificate of Mileage; Town Hall heat; Lister appointment or Community Advisory Committee (VSP) as no one had sent in a letter of interest; passed on to the Listers Andrea Royce's interest in becoming their data input person.

2006 Social Service Committee — Committee personnel met with the Select Board at their Jan 10th workshop, accepted their recommendation of services to support.

Land Committee — Joint public meeting to be held on Feb. 1st will meet earlier, Jan 23rd.

4. New Business:

- Fisher & Fisher, town attorney has increased their municipal hourly rate to \$125
- Rescue Inc. "Letter of Operational Conduct" was received, reviewed for Jan — June 06 services at the cost of \$8,617.50, *Martin so moved the acceptance of Rescue's Letter of Operational Conduct, seconded by Stowell, carried by the Board.*
- Andrea Seaton informed Davis that Grace Cottage Hospital's kitchen has agreed to provide Town Meeting lunch; with apprehension in accepting a donation or "monetary tip" from attendees.
- Wyman, whose residence is off a Class 4 highway, Jordan Rd, plows the road, their driveway, and has observed increased snowmobile travel off the VAST trail. They turn around in their yard and were almost driven into by the Wyman's who called VSP. The Town can't prevent anyone from traveling, walking over a public Class 4 road, added Stowell. Mrs. Wyman indicated to Martin that she will contact the local snowmobile clubs for assistance.
- Auditor Carol Lanning called the chair with concerns about another auditor putting in hours not actually worked and working at home. He tried to explain to her that the Select Board has no responsibility in this or any other elected official, advising her to call the Secretary of the State for guidance.

*Martin moved to **Pay Bills and Sign the following Orders**, seconded by Evans*

TREASURER'S 2005 AP's \$462 payroll; \$2,967.49 and \$22,159.57

SM06 — 02 \$14,382.87 plus \$1,436.25 Rescue

SMPR06 - 01 \$651.00 Road Com Ords wk/ending 1/7 & 1/14

carried and signed by the Board.

Stowell questioned paying time and half when not having worked 40 hours.

6. Other Business

- St of VT:
- Steven & Susan Lott incorporates WW permits — (subdivide 3 lots)
 - ANR — ground water protection notification from Janos & L&G
Revision to Allow Season discharging etc.
 - Enterprise car rental packet

7. Executive Session —none at this time

8. Time of Next Meeting —

At 10:45 PM Brooks **recessed** tonight's meeting to tomorrow evening to 6:00 PM, seconded by Martin, carried by the Board.

Recessed Jan. 16th to 17th to 6:00 pm - present Brooks Evans, Martin & Stowell.
Michalina Wasung appearing at 7:15 PM

Draft March 2007 Town Meeting Warning — each member participated with questions, explanations, placement, etc. Then proceeded to look over the piles of year-end financial statements, details, etc. left upon the table.

Around 7:15 PM Michalina Wasung, town treasurer, appeared and was pleased to report that she had received Banknorth's note, line of credit dated the January 17th, reflecting all of the same terms she reported last night.

Martin moved to enter into a current expense line of credit with Banknorth in the amount of \$275,000 at 4.04%, payable May 1st, seconded by Evans, carried and signed by the Board.

Follow up - after talking with VLCT Wasung did not have a clear idea of any BC/BS insurance increase, possibly a decrease. Other insuring issues, companies, benefits, etc were discussed. The Board felt uncomfortable decreasing insurance expenditures in their budget preparations.

Financial papers reviewed:

- prepared SUI costs for ! year; Workers comp up 20% but will be audited on actual and credit received in the summer; unemployment down
- monies available;
- batches of detail transactions and reserves
- She talked about the equipment fund, letting it float; Stowell spoke of the many large purchases (2 dump trucks, loader, grader), which killed the fund. It will be a hard and long time to get it rebuilt. Wasung added Bostrom had increased equipment outlay and noticed the Compactor has started to cost money. How is the Town going to keep it alive?

Wasung spoke briefly on:

school costs coming down, the Town not being hit really bad because of the new education for taxation.

The Board requested that the interest in the Capital Expenditure fund not be used in the purchasing of a new copier.

She put the situation of the remaining Town Clerk's Office money over the Govnet for response, receiving none. She believed that salaries were calculated correctly, but Davis did not get an increase. She requested the Board instruct her on how to proceed, under her door, as this can be received, as another payable computer budget is still open. Wasung left at 7:45 PM

On another matter, Howard Lott, lister and John Boyle, B&B appraisers, heard that she was attending tonight's meeting and gave her their letter asking the Select Board to request Property Values and Review (PVR) re determination of Townshend's CLA, etc as reviewed on Jan 3rd. The chair accepted this request, instructing Davis to draft a letter for member approval and his signature, to be received by PVR before the 21st

Evans moved to pay the prior Town Clerk, Davis \$1,105 as the approved Town Meeting salary raise, seconded by Stowell, carried by the Board.

BUDGETS - Recalculations of the proposed 6 month and fiscal year budgets continued, trying to establish taxes to be raised, *Martin moved to accept the numbers in the 6 month, Jan 1 — June 30, 2006 budget and the fiscal year, July 1, 2006 — June 30, 2007, seconded by Russ, carried by the Board.*

*The chair suggested that members take the weekend to review budget numbers, calculations, assumptions, etc. and the Warning, if not satisfied, **recessing** the meeting to Monday, January 23rd. Members approved.*

Over the weekend, select person Evans contacted Martin after finding an incorrect revenue figure affecting the lowering of taxes to be raised and her desire for the Board to look at other means to increase revenue. She expressed her concerns over the waste / compactor; Martin asked Davis to call everyone to meet Monday, **Jan 23rd meeting** beginning at 7:30 pm for 45 minutes.

All members engaged in lengthy discussion on the Waste / Compactor as to being established as self supporting from revenues in disposing household waste, to offset fees, tipping and WSWM etc at a cost of \$1.00 a bag, increased less than 3 years ago to \$1.25. But, the costs of running the compactor are dramatically increasing and the revenues are not offsetting the costs of running the department, Stowell was extremely concerned on taxing those who do not use the facility.

Evans moved to raise the cost per bag for disposing waste to \$2.00 beginning July 1, 2006, seconded by Russ, 3 voted in the affirmative Stowell and Brooks negative, motion carried. Martin added might be the Town should do as Newfane, providing no collection of household waste.

Martin moved to accept the final figures and budgets, seconded by Brooks, carried by the Board. Hard copies were provided with the disks: financial given to the Town Treasurer, the 2007 Warning for the Town Clerk.

*Stowell moved to **adjourn** at 9:00 PM, seconded by Brooks, carried by the Board.*

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Davis, clerk for the Board