

Townshend Select Board Meeting Minutes - January 2, 2007

Present		Participating Member
Berenice Brooks	Jeffrey Russ	Fredrick Hege
Alene Evans	Irvin Stowell,	
Henry Martin	Select Board	

The chair *called the Meeting to Order* at 7:00 PM and proceeded along the prepared agenda:

1a. Town Clerk and/or Treasurer: The chair understood the Board’s reasons for not paying, at this time, outstanding NEMRC bills (printer & software installation) questioning the need and purpose to buy an additional printer, etc; are funds available? The Town’s liability is the Board’s main concern, as it appears that documents/paper work are leaving the Town Hall to be worked on at home by the Treasurer on her personal lap top. The Treasurer’s scribbled note was confusing and did not provide sufficient information for payment of these bills.

Discussion continued on adhering to State Statute of the treasurer signing checks and keeping the Town informed of a possible deficit. Townshend Elementary School hires Rucker as their business manager (provides payment of bills, financial reports, etc) and their Treasurer focuses on check signing, checkbook/cash balances, etc. The Board continued discussing the idea of separating tax collecting and the hiring of a bookkeeping service to facilitate bill paying and other financial responsibilities

1b. Highway foreman, was unable to attend tonight’s meeting, consequently giving Davis the following:

- Accepted DuGrenier’s lower field driveway access permit, off Back Windham Rd, West Townshend
- All State Asphalt, Inc. correspondence to purchase liquid chloride (All State bought out IMUS). After reading the correspondence the Board will discuss their questions and concerns at tomorrow night’s budget meeting (inviting Bostrom)

Stowell expressed his concern on the “sad shape” of Windham Hill Rd, which was not repaired this year with hot mix; sections of the roadway are “smashing up”; a great deal of money will be needed to rehabilitate this road. Martin added the Board started discussing fixing it over the last couple of years. Stowell will contact AOT for the availability of Class 2 grants. Martin asked that he explain the Town’s situation and for them to get someone to look over the Windham Hill Rd project before this spring. At this time Stowell announced that after 31 years he would not be seeking re-election to the Select Board. He will work with C. Marchant on finding “ancient roads” .

Martin moved to approve the Minutes of Dec 18, 2006, seconded by Evans; Members did not comment on Evans concern - was the overdue Town Clerk payroll payments explained in depth (Davis was prorated ((Jan — Marchst)) and Bean was a week’s pay), ***unanimously carried by the Board. Martin abstained.***

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

SM06-07 -12 \$3,687.94
 SMPR06-07 -11 \$2,466.11

Road Com Ords wk/ending 12/23 & 12/30

unanimously carried and signed by the Board

4. Old Business

Town Hall Policy—Evans presented the “final policy draft”, at which time Hege questioned whether the rates are daily or weekly? Discussion continued, notations were made and a final clarification that the Select Board must approve exempting non-profit organizations from the fees.

Ratify considerations taken during the budget workshop:

- *Stowell moved to accept Bartlett Tree Experts 2007 Common work not to exceed, \$930, seconded by Russ, unanimously carried by the Board.*
- *Martin moved to continue with Vermont Leagues of Cities and Towns (VLCT) approving their choice of providing health insurance coverage thru CIGNA, seconded by Evans, unanimously carried by the Board.*
- Their clerk presented a completed 2nd 2007-08 budget draft; expressing that two areas remains unresolved: salaries and employee payment of their health insurance.
 - Comments re: Town employee payment of health insurance:
 - should be a 80/20 split;
 - nowadays, no one gets free health insurance; in the early years, this was a great benefit that offset the lower wages paid;
 - what is the amount of the net wage; the need to increase wages to offset this expense; this expense (20%) is pretax;
 - employee may have available another health insurance provider; effective when?

After lengthy discussion *Martin moved beginning July 1, 2007 that all town employees, currently receiving health insurance benefits, will be responsible for 20% of their chosen benefit offered by the Town, seconded by Evans, unanimously carried by the Board.*

Additional Town Hall parking—Russ remained adamant to obtain Route 30 off road parking, in front of the Town Hall and agreed to: following up with the State’s AOT.

Martin and Stowell revisited their venture in trying to acquire this additional parking, worked many hours only to be discouraged by AOT.

Town personnel policy—Evans reported on her visit with Newfane Select person, Piet VanLoon, who provided her with copies of their new and old policies (to directly include the sexual harassment policy) and other policies for format and wording. She asked for participation of other members.

Correspondence:

- December 15, 2006 follow up correspondence from Dominic Cloud, of VLCT’s Municipal Assistance Center was discussed: did he speak with Michalina Wasung, town treasurer; \$80 hourly cost, not to exceed \$3000. Evans questioned what are their expenses (mileage, dinner, copies). Martin said he’d follow up with Mr. Cloud. He personally felt that the cost of this service would be money well spent, as the Town is at crossroads. Newfane Selectperson Van Loon commented that it is important for the Town to seek and establish a good solid plan. After complete discussion *Evans moved to authorize the chair to enter into a contract, not to exceed \$3,000, after he is satisfied with his conversation with Cloud, seconded by Stowell, unanimously carried by the Board*

No action taken on Valley Cares —

- Stevens & Assoc. notified ANR on 12/11/07 to change the electrical service pole
- State of Vermont - 12/26/07 Administrative Amending Land Use Permit re: above pole change

5. *New Business*

- Receipt of VLCT's survey on the condition at the Town Barn prepared by Wade Masure was reviewed. Russ continued his frustration of the Town not being proactive in updating town buildings and facilities, “ what if the Town boarded up all of their buildings and got rid of all trucks then what would the taxpayers do?” After lengthy discussion on what the survey revealed, Martin instructed Russ to work with road foreman, Bostrom, to itemize those projects that can be completed in house, by electrician, plumber; check out OSHA regulations and to report back as to how the Town should proceed.
- January 29, 2007 joint meeting with School Board — finalize and sign March 2007 Town Meeting Warning — which the Town Clerk handed over to their secretary to prepare. Evans volunteered to draft the Board's “ verbal report” .
- St of Vt — Department of Taxes Memorandum re: Locally Approved Agreement — Expiration of “Prior” Agreements It was suggested to only exempt OHCC's from the municipal tax.
- OHCC invited members and the public to a reception for their new CEO Dr. Shana Jones 1/19/07
- Martin responded to Hege's quest for clarifications as to why the Town's holding a mortgage with Valley Cares (West River Assisted Living and Housing Limited Partnerships) — It is all part of the approved grant. If it goes belly up the Town can put a lien upon the properties to recoup a portion of monies owed (the Town stands about number 10).
- Hege presented the list of inquiries made to the Town's WEB site. Most people are looking for stuff, lodging, specific businesses. He believes, if at all possible, to create a link with the Townshend Business Association's (TBA) site. If not available, he suggested the Town should consider creating a basic listing, non-discriminatory, of all Town businesses and their services, including all the necessary disclaimers; his cost to create this could be offset by a business application fee. The Board took this idea under advisement.

6. *Other Business*

Social Service recipients — Thank you from SEVCA & Historical Society of Windham County

7. *Executive Session* — none at this time

8. *Time of Next Meeting* — Jan. 15, 2007

Brooks moved to Adjourn at 9:15 PM, seconded by Russ, unanimously carried by the Board.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Davis, clerk for the Select Board