

## Townshend Selectboard Meeting Minutes — January 15, 2007

Present:		Participating
Berenice Brooks	Jeffrey Russ	Michael Charles, “Tom” Lyman & Arthur Monette
Alene Evans	Irvin Stowell	
Henry Martin	Selectboard	

The Chair *called the Meeting to Order* at 7:00 PM, and proceeded along the Agenda while awaiting the arrival of a Planning Commissioner:

The Board reviewed and discussed the *Jan 15<sup>th</sup> Memo left by the Town Treasurer* in which she proposed the borrowing of \$124,000 from TDBanknorth to defray the purchase of Truck #8. Stowell spoke about the Town still waiting for a status update of a Municipal Loan. He did not accept extending the time to pay off this Truck’s loan. Other comments were the need to study the consequences of borrowing now or later and calculated cost of approx. \$5,000 in interest at 4%. After complete discussion ***Martin moved to borrow \$124,000.00 from TD Banknorth at 3.97% seconded by Evans, unanimously carried and the Board signed the documents prepared by the Treasurer.***

The second part of the Town Treasurer’s Memo was the need of an article for additional equipment capital funds. Martin called the Town Treasurer, at home, for her input.

At this time, the chair welcomed the Planning Commission (PC) members, Michael Charles, Arthur “Tom” Lyman and Arthur Monette. They presented, and all spoke about, the PC’s recommended renovations and plans to the Town Hall to create a comfortable, convenient meeting place without limiting the size of the area. Their proposal suggested building a wall of lockable cabinetry allowing auditors, planning commissioners, Selectboard, historical society, etc. a specific workspace in the “banquet room”. Evans spoke of her suggestion to build an “armoire” / jelly jar type cabinet as a workspace and to house filing cabinets in the dining room. The Board’s consensus was in support of this idea; requesting that the PC acquire, for Selectboard consideration, additional information with specific plans, costs, etc to construct these floor to ceiling “cabinets” etc.

Stowell addressed the need to have a separate area to conduct executive session and reminded everyone that the Town Hall building is in the Historical Register.

Michael Charles suggested and said he would personally provide the equipment to allow the Town Hall to have “wireless internet access”. Charles explained this wireless service would only be available within a 50-foot limit, which answered the Board’s questions of security and hackers into the Town’s wireless usage. ***Martin moved to accept Michael Charles’ offer to install wireless Internet service in the Town Hall, seconded by Evans, unanimously carried by the Board.***

Other topics of joint discussion:

- installing an elevator
- using the basement (not apparent as this time as the offices are not manned 5 days a week)
- updating the electrical service
- vault space

- instruction on how and when to purge materials/documents
- acquiring an appropriate conference table and chairs
  
- the Selectboard is in the process of trying to provide Town Hall parking spaces, off Rte 30, by working with the State Highway.
- Selectboard will advertise and accept Letters of Interest in the vacancy on the Planning Commission, created by Dale Thiel's resignation. Also vacant is the Town's 2<sup>nd</sup> representative to Windham Regional Commission.

The Selectboard inquired if the PC had knowledge of Peter Klein's application to create electricity at his West Townshend resident. They had not. The Board will provide them with a copy.

At this time, Martin reported that Valley Cares would not proceed with the Administrative Amended ACT 250, which allowed for overhead electrical service. The PC questioned why additional outside input was not obtained before the Administrative Amendment; neighbor (Kurt Tietz) had expressed his concerns in a letter to ANR.

On another matter, Michael Charles responded to the chair's request to provide the Board with additional information regarding his request for a variance on the Cell Tower Ordinance, which limits tower heights to 35 feet.

Charles has been working with a Keene company investigating the installation of a simple rod on a pine tree (first phase costing \$10,000) or a 120-foot tower; Ober Hill was found to provide the best cell service (the Town of Windham is interested in acquiring coverage); Verizon has no plans to assist Charles or to increase their cell phone coverage. The Board can't create precedence in accepting Charles' request without acquiring a variance. Martin asked if Charles could seek, from this attorney, the appropriate legal language for variance to the existing Cell Tower Ordinance height and of a condition that if one already exists, one can't build another. Charles, Lyman & Monette left at 8:15 PM

***Continuing 1a. Town Treasurer***. Martin's phone conversation with Wasung, Town Treasurer, resulted in creating a special article to raise enough money and replace the expended equipment fund of \$18,000 (new one ton) and \$12,000 (John Deere tractor); possibly asking for a total of \$50,000 to offset the equipment fund capital expenses; and, this fall, apply for \$110,000 State Municipal Loan for Truck #8.

The Treasurer copied the Selects correspondence dated Jan. 2, 2007 from the VT Dept of Finance and Management to Townshend Town Treasurer, which notifies the Town to file the required Certification of Audit Requirement and, if necessary, submit the Subrecipient Schedule of Federal Expenditures. The Treasurer noted on the grant information section (amounts \$93.00 and \$102.00) "received by Town Treasurer for Library 1/05/06". The chair believes that the two remaining grants are Valley Cares, which funds have not yet been received or expended. The Board accepted Martin's suggestion to have Robert Crego of Valley Cares contact Town Treasurer, Wasung, so they can work together to determine what paperwork needs to be completed and when.

The Board will "hammer" out the taxes to be raised for the Highway tomorrow night, as the Treasurer was unable to give Stowell the numbers he needed. He remembers when the professional

auditor indicated that the State Highway revenues would have to be raised (booked) as to actual receipt of funds.

*1b. Highway foreman:* was out plowing

Stowell will follow up on the phone call Davis received from Jack Ryan, of 319 Harwood Place inquiring why the Town does not plow further up the road as there was a large, cleared out landing Stowell addressed the fact that the Town does not plow driveways.

The Board drafted a Memo notifying Townshend’s full time employees, starting July 1<sup>st</sup>, they will be paying 20% of their health insurance benefit provided by the Town.

Russ met with Bostrom and reviewed VLCT’s survey of Town Barn improvements. The road crew will clean out the back room; the Town will offer for sale scrap metal, the old Fire State overhead doors and an old generator; an electrician will perform the electrical repairs. Russ questioned how and when would the leaking, 25+ year old roof be fixed or replaced?

***Martin moved to approve the Minutes of January 2, 2007, seconded by Evans, unanimously carried.***

***Martin moved to approve the Minutes of January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2007 seconded by Evans*** clarifications are made in red, after which ***the Board approved.***

***Martin moved to Pay Bills and Sign the following Orders***

SM06-07-14	\$12,224.12 plus B&B \$4,563.99	
SM06-07-14A hand written	\$76,799. to L&B	
SMPR06-07-13	\$ 1,880.94	Road Com Orders wk/ending 12/30 & 1/6 The Town Treasurer was notified that the road foreman had not signed these Orders.

Unanimously carried by the Board

*4. Old Business*

**Reappraisal** —Members expressed the need for a reappraisal update from B&B and the Listers. They expressed concern over the newspaper article where the State refused Rockingham’s reappraisal. The chair suggested that members compile questions and invite B&B and the Listers to their Feb. 5<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**Valley Care’s Amended ACT 250** — The Board received Kurt Tietz’s response to Valley Cares Administrative Amended ACT 250. As earlier reported by Martin, Valley Cares will not pursue this amendment.

**VT Coalition of Municipalities** — Discussion continued as to why the Town should not become a member of the “revolt & repeal”. Russ still believes the Town has to do something; our taxes are getting

blown away. Martin suggested a special Article asking voter approval to expended \$100 to join the VT Coalition of Municipalities.

**Off Stiefel Drive — pent road** Stowell tried to read the laying out of a pent road that was an offshoot from Stiefel Drive, becoming part of the legal action of Harris v Charles v Townshend, Harris, Malcolm. He was unable to perform further investigation as the Town Clerk's office was closed today. The chair reaffirmed the Board's position - this pent road was not going to be part of this court action.

**Class 2 State grant** —After leaving several messages for John Alexander, District 2 engineer, Stowell will be driving to Dummerston to meet with him face to face.

**Town Hall policy** —Stowell expressed the fee amounts being charged to rent the Town Hall and noted a discrepancy when comparing fees for the entire building vs. separate room fees. Evans noted this might have been her typo. After discussion *Martin moved to adopt this Town Hall policy, excluding the entire building rental fee, seconded by Evans, carried by the Board* Stowell No

**Vermont State Police** —Evans presented their weekly e-mailed summary of work performed, which will become a matter of record.

**D. Cloud, Municipal Action Plan** —Martin asked the Board to consider withholding any action with VLCT's D. Cloud until after Town Meeting as the Board make up could dramatically change. Martin will inform D. Cloud of this action and the Board will provide him with a list of those Town personnel to interview.

**Budget & Warning** —will have its final review tomorrow; voters need to understand the tax consequence of exempting the Heins Home.

## 5. New Business

- The Board's final review of the Social Service Screening Committee Report will be at tomorrow night's final budget meeting — to consider removing from the Screening Committee's report West River Water Shed; Windham Historical; increasing Greenup to \$100. The chair added that Davis was supposed to have presented this report, for consideration, at last week's budget meeting.
- The chair received a personal inquiry from Walter Meyer notifying Martin of the availability of Ancient Road monies and asking Martin to inquire as to how Newfane received monies for reconstruction of their sidewalks.

Martin reported that the Town has applied for an Ancient Roads grant and he found out that it took over 6 years for the **Village** of Newfane to receive this grant to repair the **village sidewalks**.

No Board action taken on:

- The Town Clerk's MEMO regarding the new owner's (of the Janos property) offering to connect into their septic system. ~~of space/area for location of a Town Garage septic system~~
- To sign, at the Board's next meeting, AOT — 2007 Certificate of Highway Mileage, after reviewed by Stowell
- State of VT Water Quality — FEMA LFD release of maps has been delayed

6. *Other Business* — no Board action taken

- Elm Leaf, Inc. equipment to rent to get rid of tree stumps, etc
- Vermont Trails & Greenways Council

7. *Executive Session* — **none at this time**

8. *Time of Next Meeting* —Jan. 29<sup>th</sup> with Townshend Elementary School Board — WARNING  
— regular meeting Feb<sup>th</sup>5

***Brooks moved to Adjourn at 10:00 pm, seconded by Russ, unanimously carried by the Board.***

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Davis, clerk for the Selectboard

**Tuesday, January 16, 2007**

After the members were seated, the Chair received unanimous support not to adjourn last night's meeting but to recess it to address the following issue and other business:

- Today Attorney Fisher called him regarding the town's position on the 2,000 foot long pent road, added to the Harris v Charles v Townshend, Harris, Malcolm suit. Martin expressed to Fisher his opinion that, not until the research is completed, will the Town consider the status and location of this pent road. The Town is not willing to pay for that research. If the Malcolm's want to do the research and provide the Town with any information, then, the Town may take up the issue. Members agreed with Martin's expressed opinion.

The difference of a pent road vs. a trail was explained to Evans: a pent road is gated to allow cows to be put out to pasture; it is not locked and usually is not a thru road. Malcolm now wants public access over Charles' pent road as Charles received access over the road running past their residence. The Town has to remember not to create land locked property.

- The chair asked that everyone sign the final Memo to all town employees notifying them of their 20% payment for health insurance benefits
- Received the revised Town Hall rental fee policy from Evans

- Continued review and adjustment of the Social Service Screening Committee report. Davis will inform the Screen Committee to add \$100 to Green up; remove from their report requests from Windham Historical and West River Watershed and the request to fund the Windham Humane Society, as they will appear as separate articles in this year's Warning.
- Evans will follow up on the comments told by Howard Lott, Lister to Davis.

Davis called Lott as a follow up to include their reappraisal article in the Warning. Lott's verbal recommendations were to increase the \$10,000 for future reappraisal to \$20,000 and to consider taking on B&B as a consultant. Davis instructed him to submit these requests in writing and to place it in the basket for consideration tonight.
- Lengthy discussion and number crunching was done to finalize taxes to be raised for the highway, which carries along an added deficit. Briefly talked about the General Fund and its lack of increased revenues. Davis will have the "final" hard copies of the budgets ready for the Treasurer (along with it on a disk) Auditors and Selectpersons.
- Stowell reported on his talk with John Alexander at District 2, re: class 2 highway grants. At this time, Alexander believes that there is no grant money available. In the past, maximum awarded grants ranged between \$170,000 to \$175,000. Alexander added that it costs of \$100,000 to pave one mile and he will assist in filling out the forms. Stowell believes it's now time for a cost estimate to repair the beginning of Windham Hill Rd; rip rap near Andrus'; replacement of culverts, etc.
- Established Tuesday, 7:00 PM, February 27<sup>th</sup> as pre town Informational Meeting.
- It was brought before the Selectboard that the Town Treasurer would not pay, until she received Selectboard approval, a Highway Order to pay the road crew's accumulated vacation/sick time for the ended 6-month budget. After minimal discussion, ***Martin moved to instruct the Town Treasurer to pay the highway employees their accumulated vacation/sick pay as of June 30, 2006, seconded by Evans, unanimously carried by the Board.***

***Brooks moved to adjourn at 9:15 PM, seconded by Stowell, unanimously carried by the Board.***

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Davis, clerk for the Selectboard