

Townshend Select Board Meeting Minutes - February 20 & 21, 2006

Present

Berenice Brooks
Alene Evans,
Henry Martin, chair

Jeffrey Russ
Irvin Stowell
Select Board

Participating Members

Kathleen Hege, School Board; Fredrick Hege, WEB
& Rescue; Richard Lucier, Lister; John Evans and
Andy Rosen, Reformer correspondent

The chair ***called the Meeting to Order*** at 7:00 PM, ***recognizing Participating Members:***

A. Evans will be asking the professional appraisers B&B's for their opinion/response as to how the Town should proceed with Property Valuation and Review Division (PVR) of the Vermont Tax Department February 9, 2006 letter responding to the Town's request for re-determination of its CLA and CofD. This letter was also copied to the Townshend Elementary School Board which brought **Kathleen Hege**, Townshend School Board representative to tonight's Select Board meeting with the same questions to ask.

RESCUE Inc. rep. Fredrick Hege provided the Board with the copies of the report of RESCUE's responses provided for Townshend. These same reports will be available at Town Meeting. He recapped David Dunn, RESCUE Executive Director, letter reminding Townshend of its dilemma to relocate by 2008. Hege has also spoke to J. Evans of the possibility of RESCUE leasing Janos' property. Martin asked everyone to keep their eyes and ears open for available space for RESCUE.

Could Townshend find itself in the same situation Brattleboro is in with RESCUE, asked Martin. No, responded Hege. The proposed fee structure was heavily debated, hashed out, etc. by all representatives; 2 years ago Brattleboro was told of their increase and agreed on 2 step increment increases. Now Brattleboro has decided it didn't like the figure. All of the original surrounding towns, which formed RESCUE Inc, have accepted their increases. The best solution to keep RESCUE's costs down, continued Hege, is to have well trained volunteers, as it costs \$400 to roll out an ambulance for any public assist.

Electronic Townshend —

- Hege spoke to the Planning Commission about an e-mail address and to consider one person to acknowledge/receipt of receiving the e-mail.
- Hege asked the Board have you visited the Town's Web site — he has put up photos offered by Karl Decker
- He suggested, for future use, the Board to consider having their own computer, which would enable them the accessibility to search information off posted minutes, documents, e-mails, etc. during a meeting. Martin response, not until they can have a secure place. K. Hege left at 7:30 PM

Richard Lucier was the only Lister responding to the Board's Memo inviting them to tonight's meeting to discuss what the Select Board can do to assist them, to get them back on track, while working with limited lister participants. Lucier believed R. Wright was coming; H. Lott,

who has a lot of knowledge and longevity as an elected Lister was tired and has been ill. Lucier, the new kid on the block, finds walking on ice “slippery” but on Saturdays he has assisted A. Bernhardt with reappraisals. He has come to realize how difficult it is to set a mutual meeting to inspect properties. Sometimes Listers just stop to take outside measurements. Lucier understands that nobody is interested in this position because the working hours limit it to retired individuals.

The Board asked the Listers to provide pre-town meeting information:

- The value of listed personal property, to be converted to tax dollars
- The value of the Heins Home. Lucier left at 7:50 PM

1a. Town Clerk and/or Treasurer: TR provided Jan 06 financial reports and state hwy.

1b. Highway foreman:

- Truck #6 — it appeared that the coolant unit was removed by the past road foreman
- Received an application for a Better Back Road Grant

Lengthy and spirited discussion among the members came as a result of residents calling them on the road crew sanding “bare roads” on windy days. Martin reminded everyone that Bostrom was hired for his knowledge and judgment. He has asked the road crew to use their discretion in treating the roads keeping in mind public safety. What about the State Forest Rd incline from the covered bridge up to the Dam Rd, asked Stowell? If we continue the highway dept. will run out of money. We will be maintaining the roads in a deficit. And, has the highway department disregarded the 40 hours work-week? Russ responded “its winter”. Martin reassured the Board that the highway crew hours are according to the mandatory 40 hours per week. But the winter’s storms come on weekends, turn into snow squalls and continue throughout the night.

Russ noticed an old pine tree leaning near Wiswall Cemetery; maybe the tree company could take it down.

John Evans dropped by at 8:10 PM unsure as to where he should begin. Martin reiterated, before any further consideration, the Town needs to see drawings and have monetary figure for a sale, lease, etc.

J. Evans had scratched out another layout as to what he believed to be a good choice for the town: new 40 or 50 foot addition, south side open spanned building, heated garage; rooms used for fire training & storage; the need to adjust Decker property line to utilize the field to drive around. His drawing showed and he explained the moving of a much smaller constructed town garage closer to the Janos property line, near a large ditch (wet land), placing storage and salt shed closer to Phoenix property line. Russ responded, again Townshend is performing a farmer fix to a situation instead of trying to achieve the best, long time solution.

Martin personally believed that the Brattleboro Reformer performed a disservice to many people and study committees when it published the recent “Janos” article. Rosen said he would contact Martin after he spoke with Evans before the writing of the article, which he did

not. A Brattleboro Reformer reporter has never covered any of the 4 public meetings discussing construction and development of a new fire station and highway garage. And, for the record, continued Martin, the Town did consider the Janos property. As the Land Committee investigated and studied the property with representatives from Stevens Associates, finding it to require extensive renovations cosmetic and structurally. Evans' response to Martin question as to why, at the last public meeting, he failed to bring up his ideas, was, at that time he wanted to keep it on the tax base, hoping to work with them (Janos) to keep it industrial and commercial.

Members asked what is the Town being offered, buying, for how much, leasing, renting, etc. not having figures is a stumbling block. At that moment, J. Evans asked for Executive Session to discuss it. Hege disagreed; the Town has not been given or seen anything to negotiate.

The Open Meeting Law was found, requirements and the reasons for entering into Executive Session were read aloud and discussed at length — no contract was available, no real estate offer is on the table, cannot negotiate on property not owned by J. Evans. He has only presented the Town with an option. It became evident to J. Evans that an Executive Session would not be called no matter how he tried to present it, so he left at 8:45 PM.

1c. Board of Health: no report

*Martin moved to approve the **Minutes of February 6, 2006**, seconded by Evans, unanimously carried by the Board.*

Stowell advised the Board that there are only 4 channels on the highway radios — fire dept, VSP, Sheriff and state highway, maybe do away with Sheriff's **channel** in order to fulfill the agreement with Grafton.

3. Old Business

Jewell's permit — Stowell was informed that they were no longer hauling on the State Forest Rd, so issuing a permit was void.

Windham County Sheriff Dept. — Brooks had been speaking with Sonya, again, regarding the Dept's latest reporting on deputy hours. This conversation resulted in Sonya having an evening deputy complete the reports with a hand written locations and descriptions. Brooks again told Sonya that the Town was not paying for patrolling.

A. Evans got permission to discuss these matters with Sheriff Prue as Martin drafted the Sheriff a letter. Rosen left

Appraisal and Re-appraisal — A. Evans will as B&B about PVR's Feb 9th letter; Bernhardt asked Davis to leave with Bean the latest "Detailed Compliance questionnaire" for their completion.

M. Charles vs. Townshend — All parties have signed the Stipulation, so the matter is closed.

Valley Cares — Dept of Housing has released funds to the West River Valley Special Needs Housing Project. Martin took a copy of this notification, as he was unaware of the named project.

Payroll Memo — Town clerk, Bean informed Martin that Cole was not on the Feb. 6th payroll order. Martin instructed that he get paid. He drafted a Memo for instructions in handling of compactor attendant's time sheet, as suggested by Stowell.

Town Hall heat — Russ has the damper.

4. New Business

Brooks **Stowell** attended Guilford Fire Station's open house. He found it to be very roomy for their trucks, having rooms for meetings, radio, the chief and lieutenant, showers and a kitchen. She believes the Town should see Putney's Fire Station.

Request for Green Up money; Screening Committee did not a lot any money, as request was received to late.

VTrans sent the necessary forms for the Town to report what monies will be spent for highway maintenance. This eliminates the annual meetings with the State highway Dist. 2 personnel.

The Town received Atty Slason's opinions regarding the Glebe Mountain windmill project.

After discussing access weight permits *Martin moved to deny vehicle access weight permits on vehicles that exceed 50 tons and not to travel over posted roads during mud season, seconded by Russ, unanimously carried by the Board.* Stowell adjusted and signed permits for Cardinal, Lynde Well Drilling & (2) from Renaud Bros.

Anita Bean, Town Clerk informed Martin that a new undedicated, electrical outlet needs to be installed for the new copier. He told her to contact a licensed electrician. Onyon was unavailable.

- A. Evans presented three ideas for members to consider enacting after 2006 Town Meeting:
- log book . . .
 - process bill paying and signing orders earlier in the agenda
 - to establish communication to ask each dept., office, commission, etc to submit monthly notes/reports

The chair asked to recess this meeting to tomorrow night, for an hour, to get ready for pre-town meeting.

Last Saturday VSP / Emergency Management called Martin to advise him of open shelters for those residents who need it and to check on the well being of an ill resident, who was found to be okay.

LaRochelle of GCH or Otis Health Care Center told Martin that it would pay for the expenses of holding a Special Town Meeting to consider continuing the tax status on the Heins Home.

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

SM06 - \$11,454.27 plus Land Committee Article Stevens Assoc. \$3,704.28

SMPR06 — \$1,203.95 Road Com Ords wk/ending 2/14 and 2/11

Unanimously carried and signed by the Board. Davis left at 10:25 PM

6. Other Business

St of VT: - Project Review: Harmonyville Store adds. Hand sink (catering); Stratton Corp. Tamarack Heights project; Public Safety wind damage?
- MEC roofing Cert. of Liability Ins - Resume - Town Service Officer appt.

*At 10:24 PM Russ moved into **Executive Session** under Title 313 section 1 to discuss personnel, seconded by Martin.*

At 10:40 PM Brooks moved out of Executive Session, seconded by Stowell, unanimously carried by the Board. No action taken

8. Time of Next Meeting —Pre-Town Meet 2/27; regular March 7

Meeting recessed to 7:00 PM tomorrow night, moved by Martin, seconded by Brooks, unanimously carried by the Board.

Tuesday, February 21, 2006, recessed Select Board meeting 7:00 PM

Present: Berenice Brooks, Alene Evans, Henry Martin, chair, Jeffrey Russ and Irvin Stowell, Select Board

A. Evans asked if anyone wanted to accompany her to Thursday's appointment with Sheriff Prue. Martin and Brooks were interested.

Town Clerk Anita Bean called Martin, again, A. Cole was not on the Payroll. It appeared to her that Davis had other things signed and returned his time sheet to the basket. Davis replied that the meeting was so fast paced and hectic she never saw what was in the Board's basket, left before Executive Session as the orders and bills were being reviewed.

The chair reviewed the a draft Memo re: Cole's time sheet and letter to Sheriff Prue.

Lister Lott's comment to A. Evans phone call over concerns of the Select Board was the Select Board had no right over them on what they can do. He was tired and didn't want to talk. Evans said did he think she and others live exclusively in a bubble. Martin reported the Board has control over their spending. Evans also asked Lott to speak to Andrea Royce's interest to input Lister data as comments of Cynthia Davis, who had earlier expressed an interest for the job, would just stir things up.

Road foreman, Bostrom, thought the Board's meeting was tonight (school calendar so noted). He gave Martin copies of his proposal in purchasing a new truck for review. As figures, comments and understanding of the proposal were tossed about, the chair asked that this discussion continue after everyone has time to understand this proposal at their next meeting.

R. Hege stopped by after his Rescue meeting, inquired about the note he left. The Board had started preparing for Town Meeting.

Town Meeting preparation - Not everyone had a town report to follow, so each article was a read aloud — specific page, figures of revenue and expenses were found for insertion into the necessary motions. It was discovered that the Warning printed in the Town Report was missing a page, Articles 13 — 22. It appeared that the Board had addressed the Town Articles, which they must address.

Evans called the auditors, finally reaching Laning, to explain the situation and the necessity of publishing the entire Warning. Martin requested that the entire 2007 Warning be published in the Brattleboro Reformer, newspaper of record, on Sat. Mon & Tues for the next two weeks. Laning told Evans she would not be in Town on Wednesday.

Martin also called Bean to explain the situation.

Brooks left, before *Martin called for Executive Session, Title 313, section 1 at 8:40 PM to discuss personnel, seconded by Evans, carried by the Board.*

At 8:45 PM Martin moved out of Executive Session, seconded by Stowell, carried by the Board. No action taken and Davis returned into the building to pick up.

Martin moved to adjourn at 8:45 PM, seconded by Russ, carried by the Board.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia Davis, clerk for the Select Board.