

TOWN OF FAIR HAVEN, VERMONT
Special Meeting

Selectboard, Water & Sewer Commissioners, Liquor Commissioners, Cemetery Commissioners
Tuesday, January 03, 2023 -- 7:00 PM

Zoom Meeting Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89116880141>

Phone: 1 929 205 6099 | Meeting ID: 8911 688 0141

UNAPPROVED MINUTES

Members Present: Glen Traverse, Bob Richards, Chadd Viger, Jay Brown, Rich Greenough

Others Present: Town Manager Joe Gunter, Recording Secretary Claire Stanley, Bookkeeper Liz Ambuhl

Call to Order: Chairman Bob Richards called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and led the assembly in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Amendments to the Agenda: None

Five Minutes for Public Comment: None

NEW BUSINESS

Revenue -- West Haven Transfer Station Fees: Manager Gunter's per capita calculations for Transfer Station use are: Fair Haven = \$87/per person; West Haven = \$67/per person. West Haven presently pays \$16,000/year, \$20. less per capita than Fair Haven. He reached out to West Haven whose only concern is that they just started their calendar year budget (Fair Haven works with a fiscal year budget). Discussion was how to proceed with billing; they have had many years without increase. Mr. Brown made a **motion to increase West Haven's Transfer Station use rate to \$21,000 this year and increase the rate by \$1,500 for the next four (4) years to ease into the new rate as recommended by Town Manager Gunter.** The motion was seconded by Mr. Traverse and passed unanimously.

Budget Revue Continues: Made no changes to **Accounting Dept.** budget. **Debt** -- Discussed replacement of 10,000 gallon fuel tank (west side of building) with a 2,000 gallon tank placed in rear of Municipal building -- total cost of \$46,000. Discussed that half the wastewater plant upgrade bond is paid by the general fund; half by the water/sewer budget. Mr. Richards commented given interest rates, is it wise to consider refinancing debt(s). There is increase in **benefits** across the board due to salary increases; health insurance went up by 11.5%. Manager Gunter prepared a handout of four (4) options to decrease **Reserve Allocations** to reach budget under 4% increase. Mr. Viger commented that cutting reserve allocations is shooting ourselves in the foot. Mr. Greenough agreed that cutting any reserve allocation is shooting ourselves in the foot. Mr. Brown asked why does Police income go to the general fund; it should go to the Police budget, which could eliminate their reserve. Mr. Richards suggests Police revenue go into their Reserve fund. Ms. Ambuhl noted can break out Police Dept. income for the Town Report. There is no amount in **Grant Match** allocation -- Manager Gunter explained there are now about six (6) years of grants "in the pipeline". Mr. Richards said there is need to be prepared -- future discussion re: reserve minimum/maximum amounts policy. Manager Gunter said such a policy exists and he will make copies for members. There was lengthy discussion re: paving

options; the status of the State grant for Scotch Hill; started with a paving plan (10 year cycle); that Airport Road needs ditching; paving West and South Park Place before the State paves downtown. Mr. Brown **made a motion to reduce the Police Vehicles & Equipment allocation by \$5,000; Streets and Sidewalks by \$5,000; and Municipal Building by \$5,000**; seconded by Mr. Viger. This cut makes the general fund budget increase 3.4%; the highway/ municipal budget increase 3.9%. The motion carried.

Revenue Budget: There is increase in **Town Clerk** recording fees (\$3,000); increase in **Transfer Station** recycling income, and West Haven fee (\$7,000); \$11,000 from **Solar array** at Transfer Station; increase in **Police Dept.** from fingerprinting and special services (\$18,700). **Interest** income is down.

A La Carte List: Members reviewed the list of items not funded in the operating budget. There was lengthy discussion re: full time Rec Director; lack of facilities; many families cannot afford fees; too expensive. The \$250,000 allocation from the recently approved Federal Omnibus Appropriation Bill is earmarked to finish work on the Municipal Building. The building is on the National Historic Registry. Mr. Traverse **made a motion to include on the ballot, Shall the voters of Fair Haven allocate \$32,000 for Rec and Park maintenance fund**; seconded by Mr. Viger and passed with Mr. Brown dissenting.

Ballot Questions: Members consensus is to include **Elimination of Elected Auditor** noting that those elected in the past have made no effort and done no work.

Mr. Traverse **made a motion to include, Shall the voters of Fair Haven vote to appropriate \$50,000 of the total \$138,835.00 fiscal year 2021-22 General Fund carry forward to the Municipal Building Reserve Fund, used for exterior paint and repair**; seconded by Mr. Viger and passed unanimously.

Mr. Traverse **made a motion to include, Shall the voters of Fair Haven vote to appropriate \$16,000 of the total \$116,777.00 fiscal year 2021-22 Public Works carry forward to the Public Works Vehicles and Equipment reserve fund**; seconded by Mr. Greenough and passed unanimously.

There was brief discussion re: adopting the Declaration of Inclusion. The Town already has an inclusion policy. Inquiring about the old racetrack; Hubbardton Forge owns but does not use; Is that property for sale; Have reached out with no reply; Town put in water/sewer for them at a high cost.

Executive Session: Mr. Traverse moved the Board and Manager Gunter into **executive session** at 9:15 p.m. to discuss personnel, VSA ¶ 313 (a)(3); seconded by Mr. Viger and passed unanimously.

The Recording Secretary was excused at this time.

The Board came out of executive session at 9:45 pm

Mr. Brown motioned to **adjourn** at 9:46 seconded by Mr. Traverse

Respectfully submitted: Claire Stanley

Glen Traverse, Board Clerk