

TOWN OF FAIR HAVEN, VERMONT

**SELECTBOARD; Water and Sewer Commissioners; Liquor Commissioners; Cemetery Commissioners
Municipal Building, Fair Haven, VT -- February 9, 2021 -- 7:00 P.M. -- REGULAR Meeting**

Zoom Meeting Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89969578971>

Phone: 1 929 205 6099 | Meeting ID: 899 6957 8971

APPROVED MINUTES

Members Present: Bob Richards, Jeff Sheldon (on phone), Jay Brown, Carol Egan, Glen Traverse

Others Present: Town Manager Joseph Gunter, Recording Secretary Claire Stanley, Department of Public Works (DPW) Superintendent Aaron Kerber, William Chmielewski, Peg TV, Rod Holzworth, II, Linda Barker, Mayor Murphee, Police Chief Humphries (on phone)

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

Amendments to the Agenda: Mr. Brown moved to add School Resource Officer to New Business; seconded by Mr. Traverse and passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes: Mr. Traverse moved to approve the minutes of the January 26, 2021 meeting as written; seconded by Mr. Brown and passed unanimously.

Five Minutes for Public Comment: Mr. Holzworth reported seeing a large crowd of (many out of State) people at the gym last weekend. He inquired who's responsibility it is to make sure Covid-19 regulations are followed. He noted he is very much pro-business, but does not want to be on the map because infections are rising. Manager Gunter will contact Mr. Lulek, Health Officer to remind and review procedure with the owner.

Department Head Reports: (DPW) Superintendent Aaron Kerber reported:

- * The small snow events quickly eat into salt use. As of last Wednesday, we used less salt than at the same time previous years
- * The new truck is delivered
- * There was a broken spring on one of the trucks; overall the equipment is doing well
- * There was a water leak on Crippen Ave. Repaired
- * There was an incident of water in a basement; established the problem and it is repaired
- * The final sewer upgrade bids will have pre-bid review on the 18th
- * Have received several replies interested in the Adams and Academy Streets pump station request for proposal (RFP).

Town Manager Joe Gunter reports:

- * Police Dept. is slow lately
- * Received \$1350 in fines in January;
- * issued another \$500 fine to the owner of the First Street property; one of four junk cars was not removed
- * Expect to receive license to sell the 12 South Main Street property soon

- * The Airport Road property will be up for tax sale
- * Have received the Town Hall improvement bids; the cost is much greater; have contacted funding sources that are sympathetic; there are no Covid-19 relief funds available; the project can be cut back; the beam issue is resolved; make sure the upstairs is sound, stable and safe before proceeding
- * The attorney will draft a suitable letter re: taxes, insurance for the Maple Street house donation
- * While examining the Town Hall building for upgrade, the phone company found the existing system wanting. For \$400 system upgrade, the Town can realize a \$400/month saving.
- * Members signed the contract with Dubois and King for Park lights, and Park and Ride. There was discussion re: studies that seem anti-business, unnecessary and only delay work.

OLD BUSINESS

Trailer Replacement: Mr. Kerber reported the welder's recommendation is to not put any work into the trailer, it is not worth it. Mr. Kerber asked for this information in a letter. There is a new, not been in service 10 ton capacity trailer available in Hoosic Falls for \$12,000. Any others found have a delivery of 2 to 3 months. Mr. Brown made a motion to buy the trailer for \$12,000 plus an extra \$500 for chains; the funds to come from the DPW Equipment Reserve fund; seconded by Mr. Traverse. It was noted DPW has a \$100,000 excavator they cannot move. The motion carried unanimously.

Truck Loan -- Final Approval: Members signed the final loan paperwork for the truck that was delivered last week. Mr. Brown abstained.

Pump Station Loan -- Final Approval: Members signed the final approval for \$45,000 line of credit from Community Bank to match \$60,000 from the Sewer sinking fund for upgrade to Adams and Academy sewer pump stations. The annual payment is \$9,000; \$11./year for each customer on the base rate.

Interim Financing for Wastewater Plant -- Final Approval: Members signed the final approval for \$3,720,000 line of credit for Interim Financing for Wastewater Plant upgrade.

Voter's Guide Edits and Approval: Copies in members' packets. Chairman Richards said he is uncomfortable, in general with this document as it appears the Board is taking a position. Mr. Traverse said he feels the Board owes it to voters to understand what they are voting for. Mr. Brown sees no problem with the guide, but that voter tax money is used to mail it to them. He suggests rather, making copies to be left at Town locations for folks to take if they want. Ms. Egan noted this document is what the Board asked for. After lengthy discussion re: legality and procedure, Mr. Brown made a motion to draft a press release to post in all usual places pending a positive legal opinion from the Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT). The motion was seconded by Mr. Traverse and passed with Mr. Sheldon and Mr. Richards dissenting.

NEW BUSINESS

Dog Park Discussion: Ms. Barker reported she had contacted Manchester, Middlebury and West Rutland that reported no problems with volunteers slacking off; would do it again. She has received

many responses from Mayor Murphee's on-line post; has been researching fund raising ideas and best location for a dog park; continues to make masks; has raised \$450 to date for a dog park. Mr. Richards and Mr. Traverse feel it is a good idea; the Air Park would be a good place. It would be necessary to draft rules; dog problem discipline; plan for a large and small dog area; only licensed dogs allowed; no alcohol/smoking; if self-policing does not continue -- to close it. Ms. Barker requests to have an account set up for fund raising money to be deposited for that purpose.

Sewer Abatement and Policy Discussion: Info in members' packets. There is no sewer abatement for any reason in this ordinance. Discussion was to look to past practice re: how were requests for abatement handled; establish a maximum abatement amount; to request from VLCT sample verbiage for ordinance to allow only pool fills and leaks not going into sewer. If a homeowner requests a second meter with dedicated water line for outdoor use only, it is at homeowner expense.

School Resource Officer (SRO): Mr. Brown reported he has read that there possibly will be a law to no longer allow SROs in schools, and if that does happen, that officer will not become another officer on the force. Mr. Brown made a motion that if the SRO position is eliminated at the high school, that officer does not end up a fifth officer on the Fair Haven Police Force; seconded by Chairman Richards. Manager Gunter noted he would not do that; the contract would be eliminated and the money (salary) would roll into the General Fund. The motion failed with Mr. Brown and Mr. Richards dissenting.

Parking Lot: It is suggested that one or more of the Parking Lot items be included in Old Business so some of the items can be checked off; to include Town Hall Refurbishment into Project Updates.

Board Roundtable: Mr. Brown noted there are a truck and a police car that need to be lettered. *When is the water allocation for 30 South Main Street expected? *Re: the Camara water line leak issue, it should go back to the contractor -- Neither Manager Gunter or Mr. Kerber is aware of any problem. * Re: large amounts of delinquent water bills noted in the Town Report -- why is the Town still providing water to these properties? Re: large delinquent tax amounts not going to tax sale. Manager Gunter stated the State does not recommend tax sale(s) during Covid-19 crisis.

Review of Financial Reports: The checkbook status is \$526,822.18

Mr. Sheldon moved to approve payment of the Payroll warrant for \$30,637.75; seconded by Mr. Brown and passed.

Mr. Sheldon moved to approve payment of the General Fund Warrants of \$74,512.10; seconded by Mr. Brown and passed.

Mr. Brown moved to adjourn at 8:55 p.m.; seconded by Mr. Traverse and passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Claire L. Stanley



Jeff Sheldon, Board Clerk