

TOWN OF FAIR HAVEN, VERMONT

Selectboard, Water & Sewer Commissioners, Liquor Commissioners, Cemetery Commissioners
Tuesday, May 31, 2022 – 7:00 PM Agenda

Zoom Meeting Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81560988777>

Phone: 1 929 205 6099 | Meeting ID: 815 6098 8777

UNAPPROVED MINUTES

Members Present: Glen Traverse, Chairman Chris Cole, Bob Richards, Jay Brown, Rich Greenough

Others Present: Mike LaDuke, Ryan Muratorri, Lauraine Lawrence, Jim Britt (PEG TV), Linda Sienkiewicz, Linda Barker, John Lulek, Dept. of Public Works Supt. Aaron Kerber, Chuck Delancy

Call to Order: Chairman Chris Cole called the meeting to order and led the assembly in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Amendments to the Agenda: Mr. Traverse **made a motion** to add to New Business, “*Authorize Liz Ambuhl, Book Keeper to have access to the Town accounts*”; add to Executive Session, “*Real Estate*”, 1 VSA ¶ 313 (a)(2). The motion was seconded by Mr. Richards and passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes of May 17, 2022: Mr. Richards moved to **approve the Minutes of the May 17, 2022** meeting; seconded by Mr. Traverse. CORECTIONS. Pg. 6, ¶ 2, line 4, “Mike” Bruno; line 8, “~~a~~adventure”; Pg. 7, ¶ 4, line 1 “trailerred”. The motion carried as corrected

Meeting with Renters for Water Bill Payments: Ms. Lawrence stated she is current with her water bill at 10 Adams Street and was not aware until very recently that her brother at 12 Adams Street owes \$4031. The property is two apartments, two meters, one shutoff. There was a payment agreement last year that was broken. Mr. Brown suggests entering into another (one time) payment agreement with both tenants; if the brother does not agree and make payments, water will be shut off. Discussion included: the Town is not the agency to access Covid relief funding; they can contact Fair Haven Concerned that can help with application. Manager Gunter stated that the Town cannot shut off water service if one tenant is current with payment; the Town’s only option is to sell the property. Mr. Richards suggests that the payment agreement be strict and aggressive.

Manager Gunter stated that the Airport Mobil Home Park owes a water bill totaling \$22,600 and \$22,050 in taxes. He has talked with tenants re: a water line leak that has not been repaired; no payment(s) have been received since the last two payments made with Covid relief funding. Mr. Brown stated he is in favor of shutting off the water service; it is not fair to other water users. Mr. Delancy stated he did repair the water leak; only 4 of the 16 tenants are paying. He said he makes payment to Debbie Eddy; she sends it to Probate. He is at a loss as to how to proceed since the property is in Probate with the Landlord. Mr. Richards said, “you need a lawyer”, the Town has no control; the landlord is responsible; contact Legal Aid; contact Fair Haven Concerned for help in determining how to proceed. The Town cannot continue to carry this debt. Manager Gunter stated the only option the Town has is to sell the property. He sees that as an opportunity to use the property to improve the Town. Many payment agreements were entered into with no effort made for payment. Chairman Cole stated he does not see any change coming; after brief further

discussion, it was agreed that water service will be shut off tomorrow. The process for the Town is, water shut off, then tax sale. Tax sale is for the land, not the trailers. Tenants then have to remove their trailers and find a different place to live.

Five Minutes for Public Comment: Ms. Linda Barker expressed concern re: the Air Park gate that is in disrepair. She presented photos showing peeling paint, dislodged/leaning anchor post. The purpose of the gate is to stop vandalism (doing donuts) in the field during mud season. Mr. Brown suggested removing the gate and using a cable. Mr. Greenough prefers using the gate rather than cable for safety reasons. Mr. Traverse stated he does not want DPW spending more time at the dog park causing further backlog in their other work. It was determined that the gate would stay; if the dog park committee is willing, they can paint it (yellow).

Ms. Barker stated receipt of a bill for the water line to the dog park; she requests itemized receipts. She stated they have not received a bill for topsoil the committee feels is poor quality. DPW Supt. Kerber stated two loads of topsoil at \$20./yard were delivered there. He has not received a bill for it yet. He stated the Town crew spent a week at the dog park, time not spent working other projects for the Town. He will prepare receipts as soon as the information is available.

Linda Sienkiewicz expressed concern re: a tractor trailer parked on Washington Street that blocks the view when driving from West Street causing danger. Mr. LaDuke said he had talked with Chief Humphries about the truck parking there. The Chief reported the truck is parked legally and that nothing can be done. Mr. Traverse said the Board has the ability to change the area to a no parking zone. Mr. Brown noted doing that would cause more problems elsewhere.

Department Head Reports: Mr. Kerber Dept. of Public Works (DPW) Superintendent reported:

- * The Dept. was busy preparing for the Memorial Day Celebration
- * Swamp Road patch and shoulder work
- * Did a water line repair on Caernarvon Street; waiting for parts to do a permanent repair; moved a service line away from the utility pole
- * Follow up work on complaints
- * Did troubleshooting on the River Street pump station. Found the defective part; ordered new one today
- * The Adams Street pump station is one step closer to completion
- * Little left to do at the Sewer Plant; working on the security system and landscaping
- * Experienced an increased water use this week; will continue to monitor and hope it will stabilize
- * Mr. LaDuke reported there are 29 meters left to change including 9 at vacant properties and 3 Town owned. Need to discuss how to address the large meters at the High School and Laundromat.
- * Mr. Brown asked who is doing the shoulder work on Swamp Road. DPW Supt. Kerber stated they will do the work because there is no budget to hire it done; he plans to use grindings. Mr. Brown suggests getting a price to hire the machine and operator to do the shoulders more quickly
- * Mr. Brown inquired who did trash pickup after Spring Fling; he expressed concern that overtime was paid; suggests that next year, the Chamber be responsible for trash pickup.
- * 22A grinding/paving starts tomorrow at the New York State line
- * Chairman Cole noted DPW did a good job at the dog park; earlier negative comments were out of line. Also, Memorial Day preparations were very well done; the Park looked nice; everything went very well.

Town Manager Report and Communications: Manager Gunter reported:

- * **Police Report** in members' packets
- * There were 100 Municipal traffic violations
- * 32 civil finger printings done @ \$20. each
- * Tickets were issued for every dog complaint received starting May 23rd

Manager's Report

- * A court date for a hearing re: excessive junk at 10/12 Adams Street is scheduled for June 14th
- * Have scheduled a hearing, with the Select Board for the vicious dog issue at Appletree Apartments for June 14th at 6:30 pm, before regular meeting
- * Going well with the server
- * The IRS is looking to take action at the Airport Road Trailer Park; they owe large sums to the IRS
- * The Fur Haven Dog Park grand opening is scheduled for June 5th
- * Letters went out to every Trailer Park residence in a timely fashion; red slips were hand delivered to every residence

OLD BUSINESS

Policy Review Continues -- Purchasing Policy: A draft of suggested edits are in members' packets. Mr. Traverse discussed suggested changes and noted changes are recommendations only. Amounts in the Bidding Procedure section were adjusted to better reflect current values and were discussed at length with Supt. Of Public Works Kerber. Reserve funds can be used only with Select Board approval; all purchase orders are signed by the Town Manager who is the authorized purchasing agent. The use of P-Cards (Procurement Card) was discussed. The Town does not use them; Mr. Greenough stated that in some cases, P-Cards are a savings; are more efficient for small items. Currently, quotes are very volatile and, in some cases, are good for only a week, and sometimes change daily. This policy will be on the next agenda for approval.

NEW BUSINESS

Grant Match Request for Playground: Due in part because the price of mulch has increased, the playground project is \$1,594.88 short for completion. Fair Haven Grade School has offered to pay half of the shortfall (\$797.44). Mr. Richards **made a motion to approve an additional \$797.44 from the Grant Match fund** for the Playground replacement project; seconded by Mr. Traverse and passed unanimously.

Mr. Brown **made a motion to Authorize Bookkeeper Liz Ambuhl Access to Town Accounts;** seconded by Mr. Traverse. Ms. Ambuhl will start work June 6, 2022, at 8:00 am. The motion carried unanimously.

Water/Sewer Budget -- Water Budget Discussion: Budget and debt information in members' packets. Board discussion included Mr. LaDuke and DPW Supt. Kerber. Mr. Traverse inquired, is there a chance to reduce the Capital Improvement allocation. Mr. LaDuke stated they are doing more work in-house in an effort to keep costs down. Discussion included: how best to use ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) dollars in light that the Water/Sewer budget is expected to see an \$88,000 increase. There followed lengthy discussion including, what part of administration salaries is used in this (water/sewer) budget; possibly paying off bond debt(s) using ARPA funds;

suggestions for keeping costs down as much as possible. Manager Gunter will prepare three (3) budget options to review next meeting.

Mr. LaDuke introduced Ryan Muratorri who has been at the Water Plant for the last year working toward licensing.

Parking Lot: Removed **meter changes**; **Town Plan** not started; working on **Zoning Regs update**

Manager Gunter reported receiving a call asking that if meter was to be changed, it would have to be done Saturday or Sunday morning. Contacted Mike who said he would do it, holiday weekend.

If all items/articles fall into place including Senator Sanders' proposal, replacing Adams Street Bridge in 3 to 5 years out.

Board Roundtable: Mr. Greenough reported a few complaints re: upkeep of Cedar Grove Cemetery. He understands they are shorthanded. Mr. Greenough complimented the Police Department for their excellent job this weekend. Nothing was overlooked; it went like clockwork

Mr. Richards reported on a conversation with his son, who is a chef looking for help. They received one application offering \$20/\$25 per hour with good benefits. He defends Town employees' pay.

Review of Financial Reports: Mr. Richards **moved to pay the General Fund Warrant, \$646,682.52;** seconded by Mr. Brown. The School payment is \$574,000. The motion carried with Mr. Traverse abstaining.

Mr. Richards **moved to pay the Payroll Warrant, \$34,056.71;** seconded by Mr. Brown and passed with Mr. Traverse abstaining.

The **checkbook status** is, \$586,748.34

Executive Session: Mr. Traverse **moved the Board and Town Manager into executive session** at 9:13 pm to discuss Personnel: Labor Relations, 1 VSA ¶ 313 (a)(1); Real Estate, 1 VSA ¶ 313 (a)(2); seconded by Mr. Brown and passed unanimously.

The Recording Secretary was excused at this time.

Out of **Executive Session** at 9:50 P.M.

Motion was made a seconded to **sign the AFSCME contract** Local 1201, Council 93, AFL-CIO

Respectfully submitted: Claire Stanley