

## TOWN OF FAIR HAVEN, VERMONT

Selectboard, Water & Sewer Commissioners, Liquor Commissioners, Cemetery Commissioners

**REGULAR MEETING -- Tuesday, June 27, 2023 -- 7:00 PM**

**Zoom Meeting Link:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85646551688>

**Phone: 1 929 205 6099 | Meeting ID: 8564 655 1688**

### UNAPPROVED MINUTES

**Members Present:** Glen Traverse, Bob Richards, Chadd Viger, Jason Coupal, Rich Greenough

**Others Present:** Town Manager Joe Gunter, Recording Secretary Claire Stanley, Steven Wilson, PEGTV

**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:** Mr. Coupal **made a motion to add** "Slate Valley Electric" and "Two Applications for Trustee of Public Funds" to NEW BUSINESS; seconded by Mr. Greenough and passed.

**Approval of Minutes:** Mr. Viger **made a motion to approve the minutes** of the June 16, 2023, meeting as written, except the spelling of Mr. Coupal's name on Page 1; ¶ 2; seconded by Mr. Greenough and passed.

Mr. Coupal **made a motion to approve the minutes** of the June 20, 2023, special meeting; seconded by Mr. Traverse and passed

**Five Minutes for Public Comment:** None

**Department Head Reports:** **Town Manager Gunter Reported:** The detailed Police report is in members' packets.

\* There were 22 Municipal violations in the past two weeks

\* Did 15 citizen fingerprints

The **Dept. of Public Works (DPW)** crew patched the hole(s) at the end of the Main Street bridge.

\* Did install the waterline into the Municipal building -- need to finish grass seeding

\* Will replace the Allen Street storm drain tomorrow, rain or shine

\* Are doing cold patch work as needed

\* Two workers are out; one on medical leave, one on vacation; back in early July

\* Had a person ask, "who's the new guy at the Transfer Station"? It is TJ Covenor, a new DPW hire. He is doing a great job.

**Town Manager Report & Communication:** Manager Gunter reported:

\* Had a visit from VCDC that reviewed the Town Hall project

\* Finishing the sidewalk project; have applied for another grant (\$500,000) for the project. Manager Gunter questions some areas in the downtown sidewalk section. Members reviewed drawings of the area. Discussion included how to incorporate the memorial slates in the new design; for some

areas, is grass preferred or colorized concrete; there have been two more than required public hearings on the project. Members will study the drawings and make decisions at the next meeting.

\* Someone contacted the office re: a sink hole at the corner of Caernarvon and First Streets

\* Saturday is the end of the fiscal year. The Town (010) budget is 99.34% spent; the highway budget is 101% spent, is over mostly due to high fuel costs.

\* Manager Gunter said he is glad to have this year behind us

\* Tax rate should come out some time next week; waiting for school rates from the State

## **OLD BUSINESS**

**Parking on North Main Street:** The Collettes are not in attendance. Chairman Richards commented there is not a lot that can be done. Mr. Greenough suggested a handicapped space in each of the restricted spaces only on Sunday mornings noting he does not know that this can be done anyway. Mr. Coupal said he feels the Church should take the lead on this matter and present a proposal.

**Right of Way for Airport Road Solar Project:** Fair Haven Solar requests right of way on Munger Road to the proposed electric substation on Airport Road just north of the highway. There was lengthy discussion including: the right of way is to allow access to build and maintain the solar field on Munger Road and the Bishoff property, and bury an electric cable to the substation: can this project be taxed; Mr. Coupal noted the Town should ask for something, license fee or property tax; after the project is built, will the Town be expected to maintain the road; Chairman Richards noted it is a class 4 road, not required to be maintained -- winter maintenance is on them. Members reviewed the agreement and noted this is the time to make fair and reasonable requests. Members stated support for the Solar project but noted the need for going through due process. Mr. Greenough thinks we should meet with them. Mr. Traverse inquires, is this underground electric line proposed to be near/on the same side of the road as the Town's main water line. Chairman Richards reported they have not presented plans to the Planning Commission. Manager Gunter said he will follow through with these questions. There is language in the agreement that the right of way will be returned to the Town at the end of the project life.

**Truck Loan Approval:** Mr. Traverse **made a motion to approve** signing a loan for \$37,490 with Community Bank, 5 years at 5.06% for a used DPW truck (already purchased). The motion was seconded by Mr. Viger and passed unanimously.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

**Transfer Station Credit:** Mr. Greenough **made a motion to approve** Transfer Station Credit as requested by Dan Gray; seconded by Mr. Traverse and passed unanimously.

**Trustee of Public Funds Applications:** Mr. Coupal **moved to table this matter** until the applicants are invited to attend for interview; seconded by Mr. Viger and passed unanimously.

**Handicapped Space:** Mr. Traverse **made a motion** to live to the ordinance and deny, without prejudice, the request from the Episcopal Church for handicapped parking spaces; seconded by Mr. Coupal. This Board is still open to a logical solution. The motion carried unanimously.

**Water/Sewer Budgets – Water/Sewer Budget:** Manager Gunter prepared options with percentage increases and rate sheets for members. Chairman Richards stated there is little wiggle room except the Manager’s presentations. The discussion was re: Reserve allocations. The Water Dept. fund has \$372,715; the Sewer fund is at \$37,089. Mr. Coupal stated he appreciates efforts to keep the budget down, but putting small amounts into these funds will never reach the \$250,000 goals; we are responsible for the future. Mr. Viger suggested allocating \$40,000 to the sewer reserve fund; zero to the water reserve fund as we need to build the sewer fund first. Mr. Coupal **made a motion to allocate** \$40,000 to the sewer reserve fund; zero to the water reserve fund; seconded by Mr. Viger. The motion carried with Mr. Traverse and Mr. Greenough dissenting.

Manager Gunter reported that the DPW is frequently called out to homes reporting a plugged sewer line that turns out to be on the homeowner’s property and not a Town issue. He has added a \$100 inspection fee to the “rates” sheet. Mr. Coupal **made a motion to include #8 Plugged Sewer Inspection, \$100 per call (waived if Town owned sewer in plugged)**; seconded by Mr. Viger and passed with Mr. Traverse dissenting.

Mr. Coupal **made a motion to approve the water/sewer rates:**

Sewer base rate \$25.00/qtr. (no change)  
Sewer metered 14.52/1000 gal (\$1.21 increase)

Water base rate \$38.50/qtr. (no change)  
Water metered 8.12/1000 gal (\$ .17 increase)

The motion was seconded by Mr. Viger and passed with Mr. Traverse dissenting.

**Policy Review: Refund and Small Credit Policy:** At present, the policy requires property tax overpayments over \$5.00 to be refunded, and under \$5.00 to be rolled over to the next payment period using a cumbersome process. After discussion, it is the consensus of the Board that all property tax overpayments shall be returned to the homeowner regardless of amount. Manager Gunter will make changes to the policy for signature at the next meeting.

**Parking Lot:** Mr. Traverse suggested adding “*Transfer Station Operation*”. There followed discussion including: Manager Gunter stated people expect better service; will work to improve operation and service; ideas such as increasing revenue by accepting materials from other Towns; do away with the Transfer Station and go to sidewalk pickup; re-thinking the traffic flow. Chairman Richards noted there must be funding out there for these projects. Manager Gunter stated he will monitor the Transfer Station more closely.

Chairman Richards stated that Zoning had their first public hearing; two people submitted very constructive ideas. The Zoning regulations will be submitted to this Board the beginning of August; the Town Plan is due next June.

**Board Round Table:** At Mr. Greenough’s inquiry, Manager Gunter has no further report on the DPW engineering study

Mr. Coupal reported he is taking walking tours in an effort to familiarize himself with the Town while enjoying the good weather.

Mr. Viger spends a lot of his free time at the playground with kids and seeing what can be done for recreation. He feels there could be revenue with concessions; a bicycle track could be built (humps and bumps) with little effort.

Chairman Richards said we should be getting ready to provide lighting for Concerts in the Park -- to check with the high school, or rent from construction company. Manager Gunter said DPW has adequate lights. \* Chairman Richards asks that the Main Street bridge be investigated -- there are holes on both ends of it. The bridge is inspected yearly, should be this summer.

**Review of Financial Reports:** The **checkbook status** is \$581,616.11.

Mr. Traverse **moved to pay the Payroll Warrant, \$38,353.54**; seconded by Mr. Coupal and passed unanimously.

Mr. Traverse **moved to pay the General Fund Warrant, \$98,343.08** seconded by Mr. Viger and passed unanimously.

**Executive Session:** Mr. Traverse **moved the Board and Town Manager Gunter into executive session** at 9:03 pm to discuss Personnel 1 VSA 313 (a)(3); seconded by Mr. Coupal and passed.

The Recording Secretary was excused at this time.

The board came out of executive session at 9:20 no actions taken,  
Mr. Traverse motioned to **adjourn**; Mr. Coupal seconded. Meeting adjourned at 9:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted: Claire Stanley

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Glen Traverse, Board Clerk