

## TOWN OF FAIR HAVEN, VERMONT

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

**REGULAR MEETING -- Tuesday, July 11, 2023 -- 7:00 PM**

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

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

**Test APPROVED MINUTES**

**Members Present:** Glen Traverse (on Zoom), Bob Richards, Chadd Viger, Jason Coupal, Rich Greenough

**Others Present:** Town Manager Joe Gunter, Recording Secretary Claire Stanley, Steven Wilson, PEGTV, Town Accountant Liz Ambuhl, Office Assistant Eileen Richards, Rec Director Ryan Lawrence, Luke Vadnais, Police Chief Humphries.

**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. Traverse **made a motion to add** *"Fair Haven New Revolving Loan"* to NEW BUSINESS; seconded by Mr. Greenough and passed.

**Approval of Minutes:** Mr. Traverse **made a motion to approve the minutes** of the June 27, 2023, meeting as written; seconded by Mr. Viger and passed.

Mr. Traverse **made a motion to approve the minutes** of the July 4, 2023, special meeting as written; seconded by Mr. Greenough and passed.

**Five Minutes for Public Comment:** The Board heard from Luke Vadnais who expressed appreciation for the work done by this Board. He reported displeasure among parents re: lack of support from the Town for recreation for kids; specifically, such a low wage for the part time Rec Director. He feels the rec program cannot grow/improve with a new Director every year. The program has no equipment except what parents buy for their own kids, and pass down to younger kids; there are no winter sports as in surrounding Towns because there is no money; wish Fair Haven could do more for the kids. Mr. Coupal asked is there another solution except hiring a full-time Rec Director. Chairman Richards noted in the past, there were many volunteers that formed a Rec Committee and he feels a Committee is needed now; it is tough to budget higher amounts; Mr. Vadnais wants to see kids be a priority -- at this time parents are having to make time to mow the fields before games; very often the bathroom trailer cannot be used because of vandalism (currently one port-o-let), not inviting to parents. He stated there are a lot of good people willing to do good stuff and give of their time -- just need some help. Mr. Coupal asked which new project would be most apt to involve parents. Mr. Vadnais stated that Rec Director Ryan Lawrence is doing a good job, but can't continue at such a low salary. Chairman Richards noted this is different times and a full-time Rec Director would need to be

sold to the community. Mr. Viger noted there are approximately 300 kids participating in Rec Programs; he understands folks don't want taxes to increase, but feels folks are open to spending money when results are seen. Mr. Traverse stated there is money in the budget for equipment. Mr. Vadnais commented on possible fund raising ideas including, selling signs on a permanent fence; sponsorships, concessions could raise a large amount considering out of town families attending games; the Rec programs could probably be self-supporting if the Town would fund it for a couple years. Chairman Richards said a full-time Rec Director should be a high priority; can they get a committee together to prepare numbers for the next budget season. We will do better. Mr. Greenough suggests to start by getting a committee to find out, specifically, what is needed and estimated cost. Members thanked Mr. Vadnais for all he and other parents are doing for the kids.

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

- \* Have started making improvements at the Transfer Station; one person in the shack with the second person assigned to cleaning up containers and grounds
- \* Spoke with Bonnie Rosati who will have a book drop off box there
- \* Am working on a Request for Proposal (RFP) for a new roof on the Water Treatment Plant. The roof is leaking. More to come.
- \* Talked with the baseball coach; need equipment. There is \$1500 in the budget for equipment -- far too little for needs, considering equipment is very expensive (baseballs at \$8.00 each). Mr. Viger said there is need for field work beyond mowing
- \* Letters went out to homeowners re: trimming bushes at corner of Caernarvon St. and Allen Ave.
- \* The new homeowners permit(s) packet is done. Does not contain State permits but a link for those is included
- \* Have sent out 7 or 8 onesies along with welcome packets
- \* Have spoken with the Historical Society re: some (historic) homes are "falling apart". There are funds available for homeowners to make improvements to their homes. These funds need to be re-paid. Chief Humphries suggests drafting a code
- \* Have applied for a \$500,000 Mines Undergraduate Research Fellowship (MURF) no match grant for energy efficiency in this building
- \* Chairman Richards received an e-mail re: Electric Vehicle (EV) charging stations. Manager Gunter will investigate
- \* **Dept of Public Works (DPW)** is doing upgrade on Bigelow Hill following the rain(s)
- \* At Chairman Richards inquiry, Manager Gunter agreed that if asked for help from other Towns re: flood issues, Fair Haven DPW can assist/donate help
- \* Mr. Viger inquired is the Emergency Plan up to date; is there adequate communication with the Grade School re: using the building as a shelter -- are they ready for shelter use. Chairman Richards stated we are absolutely not organized for an emergency; need to discuss specifics. Manager Gunter disagrees.

**Department Head Reports: Police Chief Humphries Reported:**

- \* Detailed report in members' packets including revenues
- \* There were 2 arrests (52 yr. to date), about average
- \* 33 traffic/municipal violations issued (1041 yr. to date)

- \* 11 written warnings (33 yr. to date)
- \* 1 car crash (14 yr. to date)
- \* Completed 14 civilian fingerprints (285 yr. to date)
- \* Executed multiple search warrants working with State Police and Homeland Security investigating ongoing missing persons case at 1209 Prospect St.
- \* Participated in Touch a Truck in the Park
- \* Police were present at the Lumberjack Show
- \* Responded to a "birds in the attic" complaint
- \* State Police continue to investigate the recent shooting event; Officer Shaun Hewitt is back part time; seems to be doing well
- \* Ptl. Mark Gutel begins his 3rd year with the Dept.
- \* There were 137 calls for service (2379 yr. to date)
- \* Are communicating with Rutland Police Dept re: helping if needed at Patrol Officer funeral

## **OLD BUSINESS**

**Appointment of Trustee of Public Funds:** Manager Gunter reported there were two applications; one sent a letter requesting she no longer be considered for the position. Ms. Jeanne Tobin will fill the three (3) year position until the next election.

**Downtown Sidewalk Grant Discussion:** Manager Gunter stated he needs guidance on some items of the project. The memorial slates, presently at tree locations will be placed in the new mini park. Members want additional information before deciding on how to treat the median between the street and sidewalk (stamped concrete, gray or colored concrete and estimated extra cost) -- the medians on side streets are grass. Will have a decision next meeting.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

**Fair Haven New Revolving Loan Fund -- Applications:** Manager Gunter reported the Economic Development Committee (EDC) approved two applications at their last meeting. 1) for \$15,000 to purchase a building for a new business, Green Mountain Elite Sports, as requested by Mr. Chadd Viger. 2) for \$10,000 to purchase a walk-in cooler as requested by Donuts of Rutland. They are expected to start their building project on Washington Street in three (3) weeks; expecting to have 9 new jobs. Mr. Coupal **made a motion to approve and support** the \$10,000 Revolving Loan grant application as requested by Donuts of Rutland and approved by the EDC. For equipment, a business has three (3) years to repay their loan. The motion was seconded by Mr. Greenough and passed unanimously.

Mr. Coupal **made a motion to approve and support** the \$15,000 Revolving Loan grant application as requested by Green Mountain Elite Sports and approved by the EDC. A business has five (5) years to repay the loan. The motion was seconded by Mr. Greenough and passed with Mr. Viger abstaining.

**Refund and Small Credit Policy:** Mr. Viger **made a motion to approve the changes** to the Refund and Small Credit Balance Policy; seconded by Mr. Greenough. Eileen Richards explained that most folks with overpayments prefer to have that amount credited to the next billing that makes the bookkeeping simpler in the office. The motion carried unanimously.

**Parking Lot:**

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; are working on the Town Plan due next June; when that is ready will work on the Downtown designation.

**Board Round Table:** At Mr. Greenough's inquiry, Manager Gunter is getting plans from other Towns for a DPW garage building at the Air Park. He feels, however that without knowing the extent and cost of site (clay soil) work, building costs are not very helpful.

At Chairman Richards inquiry, Manager Gunter reached out to the Solar Field company and has received a map from them that is not very helpful

**Review of Financial Reports:** The **checkbook status** is \$581,488.47.

Mr. Traverse **moved to pay the Payroll Warrant, \$39,475.00**; seconded by Mr. Coupal and passed unanimously.

Mr. Traverse **moved to pay the General Fund Warrant, \$221,425.67** seconded by Mr. Coupal and passed unanimously.

**Executive Session:** Mr. Greenough **moved the Board, Town Manager Gunter and Town Accountant Liz Ambuhl into executive session** at 8:23 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 8:51 pm  
Mr, Viger motion to adjourn; Mr. Traverse seconded; Meeting adjourned at 8:53pm; no actions taken

Respectfully submitted: Claire Stanley

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Glen Traverse, Board Clerk