

TOWN OF FAIR HAVEN, VERMONT

Selectboard, Water & Sewer Commissioners, Liquor Commissioners, Cemetery Commissioners
REGULAR MEETING -- Tuesday, August 8, 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, Jason Coupal, Rich Greenough

Members Absent: Chadd Viger

Others Present: Town Manager Joe Gunter, Recording Secretary Claire Stanley, Steven Wilson, PEGTV, Town Accountant Liz Ambuhl, DPW Foreman Nate Saxton, Auditor Ron Smith (on zoom)

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.

Audit Discussion with RHR Smith: Mr. Smith gave an overview of the work done auditing the finances of the Town of Fair Haven. He prepared a management letter that offers comments and suggestions for strengthening internal control and improving daily tasks, making sure all money is where it is supposed to be. He noted to make sure the Town Accountant has support. Her job was made more difficult by the building renovation. A great deal of effort was made to make the next audit easier. Mr. Coupal said he is glad that Mr. Smith recognized Liz's efforts; what can we do to support her work. Mr. Smith said she needs support, training, lists, calendar of affairs -- day to day, month to month tasks. Chairman Richards asked was there a most urgent issue. Mr. Smith noted to focus on Bank reconciliation -- post monthly, include what the money is for. Mr. Traverse inquired re: purchase orders. Mr. Smith noted the process is not consistent with the Town's own procedures. Mr. Smith reported the Town has a good and accurate system; are financially fine; and to make sure to stay on top of re-imburements. The Board thanked Mr. Smith for his time and effort. Manager Gunter reported the purchase order issue has been addressed. There is work to do.

Amendments to the Agenda: Mr. Coupal **made a motion to add "Personnel"** to Executive Session; seconded by Mr. Traverse and passed.

Approval of Minutes: Mr. Traverse **made a motion to approve the minutes** of the July 25, 2023, meeting; seconded by Mr. Greenough. CORRECTION. Pg. 2, 3rd point under Town Manager Report; remove "new"; add "site for" . . . The motion carried.

Five Minutes for Public Comment: None

Department Head Reports: DPW Foreman Nate Saxton reported:

- * Are doing clean up; cutting brush; filling potholes where needed
- * Getting ready for a culvert on Highway 69
- * Mowing
- * Crosswalks will be painted before school opens
- * Mr. Coupal noted that the crosswalk signs in the middle of the street are being hit. These were purchased by the Police Dept. with a grant; hitting the signs is a violation of law, could be cited by police.

Town Manager Report & Communication: Manager Gunter reported:

- * **Police Dept.** Report in members' packets
- * There were 22 violations; 2 car crashes; 16 finger printings
- * The Municipal Energy Resilience Program (MERP) grant application is turned in to the State. This no match grant deals with the Town Hall upgrade; insulation, air conditioning, heating system; discussed possible solar and energy storage. Mr. Traverse suggested is solar feasible at the wastewater plant or is the grant for the municipal building only.
- * There were no bids for the water plant roof; have re-done it, due the 21st
- * Meeting tomorrow at 10:00 re: the Park and Ride upgrade
- * The Historical Society is researching photos and artifacts to place on Town Hall walls
- * Have repaired one of the playground toilets; waiting for parts for the other. The handicapped toilet still needs repair.
- * The 20-year Wastewater plant evaluation is coming up. Carrie is working on preparing the RFP

OLD BUSINESS

Downtown Sidewalk Grant Discussion: Manager Gunter researched and found cost of landscape design software range to \$2900. Have received no response from Castleton University for student interest. Renderings for the downtown green space would cost \$2500. The project is over budget due to inflation and will continue to go up. Chairman Richards stated that usually renderings are part of the original cost of design, that this is not a big deal; said he could talk to D & K; we are not asking for much. Mr. Coupal said there is a need to see what we are voting for in the small design changes, need a full measure of resources to make those decisions and not just educated guesses. We cannot be expected to know details of what this looks like. Manager Gunter said there is a (per hour) cost to having them attend a meeting for discussion. Mr. Saxton noted the blueprints are available and show details. Manager Gunter reported D&K will be here Thursday at 10:00.

Planning Commission Member Discussion: Manager Gunter advertised the open position on Facebook with no response. Mr. Traverse said this Board should wait for a formal request from the Planning Commission before reducing the Commission numbers. The matter was tabled.

Recreation Discussion: Meetings are scheduled with the Rec Committee on the 14th and 28th. GMP can install two poles and string the wire for \$6076. The Town also has two poles at the playground. The school monitors cameras but the resolution is poor because the playground is

not well lit. Have contacted Royal Glass to check out camera placement at the playground and at the Municipal Building.

NEW BUSINESS

Water Line Inventory -- RFP Decision: Three bids were received for the State required water-line inventory to check if/where there is lead. The State offers a \$120,000 forgivable loan; any cost over that amount is borne by the Town. Mr. Traverse **made a motion to accept the low bid of \$89,500 from Aldrich and Elliott** as recommended by Manager Gunter; seconded by Mr. Greenough. It is expected that they will inspect water lines and confirm there is no lead. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Viger arrived at 7:45 pm.

Water/Sewer Connection Permit Approval -- Dunkin Donuts: Manager Gunter noted that Dunkin Donuts broke ground at their new location on Washington Street, corner of Fourth Street. Their request is for \$25,000, the maximum amount for energy efficient construction. Mr. Greenough **made a motion to support the Community Grant application** as requested by Dunkin of Rutland; seconded by Mr. Viger and passed unanimously.

Mr. Coupal **made a motion to support the installation of directional signs**; seconded by Mr. Greenough. The grant match is paid by businesses advertised on the sign; the signs are maintained by the State; to be placed at the highway exit(s). The motion carried unanimously.

Truck Loan Discussion: The new dump truck was received two weeks ago. Mr. Greenough **made a motion to sign the loan contract**; seconded by Mr. Coupal and passed. Members signed the document

Scrap Metal Cash: Mr. Greenough **made a motion to deposit the \$1972 received from the sale of scrap metal** into the Dept. of Public Works Equipment Reserve Fund; seconded by Mr. Traverse and passed unanimously.

Chairman Richards noted the positive improvement(s) at the Transfer Station. Thanks to the DPW crew, it looks very good there.

Parking Lot:

Chairman Richards stated that the transcribed **Zoning Regulations** have been returned from Regional. Work on the **Town Plan** begins at the next meeting.

Board Round Table: Mr. Greenough urges the Board to resume discussion re: Town owned property(s) to move someday/somehow forward. Discussion included: that it is unknown how some of the properties came to be owned by the Town; research needs to be done by Listers to determine that the Town does indeed own the property; some are remote and unsalable. Just

don't want to have this "fall through the cracks". * Mr. Greenough reported a bush on Academy Street that is obstructing the road. Mr. Saxton went to look at the problem today. Manager Gunter will contact the homeowner.

Mr. Coupal reported that Ruby Bistro opened for business yesterday.

Mr. Viger commented that one person from the Rec Committee intended to attend tonight to state there are more things to do at the playground to curtail vandalism. Mr. Coupal noted these items are for the next budget; research for grants to see how much can be done with grants. Chairman Richards stated that Stewarts Shops have grants intended for youth.

Chairman Richards stated he sent information to members re: sub station improvements. It will be moved from Cottage Street to just off Airport Road, north of the highway. The move also serves to get the sub station out of flood area.

Review of Financial Reports: The **checkbook status is \$946,527.69.**

Mr. Traverse **moved to pay the Payroll Warrant, \$40,232.67**; seconded by Mr. Greenough and passed unanimously.

Mr. Traverse **moved to pay the General Fund Warrant, \$47,787.50** seconded by Mr. Coupal. The motion passed unanimously.

Executive Session: Mr. Viger **moved the Board and Town Manager Gunter into executive session** at 8:20 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 8:59 pm

Mr. Viger motioned to adjourn; Mr. Coupal seconded

Meeting **adjourned** at 9pm

Respectfully submitted: Claire Stanley

Glen Traverse, Board Clerk