

## TOWN OF FAIR HAVEN, VERMONT

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

**REGULAR MEETING -- Tuesday, January 9, 2024 -- 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, Tucker Babcock, Peg TV, Police Chief William Humphries, Lyle Jepson (on phone), Peter Schneider (on phone).

**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.

**Peter Schneider, Discussion About Skyline Building:** The Board heard from Peter Schneider from Vermont Energy Investment Corporation who is heading up a project to do an assessment of the former Skyline building to bring mobile home construction back to Fair Haven. Mr. Schneider said the business would employ 75 to 100, working to build high efficiency, improved specification standards, affordable homes. He has met with Manager Gunter, and with Lyle Jepson of Rutland Regional Chamber & Economic Development. He stated his role would be to consult and support, provide assistance with permitting. The project begins with a feasibility study to determine work force, condition of the building and financing. Have applied for a \$120,000 grant, part of which can be used by the Town to pay for help managing the funds. At chairman Richards' inquiry, the Town's responsibility is to manage the money, review proposals, and meetings and updates. Mr. Schneider said an optimistic estimate of the timeline to full operation is the end of 2025. Mr. Jepson offered a less optimistic timeline of 2027. Mr. Schneider noted the factory is not heavily automated; that a lot of equipment is still at the location; expect to be able to build up to 3 homes per day; that affordable factory-built homes are in high demand. There was discussion re: the process of securing a grant, permitting, contracting an operator, etc. The Town needs help during the feasibility study -- a lot can be learned during that phase. The Board thanked Mr. Schneider for his interest, time and work on this project for Fair Haven.

**Mike Stannard -- Ash Tree Survey Report:** Mr. Stannard did not attend.

**Amendments to the Agenda:** Mr. Traverse **made a motion to add to Executive Session:** Personnel/Contract 1 VSA 313 (A)(1); seconded by Mr. Greenough and passed.

**Approval of Minutes:** Mr. Traverse **made a motion to approve the minutes** of the December 12, 2023, meeting as written; seconded by Mr. Greenough. CORRECTION. Pg. 4, ¶ 3; . . . to mowing sites “is safer in a pickup bed and not with personal vehicle”. The motion carried as corrected.

Mr. Traverse **made a motion to approve the minutes** of the December 21, 2023 meeting; seconded by Mr. Coupal and passed.

**Five Minutes for Public Comment:** None

**Department Head Reports: Police Chief Humphries reported:** Detailed reports of the first 7 days of January are in members’ packets. There were: 3 arrests, wrote 36 tickets, 15 warnings. There were 4 accidents and 70 calls for service. Chief Humphries is starting his 20th year as Police Chief; James Riehl is starting his 20th year with the Dept. The Dept. is working/learning with the new computer system.

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

- \* A special thank you to Liam Laramie who served several months on the Economic Development Committee. He is going back to school.
- \* A **Candidate Night** is scheduled for Saturday, March 2, 2024 at the library.
- \* Have invoices for playground damage
- \* The Town Hall renovation is finally done (after 5 years). All funds are paid except USDA that is always paid last.
- \* The OSHA reporting for the Town Hall renovation is done -- there were 3 minor injuries.
- \* Received word from the auditor, the audit will not be ready for inclusion in the Town Report
- \* A shout out to the DPW Crew for their work during the last snowstorm
- \* The Transfer Station draft permit application is sent to the State
- \* Have been keeping up with filling potholes, especially on Scotch Hill

## **OLD BUSINESS**

## **NEW BUSINESS**

**Planning Commission Membership:** Mr. Coupal **made a motion** to reduce the number of members from 7 to 5 with the understanding that this matter will be re-visited; seconded by Mr. Traverse. It has been difficult to reach a quorum at meetings. The motion carried.

**Tobacco and Liquor Licenses:** Mr. Coupal **made a motion to approve** a Second-class Liquor License, a Tobacco License and Tobacco Substitute Endorsement as requested by R. L. Valley. The motion was seconded by Mr. Traverse and passed unanimously.

Mr. Coupal **made a motion to approve** a Second-class Liquor License, and a Tobacco License as requested by Global Montello Group. The motion was seconded by Mr. Traverse and passed unanimously.

Mr. Coupal **made a motion to approve** a Second-class Liquor License, a Tobacco License and a Tobacco Substitute Endorsement as requested by Stewarts Shops Corp. The motion was seconded by Mr. Traverse and passed unanimously.

**Equipment Purchase, Fire Dept. Reserve:** Mr. Greenough **made a motion to approve the purchase** of 4 sets of turnout gear, cost \$17,261, paid from the Fire Dept. Reserve fund; seconded by Mr. Traverse and passed unanimously.

**Loan Approval for Lead Line Inventory:** Mr. Traverse **made a motion to approve** signing the application; seconded by Mr. Coupal. The lead water line inventory is State required; accepted by this Board in June 13, 2023; loan will be forgiven when the work is done. The motion carried unanimously.

**Zoning Board Appointment:** Mr. Coupal **made a motion to appoint** Bonnie Rosati and Cindy Adams to the Zoning Board for terms of 3 years and 3 months ending in March 2027; seconded by Mr. Traverse. Their terms were moved off schedule over 10 years ago by then Town Manager Peter Hathaway. This appointment, allowed under 24 VSA ¶ 4460 (b)&(c) gets their terms back on schedule. The motion carried unanimously.

**Warning Review:** Manager Gunter said the Warning has been updated. Members reviewed the Warning and made a change to article 4 removing the Fire Dept. purchase of a brush truck. Discussion included security cameras at the playground, in the Park and at the Town Hall; that petitions were stopped during COVID but need to be re-instated. Requests are due on the 18th. If no invalid petitions are submitted, the Board will approve the Warning on this date.

**Parking Lot:** No discussion

**Local Accomplishments:** Manager Gunter stated he feels the need to bring down the Tax Rate and would like to include revenue discussions on future agendas. Members said this is a good idea and would like to include input from all Dept. employees and the public.

**Board Round Table:** Chairman Richards inquired re: is there a central place where information such as appointment terms are kept. Chief Humphries noted terms are published in the Town Report

**Review of Financial Reports:** The **checkbook status is \$760,120.58.**

Mr. Traverse **moved to pay the 12/26/23 Payroll Warrant, \$32,484.74;** seconded by Mr. Greenough and passed unanimously.

Mr. Traverse **moved to pay the 12/26/23 General Fund Warrant, \$391,123.06;** seconded by Mr. Coupal and passed unanimously.

Mr. Traverse **moved to pay the 1/11/24 Payroll Warrant, \$35,798.24**; seconded by Mr. Coupal and passed unanimously.

Mr. Traverse **moved to pay the 1/11/24 General Fund Warrant, \$84,917.03**; seconded by Mr. Greenough and passed unanimously.

**Executive Session**: Mr. Traverse **made a motion to enter executive session**, including the Town Manager at 8:17 p.m. to discuss Personnel/Contract, 1 V.S.A. ¶ 313 (a)(1); seconded by Mr. Greenough and passed unanimously.

The recording secretary was excused at this time.

The Board came out of executive session at 8:25pm.

Mr. Traverse motioned to allow the Police Chief Humphries to join VMERS Plan D; seconded by Mr. Coupal and passed unanimously.

Board **adjourned** at 8:30pm

Respectfully submitted: Claire Stanley

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Glen Traverse, Board Clerk