

## TOWN OF FAIR HAVEN, VERMONT

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

**REGULAR MEETING -- Tuesday, February 6, 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, Lillian E. Billewicz, Johnathan Billewicz, Rose Anne VanLew, Joshua Helton

**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:** None

**Approval of Minutes:** Mr. Traverse **made a motion to approve the minutes** of the January 23, 2024, meeting as written; seconded by Mr. Greenough. CORRECTION. Pg. 4, ¶ 2. Mr. Coupal moved to strike "*with Mr. Coupal dissenting*"; seconded by Mr. Traverse and passed. The motion carried as corrected.

**Five Minutes for Public Comment:** Ms. VanLew explained that she started a petition re: the proposed downtown project because she had expressed concern about parts of the project at a earlier meeting and did not get a reply. She was encouraged to try to get it on the Town Meeting ballot. Ms. VanLew stated that she is not opposed to the entire project, but has concerns about parking for deliveries, etc. She also suggests that plans be included on the Town website as folks do not have information. Mr. Coupal said that it is on the ballot as advisory, and that if it passes, we cannot ignore the will of the voters. Mr. Greenough said he also has concerns re: parking citing the danger of a small car trying to back out after being parked beside one of those long pickup trucks. Mr. Coupal also agreed that there are pieces of the project of concern to him. Ms. Billewicz said that if the article is to be binding, the wording must be precise. Chairman Richards noted that concerns could be worked out to accommodate most issues. Chief Humphries noted that Brandon had done a huge downtown renovation with complaints and concerns. However, the Town has made a complete turnaround. There are new businesses, the Town is cleaned up and crime has declined. The same could happen in Fair Haven.

At Mr. Billewicz's inquiry, no, Manager Gunter will not be disciplined re: an asbestos issue.

**Department Head Reports: Police Chief Humphries reported:** Detailed reports are in members' packets. There were: 2 arrests; wrote 35 tickets, completed 12 sets of civilian fingerprints. The Dept. responded to 3 car crashes and 101 calls for service. Chief Humphries stated that Officer Shaun Hewitt is retiring, though he will remain as part-time firearms instructor. Officer Hewitt is a loyal employee, never missing a shift. He possesses considerable and valuable knowledge. Have hired Ian Quinn as part-time officer; Officer Breesee is beginning his 6<sup>th</sup> year as part-time officer with the Dept. One car has front end damage due to an accident; it is drivable.

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

**Dept. of Public Works (DPW)** continues ditching; filling potholes; hot box received today

- \* Have done interior work, tool inventory
- \* Met with Wilk Paving to review this year and next paving plans
- \* Mr. Stannard said the cost for injecting Ash trees is \$50 to \$100 per tree; need to be done by a professional
- \* Will meet with BLINK and GMP to review plans for installing Electric Vehicle chargers
- \* Have contacted the State re: reclassifying Munger Road to Class 4 correcting their mistake
- \* The Rec Dept. will take down the playground pine trees at a cost of \$5000; \$1500 from the Town; they will fund the rest. They are doing a good job.
- \* Carl Scott and Manager Gunter continue to paint the Park fence rails
- \* The Historical Society will be looking for help cleaning the Park fence marble posts
- \* Mr. Coupal inquired re: the Solar Array Co. right of way on Munger Road; how extensive will be the work to lay the electric line
- \* At Ms. VanLew's inquiry, the Town benefits from the solar array at the Transfer Station, but not from those on privately owned property

**OLD BUSINESS**

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Appointment of Mr. Coupal to the Bus Board:** Mr. Traverse **made a motion** to appoint Mr. Jason Coupal to the Marble Valley District Board; seconded by Mr. Greenough. Mr. Coupal noted that this Board asks that there be a Board member from each Town served, that he volunteered for the position. The motion carried.

**March 5th Meeting:** Mr. Traverse **made a motion** to skip the March 5, 2024 Select Board meeting as recommended by the Secretary of State; seconded by Mr. Greenough and passed.

**Cemetery Deeds:** Mr. Traverse **made a motion to approve** the sale of cemetery lot 76, section 11 in Cedar Grove Cemetery for \$945, as requested by Daniel and Holly Boyce; seconded by Mr. Greenough and passed.

Mr. Traverse **made a motion to approve** the sale of cemetery lot 167, south section 11 in Cedar Grove Cemetery for \$545, as requested by Stephanie Putorti; seconded by Mr. Coupal and passed.

Mr. Traverse **made a motion to approve** the sale of cemetery lot 66, south section 18 in Cedar Grove Cemetery for \$2045, as requested by Steven, Kelly and Mathew Wood; seconded by Mr. Coupal and passed.

Mr. Traverse **made a motion to approve** the sale of cemetery lot 190, section 11 in Cedar Grove Cemetery for \$945, as requested by Mary Jane Spaulding; seconded by Mr. Greenough and passed.

**Policy Review -- Social Services Policy:** A copy of the policy last amended in November, 2021 was given to members to review for discussion at a later date.

**Property Tax Stabilization Efforts – Discussion:** The Board asked to focus on this topic at every meeting. Mr. Coupal said he was not aware that Local Options tax had been voted down twice; is there a way to calculate the amount of income this might generate in Fair Haven. It was noted that the State determines what items can and cannot be taxed. Ms. VanLew reported that a lot of folks were against the tax because so much went to the State. Mr. Traverse noted that a lot of Vermont Towns have the tax; he suggests to use Town funds to hire an expert to do a study to determine the impact on Fair Haven revenue. Manager Gunter said all sources of revenue should be considered for possible development. Suggestions included: fees for commercial enterprises; increase of cemetery plot sales; revise Transfer Station punch cards; booth fees at events (Town maintains the park, picks up garbage, mows, etc.). Mr. Coupal noted we should try to increase revenue in ways that do not impact Fair Haven citizens.

**Parking Lot:** Chairman Richards reported the Committee is starting to include new language in the **Town Plan** and thanked the Water & Sewer Depts. for their input.

### **Local Accomplishments:**

**Board Round Table:** Mr. Greenough he would like to have attended the meeting with Wilk paving but was not aware of it. He continues to caution that prep work must be done before paving or the work will not hold up. Even if we do only a half mile a year, that it be done it right.

Mr. Coupal reported he had a very nice meeting with Lyle Jepson, CEDRR who offered a committee appointment. He is eager to do what he can, does not yet know what committee he will be assigned.

Chairman Richards reported meeting with Town Representative Bill Canfield who gave him contact information for financial help re: Scotch Hill. He told them that Scotch Hill is the driveway to two State Parks and feels the State should be responsible to help fund the road maintenance. Mr. Traverse spoke to the Class 2 paving grants that have not been received for several years, understanding the (flood) needs of the State at large. Mr. Coupal suggests to inquire about State Park attendance.

Chairman Richards noted a potentially dangerous tree problem at 19 West St. Manager Gunter said the tree is on private property.

**Review of Financial Reports:** The **checkbook status is \$1,088,523.19.**

Mr. Traverse **moved to pay the Payroll Warrant, \$30,959.13**; seconded by Mr. Greenough and passed unanimously.

Mr. Traverse **moved to pay the General Fund Warrant, \$121,771.61**; seconded by Mr. Coupal and passed unanimously.

**Executive Session:** Mr. Traverse **made a motion to enter executive session**, including the Town Manager at 8:08 p.m. to discuss Personnel, 1 V.S.A. ¶ 313 (a)(3); Real Estate 1 VSA ¶ 313 (a)(2); seconded by Mr. Greenough and passed unanimously.

The recording secretary was excused at this time.

The Board came out of executive session at 9:30pm

Mr. Coupal motioned to adjourn; seconded by Mr. Traverse with no actions taken.

Meeting **adjourned** at 9:31pm

Respectfully submitted: Claire Stanley

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Glen Traverse, Board Clerk