

TOWN OF FAIR HAVEN, VERMONT

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

REGULAR MEETING -- Tuesday, March 19, 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, Chadd Viger, Michael Doran, Rich Greenough

Others Present: Town Manager Joe Gunter, Recording Secretary Claire Stanley, Tucker Babcock, Peg TV, Police Chief William Humphries, Rose Anne VanLew, Stephen Messiter, Peter Galligan, Roger Smith, from RC Flyers, Mike LaDuke, Sean Galvin, Marcia Haas, on phone.

Call to Order: Town Manager Gunter called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and led the assembly in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. He noted that this is the first meeting since Town Meeting; he congratulated Mr. Michael Doran on his election and welcomed him to the Board.

Board Reorganization: Manager Gunter took nominations for Board Chair. Mr. Traverse **nominated Bob Richards** for Board Chairman; seconded by Mr. Greenough. There being no more nominations Mr. Richards was voted to serve as Chairman unanimously.

Mr. Greenough **nominated Mr. Traverse** for Board Clerk; seconded by Mr. Viger. There being no more nominations, Mr. Traverse was voted to serve as Board Clerk unanimously.

Set Day and Time for Meetings: Mr. Viger **made a motion to continue meetings every other Tuesday at 7:00 p.m.**; seconded by Mr. Traverse and passed unanimously.

Adopt Board Rules: Mr. Traverse **made a motion to accept the Town of Fair Haven Selectboard Rules of Procedure** as written; seconded by Mr. Doran and passed unanimously.

Designate Paper of Record: Mr. Traverse **made a motion to designate the Lakes Region Free Press** as the Paper of Record; seconded by Mr. Viger and passed unanimously.

Meeting with RC Flyers: Mr. Stephen Messiter thanked the Board for allowing the RC Flyers to use the Air Park for the past many years. He is here tonight requesting to continue using the Air Park for another year. Mr. Peter Galligan reported that in the past, the Flyers have made donations to local charitable organizations rotating Police, Fire, Rescue and Fair Haven Concerned, planning to continue this activity. They are affiliated with the Academy of Little Aeronautics, a national organization advocating safety. The RC Flyers also request permission to make repairs, at their expense, to the "runway" that is rutted and has many large potholes. Mr. Traverse stated that the Board is making efforts to increase revenue and would rather that

expense be in the form of a stipend for use of the Air Park. Mr. Traverse **made a motion to approve the use of the Air Park as requested by the RC Flyers with a \$1000 stipend** to be paid to the Town; seconded by Mr. Viger. The Dept. of Public Works (DPW) will grade the runway and deposit gravel as needed for pothole repair. The motion carried unanimously.

Amendments to the Agenda: None

Approval of Minutes: Mr. Viger **made a motion to approve the minutes** of the February 20, 2024, meeting as written; seconded by Mr. Traverse. CORRECTION. Pg. 2, last ¶, 1st line. . . Mr. Traverse. . . ; Pg.3, 1st ¶, 1st line. . . Mr. Traverse . . . The Minutes were approved as corrected.

Five Minutes for Public Comment: Ms. Rose Anne VanLew thanked Board members for their service to the Town. She spoke re: the Town Meeting vote about the downtown renovation project noting that she is not the only one with concerns. She asks, now will the Board listen to the voters or push through with the project. Chairman Richards stated that at previous meetings, it was discussed that if we can get the money, it is hoped that the project can be done with modifications. Ms. VanLew asked, was DuBois and King given direction/plans for the project or were they just asked to do a renovation. Chairman Richards responded, of course there were plans and studies. Mr. Traverse commented that the downtown renovation is an important project and should happen -- that there is room for some tweaking. Chairman Richards noted that public hearings were held; that the renovation would have a traffic calming effect; and how it is done is worth talking about. At Ms. VanLew's inquiry, yes, the sidewalk dedications will be incorporated into the new sidewalk as planned.

Mr. Sean Galvin commented that some effort needs to be made to educate voters about how their tax dollars are spent, noting, as example, the appropriation for Regional Ambulance. Do voters realize that there is an ambulance service in Fair Haven. He said that the approximately \$170,000 in appropriations is added to the tax burden and high taxes are causing people to leave. He said going back to requiring petitions, maybe would not solve the problem, but it is a start; he noted that, of course all the appropriations are for good causes; is it possible to vote appropriations from the floor and not by ballot. Mr. Traverse reported that the Board had recently reviewed and discussed the appropriations policy at length.

Department Head Reports: **Water Dept. Chief Mike LaDuke reported:** The Water Dept. is working very well at this time. * We have drastically reduced the amount of water production. * Mr. LaDuke asked the timeline for roof construction. Manager Gunter reported the contractor said they would start early to mid-April. * Mr. Traverse reported getting calls re: responding to the lead pipe search. Mr. LaDuke said that program ends October 1st and has nothing to do with the Water Dept. There is a number to call for information at the bottom of the letter received. Mr. LaDuke reported that as far as he is aware, no lead pipe has been found. * Chairman Richards commented that the access ladder at the south tank is an attractive nuisance where kids are climbing it. Needs to be removed when not in use. Replacing it with a safety ladder is very expensive -- approximately \$40,000. Mr. Galvin noted if there is a viable plan in place, OSHA would waive the \$70,000 compliance fine. Mr. Greenough

asked if there is sufficient funds in the reserve account to replace the ladder with one compliant with safety regulations. Manager Gunter will research this issue.

Police Chief Humphries reported: Detailed reports are in members' packets. There were: 2 arrests; wrote 98 tickets; 6 sets of civilian fingerprints; 2 car crashes and responded to 228 calls for service. Chief Humphries reported the Dept. escorted the winning girls' basketball team in a parade around the community. Re: car upgrade. VLCT will pay \$4700 for the old car; can get a five-year newer car for \$3000. Mr. Greenough said to just "do it". Chief Humphries is actively looking for qualified help due to resignation(s). Mr. Greenough commented that people need to be out where they can be seen for drivers to stop at a crosswalk. Chief Humphries noted that for a violation, the person crossing must be at the edge of the crosswalk or in a bump out.

Town Manager Report & Communication: Manager Gunter reported:

- * The sewer backup on Fourth Street has been flushed; requires more work
- * Finishing the demolition cleanup at 5-7 Union Street
- * Have received five (5) applications for coin drop. The deadline for applications is April 16th
- * The school has students to do community service. They will be working cleanup in the center of Town -- First St., Union St., etc.
- * Another Lister is needed. Can apply for this paid position by sending a letter of interest. Listers appraise the taxable value of property; requires a lot of work in April; their assessment does not affect the Common Level of Appraisal (CLA) impacting the school budgets.
- * Rutland Regional is very much behind the Fair Haven Downtown sidewalk renovation project

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

Appointment of Trustees of Trust Fund: Mr. Traverse **made a motion to appoint Ms. Jeanne Tobin and Mr. Mike Barsalow** as Trustees of Public Funds; seconded by Mr. Doran and passed unanimously.

Appointment of Zoning Administrator: Mr. Traverse **made a motion to re-appoint Phil Adams as Zoning Administrator;** seconded by Mr. Greenough and passed unanimously.

Liquor Licenses: Mr. Traverse **made a motion to approve a First-class Bar License and Third-Class Restaurant/Bar license for Jekyll & Hyde Inc.** seconded by Mr. Greenough and passed.

Mr. Traverse **made a motion to approve a First-class Club License, a Third-Class Club license, and an Outside Consumption permit for the Eagles Club Aerie #3907** of Fair Haven; seconded by Mr. Doran and passed.

Mr. Traverse **made a motion to approve a Tobacco Substitute Endorsement for Global Montello Group** (Jiffy Mart Store 680); seconded by Mr. Doran and passed.

Mr. Traverse **made a motion to approve a Second-class Liquor License for Brockton Corporation, DBA Shaws**; seconded by Mr. Greenough and passed.

Return Grant Funds: The Town was awarded a \$200,000 structures grant in 2022 for the Adams St. Bridge replacement; that project was estimated at over 2 million; the grant was to be used as matching funds. The 2 million grant was not funded. The State has said, the \$200,000 can be returned and the Town can apply for another (same amount) grant that can be used on Scotch Hill near the swamp area to keep water out of the road. Mr. Traverse **made a motion to return the \$200,000 Structures Grant** to the State; seconded by Mr. Doran. Mr. Viger noted it is not that the Board does not want to pursue replacing the Adams Street Bridge, but it is cost prohibitive. The motion carried unanimously.

Approval to Apply for Structures Grant for Scotch Hill Road: Mr. Greenough **made a motion to approve application for a \$200,000 Structures Grant** to be used for repairs near the swamp area on Scotch Hill Road; seconded by Mr. Viger. Contractors are in the process of drafting estimates of cost for this project. Chairman Richards noted there will be two studies done, at a later date on Scotch Hill including the Rutland Regional traffic study. The motion carried unanimously.

Parking Lot: Chairman Richards reported his committee expects to finalize and approve the **Town Plan** at tomorrow's meeting. It will then go to surrounding Towns for comments; then Public hearings will be held. Expect to have the finished Town Plan done by June 30, good for 7 years.

Local Accomplishments: Congratulations to the Girls' basketball team for their win; the wrestling team for their division first place; the 6th grade Girls' basketball team; the 6 golds won in the Martial Arts tournament held in St. Albans by the local Makoto team. Thank you to Mr. Scott and Mr. Gunter for volunteering to paint all 300 plus park fence rails. The Yoga studio opens on Monday; they received a Revolving Loan for start up. Ms. VanLew noted that all the storefronts are in business at this time.

Board Round Table: Mr. Greenough reported receiving a few calls asking why election results were not posted sooner; need to do a better job of that. * Mr. Greenough has prepared a plan for parking on West Park Place after it is paved. He asks to have this on a future agenda for discussion. * Mr. Greenough commented on the \$2000 insurance bill that Mr. Stevens has to pay to cover the 4-hour Lumberjack show that benefits the Town. Is there anything that can be done to help him out. Mr. Viger noted it is not a Town sponsored event. Manager Gunter volunteered to start a "Go Fund Me" social media page.

Mr. Viger commented that folks seem to be unaware of Board activity leading to complaints of secrecy. The Board is transparent, there are no secrets. Are there other ways to communicate Board / Town activities. Can the Economic Development Committee put out a newsletter periodically; Mr. Doran suggests using social media understanding that not all people are on computers. Mr. Viger said he does not have answers now; it is something to think about.

At Chairman Richards inquiry, there will be a secondary reach out by the lead pipe inventory people. * There will be 3 electric vehicle charging stations in the renovated South Park Place parking area. * Mr. Richards reported he was told that the Welcome Center sees 600,000 people each year. There is a section in that building that can be used by the public and/or the Town for displays and advertising. He feels it is an unused resource that could have signage to continue driving to downtown Fair Haven.

Review of Financial Reports: The checkbook status is **\$676,395.51**.

Mr. Traverse **moved to pay the Payroll Warrant, \$32,843.35**; seconded by Mr. Doran and passed unanimously.

Mr. Traverse **moved to pay the General Fund Warrant, \$217,460.70**; seconded by Mr. Doran and passed unanimously.

Executive Session: Mr. Traverse **made a motion to enter executive session**, including the Town Manager at 8:49 p.m. to discuss Personnel, 1 V.S.A. ¶ 313 (a)(3); and 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 9:50 pm

- Mr. Traverse made a **motion to approve the sale** of town property located at Lot 25-01-02 to Todd and Mary Ferguson for \$4,500. Mr. Doran seconded. Passed unanimously.
- Mr. Traverse made a **motion to approve the sale** of town property located at Lot 04-01-15 to Jacob Zakrzenwski for \$16,000. Mr. Greenough seconded. Passed unanimously.
- Mr. Traverse made a **motion to approve the sale** of town property located at Lot 24-51-77 and 24-51-77.01 to Jerry Sayers for the amount of \$30,000. Mr. Greenough seconded. Passed unanimously.

Mr. Viger motion to **adjourn** at 10:05 seconded by Mr. Doran.

Respectfully submitted: Claire Stanley

Glen Traverse, Board Clerk