

TOWN OF FAIR HAVEN, VERMONT

Selectboard, Water & Sewer Commissioners, Liquor Commissioners, Cemetery Commissioners
REGULAR MEETING -- Tuesday, November 12, 2024 -- 6:30 PM
Zoom Meeting Link: <http://us02web.zoom.us/j/85646551688>
Phone: 1 929 205 6099 | Meeting ID: 8564 655 1688

APPROVED MINUTES

Members Present: Glen Traverse, Bob Richards, Chadd Viger, Mike Doran, Rich Greenough

Others Present: Town Manager Joe Gunter, Peg TV, Johnathan Billewicz Lillian Billewicz, Rose Anne VanLew, Mike Pavelec, Laura Padroni, Ron Smith, Teri Perry, Cindy Prichard, Lorraine Brown, Chief Humphries FHPD, Ptl. Tyler Duel FHPD, Don Proctor FHPD, Chief Heller FHPD; Chris Lawrence (joined remotely)

Call to Order: Chairman Richards called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and led the assembly in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Executive Session: Mr. Travers **made a motion to enter into Executive Session** at 6:31 p.m. to discuss personnel 1 VSA 313 (a)(1) and to include Teresa Perry; seconded by Mr. Viger and passed unanimously.

The Board came out of executive session at 6:59pm. Mr. Traverse **made a motion to hire Teresa Perry as the Town Accountant;** seconded by Mr. Greenough.

Meeting with the Auditor: Ron Smith from RHR Smith joined the meeting remotely. Mr. Smith provided the board an overview of the FY23 audit. He noted the town's difficulty reconciling accounts since the accountant left in 2022. According to Mr. Smith The Town just lacked "accounting DNA".

Mr. Billewicz interrupted the conversation asking if the auditor had found misappropriation of federal funds. No, Mr. Smith responded, there were no misappropriation of federal funds.

Mr. Billewicz interrupted the auditor again asking if he was licensed to work in the state of Vermont. Yes, Mr. Smith replied he is licensed in 5 states including Vermont and has sat on some of the highest federal regulatory boards.

The Auditor has already scheduled dates to come to Fair Haven in December to work on the FY24 audit. Mr. Smith has already met with Ms. Perry and Mr. Gunter. They reviewed the management letter and are working on corrective actions.

Mr. Smith concluded that the town was in the same place financially at the end of FY23 as it was at the end of FY22.

Amendments to the Agenda: None

Approval of Minutes of October 29, 2024: Mr. Traverse **made a motion to approve** the minutes of the October 29, 2024, meeting as written; seconded by Mr. Doran and passed unanimously.

Five Minutes for Public Comment:

Mr. Lawrence requested that crosswalk improvements be made downtown. Specifically, he would like to see flashing crosswalk signs at the crosswalk near the bus stop.

Ms. Billewicz asked if the auditor's report could be posted to Facebook.

Mr. Pavelec agreed with Mr. Lawrence and said improving all the crosswalks along Main St. should be done.

Ms. Padroni also agreed and added that it is dark on Main St. across from the park and lighting needs to be added all along the sidewalks to improve the space and make it more business friendly.

Ms. Van Lew wanted to congratulate the Slater football team on their championship win. She also congratulated a group of black belt recipients from the local Dojo.

Mr. Billewicz asked about the parking space downtown close to the crosswalk Mr. Lawrence mentioned.

Ms. Brown said she has many items in her garage from the Itty-Bitty Committee she no longer wishes to store there. She requested that the board provide a space for the items or pay for rental space.

Ms. Billewicz asked if the second floor of the town hall was completed and perhaps the Itty-Bitty Committee could use the second floor for storage.

Department Head Report:

Chief Humphries provided the Selectboard with an update for the Police Department. He will provide revenue updates at the next meeting.

Town Manager Report & Communication: Manager Gunter reported:

- * Letter had been sent out concerning water service lines to property owners who did not respond to previous requests for information.
- * The town was awarded \$389,000 to improve the energy resilience of town hall. This includes heat pump installation.
- * The second grant application for the Skyline study was submitted

- * The town crew has winterized the playground restroom, Cedar Grove Cemetery, and the dog park
- * The security Cameras will be installed next week
- * The exterior of town hall is scheduled to be painted late summer 2025
- * Public works used road grindings to improve Munger Rd.

Mr. Gunter noted that there is a Selectboard meeting scheduled for December 24th. The board decided to cancel that meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

- a. **Appointment to the Rutland Emergency Management Committee:** Mr. Traverse thanked the Chief for allowing the board reappoint him to the committee. **Mr. Traverse made a motion to appoint Chief Humphries and Chief Heller to the Rutland Emergency Management Committee;** seconded Mr. Doran. Passed unanimously.
- b. **Trash Hauling Contract:** Manager Gunter informed the board that the trash hauling contract with Casella will expire in June 2025. There is a 2-year contract extension. Manager Gunter queried the Selectboard if they wished to extend the contract or if they would like to rebid the services.

The board requested that Casella provide contract numbers before a decision is made.

- c. **Audit contract:** Manager Gunter informed the Board that the Audit contract expired in June 2025. The RFP was put out to bid in October. The town received one proposal, it was from the current auditor, RHR Smith.

Mr. Viger made a motion to accept the proposal from RHR Smith for 3 years of audit services; seconded by Mr. Doran. Passed unanimously.

- d. **Purchase Option – Skyline Grant:** Manager Gunter explained that the town has no intention of purchasing or leasing the former Skyline property. The purchase option is a requirement of the state that allows access to the property so the study can be conducted. However, the property owner had not provided a signed copy of the agreement for tonight's meeting.

The topic was tabled.

Budget Review Continues: Members reviewed selected sections of the budget line by line. No change was made to the **Town Manager, Emergency Management, Police, Police Training, Police vehicles/ equipment, Fire Dept Communications, Forest Fire Warden, Animal Control nor the Constable Department budgets.**

The board approved a \$5,000 increase to the Selectboard budget under the Economic Development line; Line number 010-3000-63.00.

The board approved a \$2,000 increase to the Fire Department's dues and meetings budget; Line number 010-4530-40.00. These funds are intended for "live fire training" in cooperation with the town of Poultney.

The board also approved a \$2,000 increase to the Fire Department's repairs and maintenance budget; Line number 010-454580-68.00. Funds are intended to purchase new tires for the fire truck. This will cover about half the tires needed.

Parking Lot: No Discussion

Board Roundtable:

Mr. Doran said the light on the flag pole is out again and needs to be repaired. He also wanted everyone to know he and his wife are doing the Fair Haven Light Tour again this year. It has grown larger over the years; it would be nice to have more than 30 homes sign up this year. Residents interested in joining the light tour can reach out to Mr. Doran using the email address he uses for town business and that is posted on the town website.

Mr. Traverse reported there has been speeding on First St. and would like to see this resolved.

Mr. Richards would like to see a schedule for the coming work on the second floor.

Review of Financial Reports: The **checkbook status is \$951,430.03**

Mr. Traverse **moved to pay the Payroll Warrant, \$36,111.80**; seconded by Mr. Viger and passed unanimously.

Mr. Traverse **moved to pay the General Fund Warrant, \$90,509.49**; seconded by Mr. Viger. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Traverse motioned to adjourn; seconded by Mr. Viger.

Meeting **adjourned** at 9:32pm.

Respectfully submitted: Joseph Gunter

Glen Traverse, Board Clerk