

## TOWN OF FAIR HAVEN, VERMONT

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

**REGULAR Meeting -- Tuesday, March 11, 2025 -- 7:00 P.M.**

**Zoom Meeting Link:** <http://us02web.zoom.us/j/85646551688>

**Phone: 1 929 2005 6099 | Meeting ID: 8564 655 1688**

### UNAPPROVED MINUTES

**Members Present:** Glen Traverse, Rich Greenough, Sam Lucci

**Members Absent:** Chadd Viger, Mike Doran

**Others Present:** Town Manager Joe Gunter, Recording Secretary Claire Stanley, Rose Anne VanLew, Walter Sperr, Victoria Angis, Jim Proctor, Bob Richards Lauri Notarino, Ann Finley, Neal Robinson, Patrick W. Frazier, Laura Pedroni, Lorraine Brown, Lillian E. Billewicz, Johnathan Billewicz, Ann Ellis, Donald Proctor, Jim Heller, Wayne Charlton, Teresa Perry.

**Call to Order:** Chairman Glen Traverse called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and led the assembly in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

**Planning Commission Report -- Bob Richards:** Mr. Richards reported that at their last meeting, three articles were added to the Zoning regulations; 1) a plan of development for new businesses; 2) subdivision regulations; 3) designated neighborhood regulations. Working to develop a Historical District by involving other Town agencies (Zoning Board, Historical Society, etc.) to do a walk through to identify and chronicle historic sites. Chairman Traverse said this will be on a future agenda after which the Plan will start the process for State approval that includes public in-put.

**Amendments to the Agenda:** Mr. Greenough **made a motion to add** to NEW BUSINESS d) *Set Tax Rate*; e) *VCDC Approval*; and add *Real Estate Negotiation VSA 313 (a)(2)* to Executive Session; seconded by Mr. Lucci and passed.

**Approval of Minutes:** Mr. Lucci **made a motion** to approve the minutes of the June 24, 2025 meeting; seconded by Mr. Greenough. CORRECTION. Mr. Frazier noted his comment about seeking input from other towns about switching water bills to electronic billing. Manager Gunter explained that minutes are not a narrative and only report summary of discussions. Mr. Lucci withdrew the motion; Mr. Greenough withdrew the second. Mr. Lucci **made a motion** to approve the minutes as ammended; seconded by Mr. Greenough and passed.

**Department Head Reports:** Work update from Water Dept. Reading meters, details of water maintenance, worked velocity caps, did regular testing, exercising valves.

\* Received a letter from Cindy Adams stating she will no longer be serving on the Zoning Board of Adjustments (ZBA). Thanked her for her years of service

\* Budget update for the Board; new budget started July 1. The General Fund ended the year 99.9% expended; Sewer 83% expended; Water 90.02% expended; Highway 101% expended.

- \* Update from Sewer Dept. – the plant is staffed 7days/wk, 10 hrs./day – weekends 4 hrs/day; June maintenance finished; daily testing; pump station cleaned; mowed/weed whacked. Letting us know they maintain the facility; doing an excellent job.

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

- \* Tax rate was set today enabling start of budget work; budget to go to this Board early October
- \* The Poultney Mettowee stormwater project is scheduled for early October
- \* Sidewalks are still a priority (last summer cleaned slate sidewalks); have been concentrating on the Transfer Station & Swap Shop
- \* Will be mowing at the Air Park now that Bobolinks have fledged
- \* Finalized the bridge loan for the purchase of the National Guard building; closing on July 14<sup>th</sup>

**Dept. of Public Works**

- \* Shout out to Shayden Coombs and Jeff Higgins who helped me with early morning work whenever asked
- \* Kelly Donaldson has 28 banners ready to go up; Jake Helm has volunteered lift for the work
- \* Governor Scott will visit on the 16th at noon at “the Old Racetrack” for discussion of Community Housing Improvement Program(CHIP) open to the public. Manager Gunter reported that ideas were submitted for this program, and that Representative Canfield had pushed for the legislation. Chip program allows borrowing from future taxes to help developers
- \* The class 2 grant is in -- expect Scotch Hill paving to start late August/early September
- \* A meeting tomorrow with Markowski re: Main Street waterline project end date
- \* At Mr. Lucci’s inquiry, Manager Gunter said the National Guard have pretty much cleared out of the building.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Appointment to the Planning Commission:** Mr. Greenough **made a motion** to appoint Sam Lucci to the Planning Commission; seconded by Chairman Traverse and passed.

**\$2500 Request from the Historical Society:** The Board heard from Victoria Angis who introduced members of the Society in attendance and reported the Society has been in existence since 1985. They have accumulated “a lot of stuff” and until last Spring were housed in two rooms downstairs. Ms. Angis explained the process/problems of re-locating upstairs including sharing space with the Fire Dept., lack of heat at the time. Heat pumps have since been installed. She reported the ceiling(s) are very high, peeling and show rust, needing paint. Also, the floor just outside the elevator is in bad shape needing rehab. They have received estimates for the job(s) and request \$2500 to do the work. Mr. Greenough noted understanding the work needs to be done, but we’ve got to find the money. Manager Gunter said work is on-going for air-conditioning with no definite timeline. Ms. Billewicz commented about a federal Welch grant. Ms. VanLew said the Board should try real hard to find the money. Manager Gunter said they are working on a building that has been neglected for a generation. Rehabilitation takes time. He is working, has contacted all state and federal agencies in an effort to find free money and asks for patience. Mr. Spurr noted he appreciates the request for patience, but painting the ceiling after moving into the space will be a major disruption. Mr. Greenough suggests doing the ceiling first and repairing the floor at the same time as the rest of the floor will be done. He cautioned that this Board cannot move money around at will -- that it must be budgeted. Funding ideas were presented including, fund-raising projects/donations.

**Approving Water/Sewer Rates:** Mr. Greenough **made a motion to accept** the 2025/2026 water use rate at \$8.46/1000 gal (\$0.16 reduction), and base rate of \$38.50. The motion was seconded by Mr. Lucci and passed. Members signed the document

Mr. Greenough **made a motion to accept** the 2025/2026 Sewer use rate at \$14.28/1000 gal (\$0.04 reduction), and base rate of \$25.00. The motion was seconded by Mr. Lucci and passed. Members signed the document

## **NEW BUSINESS**

**Outside Consumption Permit:** Mr. Greenough **made a motion** to approve an outside consumption permit as requested by Fall Mountain Wines, LLC; seconded by Mr. Lucci and passed.

**Unregistered Dogs List:** Manager Gunter reported there are 69 unregistered dogs. At Mr. Charlton's inquiry, it is unknown when the last dog census was done.

**Fire Dept. Compensation Policy Update:** Chief Heller reported a training compensation line item was added to their budget. Chairman Traverse said this Board had agreed, and this action is formalization. Mr. Greenough **made a motion** to approve the Compensation Policy for Fair Haven Fire Dept. Members; seconded by Mr. Lucci and passed.

**Set Tax Rate:** Manager Gunter reported the tax rate is lower this year and explained the reduction. Mr. Greenough **made a motion** to set the 2025 – 2026 Total Homestead Tax Rate at \$2.6042; seconded by Mr. Lucci and passed.

Mr. Greenough **made a motion** to set the 2025 – 2026 Total Non-Residential Tax Rate at \$2.9308; seconded by Mr. Lucci and passed.

**VCDC Approval:** Mr. Greenough **made a motion** to approve the VCDC grant; seconded by Mr. Lucci. Manager Gunter reported VCDC gave the Town \$60,000 to rehab the former Skyline building back to manufacturing homes. The motion passed

**Two Minutes for Public Comment:** Mr. Pat Frazier inquired re: what is included in cemetery perpetual care. He reported that his family gravestone(s) have been smashed -- they don't know what to do. Mr. Greenough said perpetual care refers to groundskeeping, not headstones.

Mr. Billewicz reported he has observed police officers on duty in private businesses and voiced concern that they are setting themselves up for possible lawsuits.

Mr. Robinson inquired re: the procedure to get input to the Planning Commission. Manager Gunter said to come to the office with information.

Ms. Billewicz spoke re: getting the internal checklist to the Selectboard Chair by June 30th

**Parking Lot:** Manager Gunter said to not make changes; there are still improvements that can be made at the Transfer Station.

**Board Roundtable:** Mr. Greenough said he understands that the DPW is very busy, but could there be time to clean up the West Street “big dig”.

Chairman Traverse noted that the new owners have removed dangerous trees on West Street

**Review of Financial Reports:** The checkbook status is -\$270,720.15

Mr. Greenough **made a motion to pay** the payroll warrant \$45,005.71; seconded by Mr. Lucci and passed.

Mr. Greenough **made a motion to pay** the General Fund warrant \$474,305.35; seconded by Mr. Lucci. This amount includes payment to Markowski Construction for the Main Street waterline work. The motion carried.

**Executive Session:** Mr. Lucci **made a motion** to enter into executive session at 8:22 p.m. for Personnel 1 VSA 313 (a)(4); Real Estate Negotiation 1 VSA 313 (a)(2); seconded by Mr. Greenough and passed.

The Recording Secretary was excused at this time.

The Selectboard came out of executive session at 9:18 pm

Mr. Greenough motioned to **approve the changes** in the police chiefs contract; seconded by Mr. Lucci. Motioned passed

Rich Greenough motioned to **approve the accountant’s contract**; seconded by Mr. Lucci. Motioned passed

Rich Greenough motioned to **approve the sale** of 7 Union St for the amount of \$52,000; seconded by Mr. Lucci. Motioned passed

Mr. Greenough motioned to **adjourn**; seconded by Mr. Lucci. Meeting adjourned at 9:20pm

Respectfully submitted, Claire Stanley

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Board Clerk