

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
THE STRAFFORD BOARD OF SELECTMEN
March 11, 2015

Members of the public body present: Brent Cadwell, John Freitag, Brian Johnson, Steve Marx, Toni Pippy

Other active participants: Lisa Kendall, Town Clerk and Jon MacKinnon, Road Foreman, Rocky Fuller, Town House Advisory Group Chair, Bill Burden, Emergency Management Director, Jennifer Brown, Herald of Randolph Reporter, Chris Gex, Steven Gex, Marie Ricketts and Lee Vormelker

Meeting called to order in the Town Office at 7 p.m.

1.) Reorganization

Elect a Chair: John was nominated by Brian, seconded by Steve. All approved.

Agenda Adjustments: John proposed and the Board agreed to adjust the Agenda to include: election of Vice Chair, adoption of Rules of Procedures, correspondence from Tori Lloyd, Budget adjustments and Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT) compensation study update.

Elect a Vice Chair - Brent was nominated by Brian and seconded by Steve. All approved.

Elect a Clerk - Toni offered to take minutes as Recording Clerk on a temporary basis. All approved.

Brent moved and Steve seconded to adopt the VLCT model rules of Procedures for conducting Selectboard meetings. All approved. A copy will be posted to the Town website. Procedures include 15 minutes for public concerns at the beginning of the meeting and at least 5 minutes of public comment on issues as they come up before the Board.

2.) Public Concerns: There were no public concerns

3.) Minutes: Brian moved and Steve seconded to adopt the minutes of February 11 and February 28. All approved.

4.) General

Town House – Rocky Fuller, Chair of the Town House Advisory Group updated the Board on current work and plans. Among other things, Rocky noted that the Town House chimney which was in very bad shape has been removed. This cost of this work was covered by a donation from Kay Campbell and funds from the George Brown Town House Fund.

Correspondence:

Jane Prescott requested information on cell service along Rt. 132 which was suppose to go into

effect on January 1, 2015. Steve will follow up on why this has not yet occurred and get back to her.

Jill Michaels had concerns over plowing snow and her driveway. Brent will get back to her.

Ned Coffin had concerns over the tax rate and how it was presented. John said he has talked with Ned already on this, explained the situation and Ned was satisfied. John will follow-up further when Ned is back in Town.

Emily Girdwood who lives next to the Farley Bridge which is due to be replaced this summer has requested a meeting regarding the work. Brent and Jon and possibly Wayne Hook, the contractor, will meet with her as well as other abutters to the project.

Tori Lloyd expressed concerns over Town employee compensation and passed on a spread sheet to the Board that she created while on the Board. Steve Marx will get back to her on this.

Barrett Hall Generator - The Barrett Hall generator is currently out of operation. Brent has been working on a grant for a new replacement for the one that had been donated. In the meantime Emergency Management Coordinator Bill Burden will contact Yankee Generator to order part and get back in service. Estimated cost for part and repair is \$500.

The Board signed the revised late filed Homestead penalty Policy adopted at the February 11 meeting which provides for a uniformed 3% penalty for both residential and non-residential properties.

The Board signed the Vermont Municipal Bond Bank – Post-issuance Tax Compliance Annual Certification of the Governmental Unit for the VMBB Bond Series year 2012 Series #4 certifying Bond payments and schedules.

Hazard Mitigation Grant: The Regional Planning Commission which is sponsor of the grant has asked for an advisory group on this project. It is likely that Steve Campbell from the Planning Commission will head and coordinate. Brian agreed to serve as Selectboard Representative as well as Jon MacKinnon from the Highway Dept. Bill Burden and Lee Vormelker from the Town Emergency Management team. Steve Willbanks, Chair of the Conservation Commission will be contacted to see if a member of that Board could participate. Bill Burden suggested that the Newton School, due to it's proximity with the Telephone Company building, might want to have a representative as well. Steve Marx, the Board's School liaison will contact Principal Bagnato in this regard.

Town Appointments: The Board reviewed the list of appointed offices for which they are responsible. Changes include:

At the request of Bill Burden, Emergency Management Coordinator, the appointment of Lee Vormelker to the position of Deputy Emergency Management Coordinator was requested. A motion was made to appoint Lee Vormelker by Steve and seconded by Brian. All approved.

A motion was made to appoint Bob Wilson in place of Matt Perry as Tree Warden by Brent and seconded by Toni. All approved.

Kate Root was appointed to the Conservation Commission to fill a vacancy that expires March 2017. The motion was made by Brian and seconded by Brent. All approved. The Board requested information regarding Patrick Mullen who has been recommended to fill the vacancy that expires March 2016 as no one at the meeting knew who he was and could speak to his qualifications.

Danette Harris was appointed to the Robert Ordway Scholarship Fund Committee for a term that expires March 2016. The motion was made by Brent and seconded by Brian. All approved.

Brent made the motion that all other positions be re-appointed, Brian seconded. All Approved. A complete list of appointed positions can be found in the Town Reports.

Two vacancies remain, Recycling Coordinator and Dog Officer. It was requested to the Board to hold off on the appointment of a Recycling Coordinator until after the next Recycling Committee meeting when they can make a recommendation. Brent has contacted Janet Hardy who is interested in serving again as Dog Office. She will only do this if a proper kennel is built. Brent will put together specs on what is needed for materials and get back to the Board on this. As there is no money in the budget this will require donations and fund raising. In the meantime Ed Eastman will continue to serve on a temporary basis.

It has been suggested that the Board advertise anticipated open positions in the future. Steve suggested that this be done in the Town Reports next year. Board members will retain their liaison assignments from the previous year. Toni will be the Board liaison with Lisa on financial matters.

Budget Adjustments - The Board started the discussion of making the needed adjustments to the budget approved at Town Meeting which is \$30,444 less than the proposed budget. Jon and Brent noted possible cut backs in chloride and postponing replacement of the screen for sand this year. Brent noted that not all cuts could come from the highway budget. Brent also noted that due to the unpredictability of weather the highway budget needs some flexibility. Steve presented a number of ideas he has been thinking about noting his feeling that after hearing from Townspeople at Town Meeting we need to level fund the budget next year again and if possible provide some reduction. The Board decided to continue budget adjustment discussion at a Special Board Meeting on Wednesday March 18 at 6 in the evening at the Town Office, with final decisions on adjustments at the Regular Meeting on March 25

VLCT Compensation Study - Brent updated the Board on the status of this project. It had been put on hold until after Town Meeting. He will pass on information on potential scope of work to Board members. John asked that correspondence with the VLCT be shared with all Board members and that it would be wise to schedule a meeting with the VLTC and the Board on the project and allow for public input as well. There will be further discussion of this project at the Special Board Meeting on March 18.

The Board adopted a Regular Meeting Schedule of the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month at 6 p.m. The Valley News will be the Town's official paper. Chris Gex requested a copy of the minutes be placed on the bulletin board by the Post Office along with minutes of School Board Meetings. The Board agreed to have this done.

8.) Town Highways

Jon updated the Board on current road status with the beginning of mud season. The Board signed paperwork posting the roads. Jon expressed concerns regarding public not understanding his job and the fact that his salary included the equivalent of 200 hours of overtime. The two hundred hours is the average of overtime that road crew members accrue each year plowing, sanding, and dealing with road work outside their normal working hours. Jon also expressed his concern that the highway budget continues to be impacted by the cost of the 2012 Highway Reconstruction Project, something that was contracted out and over which he had no control. The Board passed on the feeling expressed at Town Meeting that Strafford roads are well maintained and the work of the road crew much appreciated.

Next Meetings:

Special Board Meeting March 18th at 6 p.m.

Agenda: Budget adjustment discussion and VLCT study

Regular Board Meeting March 25 at 6 p.m.

All Selectboard Meetings unless otherwise noted are held in the Municipal Building.

Meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Toni Pippy

