

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
THE STRAFFORD BOARD OF SELECTMEN
October 22, 2014

Pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 312 (b)(1) Selectboard meeting minutes include

- (A) All members of the public body present;
- (B) All other active participants in the meeting;
- (C) All motions, proposals and resolutions made, offered and considered, and what disposition is made of same; and
- (D) The results of any votes, with a record of the individual vote of each member if a roll call is taken.

Although meeting minutes have complied with 1 V.S.A. § 312 (b)(1), any additional information is included as a courtesy.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Members of the public body present:

Rod Maclay, Chair, Brian Johnson, Steve Marx, Brent Cadwell, and John Freitag, Select Board Members

Other active participants:

Lisa Kendall, Town Clerk, Jon MacKinnon, Highway Department Foreman, Jane Prescott, Recording Secretary, Rocky Fuller, Chair THAG, Jennifer Brown, Reporter Herald of Randolph

Citizens present: Janet Hardy

Meeting called to order at 7:00 p.m.

CITIZENS CONCERNS: None

MINUTES: Rod presented the October 8, 2014 minutes to the Select Board for their approval. John F. had one correction under deficit reduction and wants minutes amended to \$97,988 of total amount raised for deficit reduction. Rod stated that \$20,000 was already in the budget. Lisa stated keeping the numbers separate makes more sense. John F. moved to accept minutes with change. Steve seconded. Minutes approved with noted change.

GENERAL: Town House Update – Rocky Fuller reported on the work of the Town House Advisory Group. See THAG minutes for more details. The group is working on a grant for the composting toilets. If they get the grant, it takes 6-8 weeks to install toilet. Chimney removal update –Headwaters of Cabot, VT did an evaluation and his estimate was significantly lower than another bid they received. Rocky distributed the proposal with a price of \$4700. Rocky stated THAG received a generous donation from Kay Campbell for the removal of the chimney. Rocky suggested using money from the George Brown fund to pay balance of chimney removal. This proposal is to remove the chimney down to 10 feet below the peak. The back house builders will remove the chimney from below the peak down to the ground. Rocky is requesting that the Select

Board approve this bid as soon as they are able. If the Select Board approves the bid, Headwaters plans to do the work in November. The Select Board are the trustees of town endowments. Rocky suggested the Select Board turns over the funds to the Trustee of Public Funds so that the monies can generate income that will make the funds grow. John F. motioned to use \$1800 from the George Brown fund for the removal of the chimney. Brent seconded. All approved. Rocky will get updated certificate of insurance to Lisa. Backhouse update – gravel pathway is installed and is now hardening. Poured piers for railing that will line path as it goes into the building. There will be 2 rails to make it ADA compliant. There will be lighting provided by Tom Root. Doc Bagley started hinges for the door. Lori Mikusa got signs for handicapped accessibility. Bricks from the chimney are a possible fundraising idea. The group wants to do crowd source funding for repairing the spire in the future. In the future the floor boards should be refinished. Paul Kifner noticed a hum in the audio system and is checking to see if it is due to the proximity of the fire house.

Superintendent meeting update – Oct. 15 – Brent and Rod met with Bruce Labs, OWSU Superintendent. Bruce wanted to get to know the different Select Boards in his district. School board wants to meet with Select Board. Superintendent will work on setting up the meeting. He wanted to make it clear he wasn't going to come in and take things over, just trying to get to know people. The Superintendent told Rod and Brent that the State wants to combine OWSU with Rochester and Bethel for a cost savings of approximately \$200,000.

Health Insurance 2015 – Lisa updated the Select Board that it's time to make changes if needed. Lisa doesn't see that it's necessary. Plans have been going well. Lisa did a comparison of 2014 and 2015 rates and due to the change in employees being covered, it will be level funded. If we stay with current plan, we don't need to take any action. John F. motioned to stay with current plan. Brian seconded. All approved.

Budget Process and Hearings – John F. requested it to be on the agenda. John F. hears from people on the property taxes and we need to give serious consideration to priorities as a Board for the budget. John F. wants people to know Select Board is taking budget very seriously this year. Select Board already made commitments in 2015; Bridge on Dodge Rd., Farley Bridge and Heater in Town Garage. John would like to increase Ed's salary to \$10,000 and make sure there is enough gravel on the roads. John would like the Select Board to have a round table discussion at next meeting to discuss budget priorities. Rod stated that the promise for tax reduction has been promised for next year. John wants people to know that it's been a tough year this past year. John would like to move the budget process along sooner than starting in January. Steve Marx feels the town should have a capital budget and the voters should vote on it. Rod asked the Board if there any projects that they should be doing that people have discussed in the past. Rod and Brent feel that Strafford has done a lot to improve the infrastructure in the past year. Lisa suggested everyone bring their priorities to the table to discuss what needs to be done for the next year. Rod wants the Select Board to write letters to committees and ask them what their priorities are for next year.

Personnel Reviews – John F. noted that October is the time of year for reviews and wants them to be scheduled. Last year Rod and Jon conducted reviews with the town crew. The new policy states each employee will meet with the Select Board for a review. Brent and Jon reviewed the policies manual with town crew this morning but found a couple sentences that need to be reworded. The way comp time is written up in the current policies is not how it is done. John F. asked Lisa to write up the current comp time policy that is being used. Jon M. fills out a review and discusses with the employee. John F. is in favor of meeting with all the road crew members. The Select

Board will warrant a special meeting and have reviews with each employee in executive session. John F. moves to have a special meeting next Thursday, October 30 at 7:45 a.m. The Select Board will meet with each employee in 15 minute increments.

Pay Scale – Lisa distributed a proposed pay scale that Brent and Lisa developed based on conversations Brent had with Thetford and their pay matrix. Lisa explained how the pay scale would work. Thetford and Richmond are the only two towns that Brent found that had a matrix based on years of experience and training. Strafford does not currently have a basis for paying a new employee and this model would create a model for fair pay. Steve wants to get an idea on what other towns are paying their employees. Brent stated that he called other towns and their pay is determined by a number pulled out of a hat.

Lister Errors & Omissions – Lisa distributed and reviewed a summary of errors made by the Listers. Brent moved to approve the errors and omissions, Rod seconded. All approved.

TOWN HIGHWAYS: Town Garage Update – Brian and John F. went to W. Windsor. Both town garage buildings are very similar. They reported that W. Windsor does not have any moisture problems. Brian reviewed the building. John F. suggested some changes to the garage; update humidistat, install fans in gables, fresh air to furnace. John F. wants Roger Carpenter to check out the humidistat and automatic switch checked out to make sure it's running properly. Rod stated that he has been working on getting the building fixed. Rod contacted a person in the State in charge of maintenance of buildings and he reported that the State is having trouble with moisture in metal buildings and he is willing to look at the building for free. New heating system will also help solve moisture problem. Rod would like the Select Board to wait to move forward while Rod is working on solving it now. Rod and Jon M. will talk with Roger about checking the humidistat.

Culvert Update – Jon found the culvert policy for loggers. The town has 600 culverts across roads. John F. would like to update/create a policy stating that driveway culvert maintenance is the homeowner's responsibility. John F. suggested paying a fee to the fire department to clean out the town's culverts. The town pays the fire department \$29,000 a year. Brent stated the Select Board needs to amend the current policy. Edit the 2 documents and bring it back to another Select Board meeting to vote on.

Sidewalk bids – haven't received any yet. Lisa reported the deadline is Wed. Oct. 29 at 4:30 p.m.

Brent moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Steve. All approved. Meeting adjourned at 8:37 p.m.

Next meeting; Thursday October 29 at 7:45 a.m. for personnel reviews and to open sidewalk winter maintenance bids.

Next regular meeting; Wednesday, November 12, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jane A. Prescott
Recording Secretary