

**Town of Ferrisburgh
Selectboard Minutes
January 3, 2017**

Members present: Steve Gutowski, Loretta Lawrence, Michael "Red" Muir, Jim Warden.
Absent: Jim Benoit

Town officials present: Gloria Warden, town clerk.

Visitors present: John Erhardt, Jr; Deborah Healey; Jeanne Kelly; Bessie Sessions,

1. 6:30 p.m. Regular meeting — call to order.

Loretta Lawrence, chair, called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

2. Approve minutes — December 20, 2016; December 27, 2016, budget work session.

Red Muir made a motion to approve the minutes of December 20, 2016, as presented. Steve Gutowski seconded. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED.

Jim Warden made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 27, 2016, budget work session, as presented. Steve Gutowski seconded. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED.

3. Selectboard new business

(a) RHR Smith & Company — payroll audit. Deborah Healey, town auditor, discussed with the board several points from the audit. She stated that certain selectboard decisions will be easier to make with the Vermont State statues listed. During the discussion, distinctions were made between the different expectations of elected versus appointed town positions, most notably that elected officials can set their own hours. Loretta Lawrence stated that she had no objection to hours being set by the treasurer but noted that the work is not getting done. She stated that the Assistant Treasurer, Pam Cousino, continues to do most of the treasurer's work, and this is a large burden on her. Red Muir commented that it was his understanding that the treasurer's work was going to occur when the public has access to the building, and that this has not been happening.

When the discussion turned to specifics, Loretta Lawrence commented that some late fee penalties were listed on the warrant as payroll transfers, which is not accurate. Jim Warden stated that the town lost a preferred discount with a paving company because the treasurer did not pay the bill on time. Steve Gutowski expressed concern that documentation and backup for certain bills were not provided with the warrant. He remarked that although some late payments were caused by the logistics of the approval process, late fees and charges incurred from inadequate job performance by the town treasurer.

Loretta Lawrence said Treasurer Garrit Smits has sole access to the town credit card; any financial information regarding late fees can only be obtained by him. The board has since cancelled the credit card.

Deborah Healey, town auditor, offered to investigate the payroll tax penalties paid to both the state and federal governments. The board thanked Deborah for offering to take this on. After completing this next week, she will report back to the board.

There was an extended discussion about other items noted at the time of the audit. Examples include: one Form 941 quarterly payroll report appears to have been filed late with the IRS, general bank account reconciliation was behind, and deposits of public monies were made well beyond a reasonable time frame into the town's depository accounts.

Jeanne Kelly said she is concerned about accountability, noting that if the funds are available to pay the bills then there is no reason for the town to be in arrears. She suggested the town appoint someone to oversee the treasurer. Loretta Lawrence replied that all the town can do regarding the treasurer's position is set the pay as the treasurer is an elected official.

4. Selectboard old business — review town's credit card policy. Discussion ensued regarding changes to the town's credit card policy. The board will review the final draft at the next regular selectboard meeting on January 17, 2017.

5. Selectboard general business

(a) Vermont Green Line (VGL) Committee update. Jim Warden, a member of the town's VGL Committee, informed the board that Vermont Green Line Devco, LLC has agreed to add \$20,000 to the escrow account and to extend the term to the end of 2017. Jim stated there is nothing new to report on the host town agreement.

Jim submitted an invoice approved by the VGL Committee to the selectboard. After discussion, Red Muir made a motion to approve payment to Civil Engineering Associates in the amount of \$656.82 from the VGL escrow account. (This account is fully funded by Vermont Green Line Devco, LLC, not by the town.) Red Muir seconded. Loretta Lawrence, Red Muir, and Jim Warden voted in favor. Steve Gutowski abstained. MOTION PASSED.

(b) Town Plan hearing and adoption process discussion. Gloria Warden, town clerk, spoke about the hearing and adoption process. Adam Lougee, executive director of the Addison County Regional Planning Commission (ACRPC), emailed a memorandum to the town concluding that the selectboard should start the adoption process over; the proposed plan was not adopted in time to take effect within one year of the date of the final hearing by the planning commission. The selectboard will send the plan back to the planning commission and request that it hold a public hearing. Then the selectboard will hold two public hearings prior to its vote on the plan.

6. Public comment

There was no public comment.

7. Other business

Jim Warden spoke to George Gardner, owner of George's Locks & Security, LLC regarding the preliminary quote for installation of a CCTV (closed-circuit television) video surveillance for the town offices building. Jim invited George to see how the system was installed at the Shelburne Police Station in Shelburne, Vermont. This hands-on approach will greatly reduced the labor rate for George's preliminary quote.

Jim Warden invited Paul Bruhn, executive director of The Preservation Trust of Vermont, to come to a selectboard meeting to discuss potential uses for the Union Meeting Hall. Jim offered to contact Paul with a definite date.

Gloria Warden asked the board to consider who the town report would be dedicated to this year.

Jeanne Kelly spoke about ways to honor the life of Scott Barnes, a recently deceased Ferrisburgh resident she feels dedicated his life to the town. She suggested that a room in the town offices building or the town report be dedicated to him. The board thanked Jeanne for her thoughts. Loretta Lawrence stated that the town has lost, over the years, and most especially this year, many, many townspeople who have contributed to the town in different ways. We will always remember all of them.

Steve Gutowski spoke about Bob McNary's contributions to the town of Ferrisburgh in his roles as Energy Chair, Fence Viewer, etc. Prior to his death earlier this year, Bob sat in the first row at each and every selectboard meeting, and did so much for the town.

8. Correspondence

(a) Vermont Green Line Devco, LLC (VGLD) Lake Encroachment Permit application. By letter, the town was notified by TRC Environmental Corporation of VGLD's filing for a permit to accommodate the installation of the underwater segment of the Vermont Green Line project in Lake Champlain.

(b) State of Vermont Department of Taxes — 2016 Equalization Study results. The town received a letter from Douglas R. Farnham, director of Property Valuation and Review, certifying the equalized education property value and coefficient of dispersion for the town. To see how the per-pupil spending and common level of appraisal are calculated, go to <http://tax.vermont.gov/education-tax-rate-calculator>.

(c) State of Vermont Division for Historic Preservation (VDHP) — Notice of Appearance & Motion to Intervene — Vermont Green Line Devco, LLC project. The town received a copy of a letter from Dale Azaria, Vermont Division for Historic Preservation's general counsel, stating that VDHP will appear before the Vermont Public Service Board.

9. Selectboard to approve or sign

(a) Villaris of Ferrisburgh — hall rental request for youth and adult self-defense classes on Saturdays from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. After discussion, Loretta Lawrence tabled this agenda item to the next regular selectboard meeting on January 17, 2017. Loretta will contact the O'Briens and invite them to the next meeting.

(c) Selectboard warrant. After review, Red Muir made a motion to approve the selectboard warrant, which details town expenditures, for a total of \$31,542.90. Steve Gutowski seconded. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED.

10. Adjourn

Steve Gutowski made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:13 p.m. Red Muir seconded. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean Silveira