

**Town of Ferrisburgh  
Selectboard Minutes – APPROVED  
February 19, 2019**

**Members present:** Jim Benoit, Rick Ebel, Steve Gutowski.  
Michael Red+Muir participated electronically.

**Absent:** Jessica James

**Town officials present:** John Bull, road foreman; Deb Healey, treasurer.

**Visitors present:** Kim Catchpaw, Richard Catchpaw, Matt Chabot, Carl Cole, Jaimeelyn Gaboriault, Steve Huffaker, George Merkel, Bessie Sessions.

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

Rick Ebel, chair, called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

**2. Approve minutes — February 5, 2019, regular meeting.**

Jim Benoit made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 5, 2019, regular meeting, as submitted. Steve Gutowski seconded. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED.

**3. Selectboard new business**

**(a) John Bull — highway operations report.** John Bull spoke about how busy he and his crew have been with recent snowstorms. Noting there are towns in Vermont without salt because of a shortage he said he has salt and is trying to conserve its use. He mentioned the one-ton truck is out of service with a broken rear axle; the crew will try to repair it, as an outside repair could cost more than the value of the truck. He said he is working with the Vermont League of Cities & Towns to update the 1111 permit. He talked about how the state has pending new road requirements, including for storm water and runoff, for grants. Jim Benoit asked John about upcoming repair work in the hollow. John described his plan, which includes meeting with the neighbors to get everyone onboard. Jim also asked if John was aware that Addison County Sheriff's Department is issuing overweight permits for all 23 towns in Addison County. After discussion, John agreed that centralizing this permitting would benefit everyone involved.

**(b) Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) — existing right-of-way (ROW) information.** By letter, VTrans notified the town that it is currently developing plans for railroad crossing upgrades at TH-1 (Long Point Road), including determining the width, location, and limits of the existing ROW. John Bull, road foreman, said he will work with Pam Cousino, assistant town clerk, to provide documentation that Long Point Road is a 4-rod road.

**(c) Animal Control Officer backup plan.** Rick Ebel introduced Jaimeelyn Gaboriault, Ferrisburgh Animal Control Officer, and Richard Catchpaw, Vergennes Animal Control Officer. Richard is interested in being the backup for Jaimeelyn, when needed. Discussion ensued detailing how recent cases of stray dogs were handled. Jaimeelyn asked the board to consider the point that animal control officer is not available 24/7. After further discussion, the board offered the position to Richard with the issue of compensation to be determined at a later date. Rick said he would ask Gloria Warden, town clerk, to check with the Vermont of League of Cities & Towns and use listserv to gather compensation info. Jaimeelyn said once he is hired as her backup she would post this information on Front Porch Forum.

**(d) Vergennes City Manager and Chief Merkel — proposal for law enforcement services.** Chief Merkel described the proposal being offered, which would provide the same scope of service but at a higher quality level for the same compensation as currently contracted with Addison County Sheriff's Department. In addition, the contract would include VIN verification and free pre-employment fingerprinting for Ferrisburgh residents. He detailed several reasons why the town should enter into a contract with the Vergennes Police Department, including the proximity of the station (less than one quarter mile west of the town line), the training and capability of his officers to investigate alcohol and drug impaired driving offenses and accidents during contracted hours, and the 24/7, 365 hours of operation with officers physically on duty in Vergennes from 7:00 a.m.. 2:00 a.m. and at times 7:00 a.m.. 6:00 a.m. Jim Benoit said town residents' first call should be to the state police. He explained that whoever gets the contract for police services, either Vergennes Police or Addison County Sheriff's Office, would be hired strictly for patrolling. He insisted that the town budget be spent for patrolling secondary roads, such as Sand, Greenbush, and Basin Harbor, and not be used to patrol Route 7. He continued by saying Addison County Sheriff's Department has continued to patrol Route 7 despite being asked repeatedly not to. Chief Merkel responded saying this is a contract and the town would direct where to patrol.

#### **4. Selectboard old business**

**(a) US Route 7/Old Hollow Road/Stage Road update.** Rick Ebel commented there is still an active study of the intersection. He said there would be a meeting of stakeholders and community members who have been working on this issue on March 25, 2019, at 2:00 p.m. at the town offices; the purpose of the meeting is to plan for the April 16, 2019, meeting when VTrans and VHB will present alternatives to this intersection.

**(b) Arnold Bay Road tree cutting and right-of-way update.** Rick Ebel said there was no update to share since the previous meeting; the board is still waiting to hear back from the town's attorney regarding progress at Vermont Superior Court.

**(c) Firefighters and emergency personnel recruitment and training update.** Rick Ebel said this agenda item was a follow up to the last selectboard meeting where legislative representatives from Senator Leahy's and Senator Sanders' offices were present. Rick said he spoke with Bill Wager, fire chief, regarding a proposed bill that would provide tax relief for firefighters. A coalition is seeking to have the bill include all emergency personnel. Rick said this is a good first step. He informed the board that Jessica James met with local representative Matt Birong about this agenda item and would update the board at the March 19, 2019, selectboard meeting.

**(d) PACIF insurance deductible information.** As a follow up to an issue discussed at the last board meeting, Rick Ebel said he contacted PACIF, the town's insurance company. It confirmed that the town's \$1,000 deductible is not considered in the payment for damages determined as proper compensation by a claims adjuster.

#### **5. Selectboard general business**

**(a) Discuss start time for March 5 meeting.** After discussion, Jim Benoit made a motion to start the selectboard meeting on March 5, 2019, at 6:00 p.m. Steve Gutowski seconded. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED.

**(b) Town Meeting Day traffic control.** Following discussion, Steve Gutowski made a motion to hire Addison County Sheriff's Department for traffic control on March 5, 2019, from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Jim Benoit seconded. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED.

**(c) Road Safety Policy for organized bicycle, foot race, and similar events.** Rick Ebel said by law a uniformed officer, not a volunteer flagger, must direct traffic on Route 7. After discussion, Rick said he would draft language for the policy based on state guidelines from VTrans and review the wording with the town's attorney.

**(d) Building Maintenance Committee discussion.** Carl Cole addressed the board saying if the town offices building's exterior wear and tear is not addressed it could lead to bigger issues. He stated his biggest concern is the roof on the south side of the building, which is unsafe for people entering the building because tiles are falling off the roof; the slate used is rusting and not the quality specified by the contract with Breadloaf, the general contractor. Other issues he noted pertained to the sagging front porch, places where moisture is rotting wood, and the need to at least caulk spaces between boards prior to painting the building some time in the future. Following discussion, Steve Gutowski made a motion authorizing Carl Cole to ask Jim Carroll to review the contract with Breadloaf. Jim Benoit seconded. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED. Carl reminded the board that this spring is the time to rebid the work needed at the Union Meeting Hall: repair to the bell steeple and siding. Carl talked about the need to add shades to the three remaining windows on the south side of the offices building, informing the board that there is approximately \$600 left in the original building budget. Steve Gutowski made a motion to purchase three shades for the southern windows from the original building fund with any additional funds to come from the building maintenance fund. Jim Benoit seconded. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED. Carl's last comments were about purchasing a sound system for use at town board meetings. He said at least \$2,500 (\$1,000 from Carl and \$1,500 from David Schlansky) was donated to the Friends of the Grange, an organization that no longer exists, for this purpose. After discussion, Rick Ebel said the board would ask Gloria Warden, town clerk, to invite Nadia Smith to attend the March 19, 2019, selectboard meeting to discuss this.

## 6. Public comment

There was no public comment.

## 7. Other business

Steve Gutowski talked about the document read by Rick Ebel at a previous selectboard meeting that confirmed Long Point Road is a Class 3 road. After discussion, the board decided to ask Gloria Warden, town clerk, to invite Mary Lou Ivey, road liaison from Long Point Corporation, to the March 19, 2019, selectboard meeting to discuss this issue.

## 8. Correspondence

**(a) Vermont League of Cities Towns (VLCT) — Strengthening Communities for the Future — March 27, 2019.** This community and economic development forum will be held at Burke Mountain Resort in East Burke, Vermont.

**(b) Vermont League of Cities & Towns (VLCT) — Selectboard Institute — March 30, 2019.** This economic development forum will be held at the Holiday Inn in Rutland, Vermont.

**(c) Prevent Child Abuse Vermont.** By letter, the town was asked to show support for Prevent Child Abuse Vermont by purchasing pinwheels, the national symbol for child abuse prevention, for \$1 each

and plant %Binwheel Gardens+at the town offices building. Rick Ebel asked that the organization be sent a letter making it aware of the process for requesting town funding.

**(d) Vermont Agency of Transportation — approved 2018 Certificate of Highway Mileage.** By mail, the town received a file copy of the 2018 Certificate of Highway Mileage.

**(e) Rayne Herzog — letter of resignation from Zoning Board.** By email, Rayne Herzog notified Norm Smith, zoning board chair, that he was resigning his position due to obligations for work and his personal training business. Rick Ebel said Rayne's position and other town positions would be advertised in the *Addison Independent*.

## **9. Selectboard to approve or sign**

**(a) Starry Night Café — 2019 Liquor License renewal applications (2).** Jim Benoit made a motion to approve the 2019 Liquor License renewal applications for Starry Night Café. Steve Gutowski seconded. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED.

**(b) Dakin Farm — 2019 Liquor License renewal application.** Jim Benoit made a motion to approve the 2019 Liquor License renewal application for Dakin Farm. Steve Gutowski seconded. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED.

**(c) Selectboard warrant.** After review, Jim Benoit made a motion to approve the selectboard warrant, which details town expenditures, for a total of \$44,951.02. Steve Gutowski seconded. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED.

## **10. Adjourn**

Red Muir made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 p.m. Jim Benoit seconded. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean Silveira