

Town of Ferrisburgh
Selectboard Minutes / DRAFT
August 6, 2019

Members present: Rick Ebel (chair), Jim Benoit, Clark Hinsdale, Jessica James, Michael “Red” Muir.

Visitor present: Bessie Sessions.

1. 5:30 p.m. Special Meeting – discuss employee reviews (probable executive session).

2. 6:30 p.m. Regular Meeting – Call to order

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

2. Approve minutes –regular meeting, July 16, 2019, and special meeting, July 23, 2019.

Jim Benoit made a motion to approve the minutes of July 16, 2019, as submitted. Red Muir seconded. Jessica James seconded. Rick Ebel, Jim Benoit, Clark Hinsdale and Red Muir voted in favor. Jessica James abstained. MOTION APPROVED.

Jim Benoit made a motion to approve the minutes of July 23, 2019, as submitted. Red Muir seconded. Jessica James seconded. All voted in favor. MOTION APPROVED.

4. Selectboard new business

(a) Lewis Creek Association – hall rental agreement, October 17, 2019. Board members noted the town had received a completed rental agreement and proof of insurance from the Lewis Creek Association, but had not yet received the check for the security deposit, required of all those who rent the town hall for events. Red Muir made a motion to table consideration of the rental request until the selectboard meeting that follows receipt of the security deposit. All voted in favor. MOTION APPROVED.

(b) USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service/U.S. Geological Survey – permission to establish a USGS streamgaging station. The town received a request from the USDA and USGS to install a streamgaging device on Little Otter Creek where it flows under Monkton Road in Ferrisburgh. It would be similar, a USDA representative said in a letter, to a streamgage on Little Otter Creek where it passes under Route 7. The installation would be part of what the USDA calls a Conservation Effects Assessment Project in Addison County. Board members briefly discussed streamgages found elsewhere in Ferrisburgh and nearby towns, and used Google Earth to locate the proposed location for the new streamgage. Board members determined that the project would need what’s called an 1111 permit, required in state statutes for installations located in the right-of-way of a town or state road. The board decided to table discussion of the project until its next meeting. Rick Ebel said he would be in touch with the USDA and invite a representative to attend that meeting. The board will also seek the advice of John Bull, road foreman, who is expected to be at the meeting.

(c) Debris on roads – Title 19 VSA § 1111 Ch. 011: Protection of Highways. Board members discussed the issue of debris left on town roadways, such as dirt from tractors and other farm equipment entering the road from a field, or grass clippings from lawn-mowing that cover part of the road. Red Muir said both can be dangerous for motorcyclists or bicyclists. Board members said state

law prohibits leaving any material on the road, and landowners are responsible for removing it. Rick Ebel said the board's discussion of the issue should empower residents to contact the town about this, and that the town will inform property owners they need to clean up any debris they leave on the roads. Clark Hinsdale suggested posting a note to this effect on Front Porch Forum. Rick Ebel said he liked that approach, promoting the idea that we all need to be good neighbors.

5. Selectboard old business

(a & b) Building maintenance reports. Red Muir gave a report on repairs needed and in the works for town buildings, including the Town Hall and the Union Meeting Hall.

Town Hall: After describing some repairs in the basement and some work needed on perimeter drains, Muir said discussions continue on how to solve the problem of cleaning rusty roof slates and replacing slates that have fallen off. He said he is hoping to set up a meeting with all of those involved in the project to figure out what the fix needs to be. He also said the stone walls on either side of the front steps and porch are bowing out and the porch is settling, an issue that needs to be addressed with the builder, Bread Loaf Construction, and/or with the engineer whose design Bread Loaf used to construct the walls.

Clark Hinsdale said talk about perimeter drains reminded him there is a reserve area for a septic system behind the town hall, and that the town should make sure it knows exactly where that is before doing any further work on drainage issues.

Union Meeting Hall: Muir said he had been discussing the building's issues—including a bowing roof due to a broken cable—with Renee Gagnon. Gagnon feels the problems are serious, and Muir said he would work on getting a structural engineer to look at the roof and the supporting structures to recommend a course of action, at which point the town could begin looking for a contractor.

Muir also said he would be in touch with Jessy Amblo, who has volunteered to take part in investigating building issues, in particular the slate roof issues on the town hall.

(b) Vorsteveld tree cutting in ROW update. Rick Ebel said there was no news to report on this issue.

6. Selectboard general business. There was no general business on the agenda, but Rick Ebel asked board members to weigh in on their availability for meetings in the near future. Clark Hinsdale said he would be missing for the September 17 meeting, and Ebel said he would not be able to attend the September 3 meeting.

7. Public comment. There was no public comment.

8. Other business. There was no other business.

9. Correspondence

(a) Vermont League of Cities & Towns – Health Officer Training Series – August 14, 2019. The town has passed along this notice to the health officer and assistant health officer.

(b) Vermont League of Cities & Towns – Municipal Budget Workshop – September 18, 2019.

(c) William G. Pomeroy Foundation – grants for historic places signage. Rick Ebel said he would pass this information along to Silas Towler, president of the Ferrisburgh Historical Society.

(d) Lake Champlain-Richelieu River Study Board – update meetings: August 12 & 14, 2019. The organization was writing to alert town officials to meetings scheduled in Vermont to discuss the issue of flooding and flood response along Lake Champlain.

10. Selectboard to approve or sign

(a) Selectboard warrant. After a review by board members, Jessica James made a motion to approve the selectboard warrant, which details town expenditures, for a total of \$22,998.75. Jim Benoit seconded. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED.

11. Adjourn

Jim Benoit made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:28 p.m. Jessica James seconded. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED.

Respectfully submitted,

Tim Etchells