

**Town of Ferrisburgh  
Selectboard Minutes / DRAFT  
April 7, 2015**

**Members present:** Jim Benoit, Steve Gutowski, Loretta Lawrence, Red Muir, Jim Warden.

**Town officials present:** Garrit Smits, town treasurer; Gloria Warden, town clerk.

**Visitors present:** Tim Davis, Elizabeth Langfeldt, Bob McNary, Charlie Paolantonio, Robert Peisch, Bessie Sessions, Silas Towler.

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

Steve Gutowski, chair, called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. He asked for a motion to amend the agenda to include:

Under 4. Selectboard old business: (b) Approval of the purchase of a John Deere mower, and (c) Approval of an ad seeking a new employee for the highway department.

Under 9. Other business: (b) Discussion of town clerk's office personnel. (Possible executive session.)

Loretta Lawrence made a motion to amend the agenda to include the above items. Jim Benoit seconded. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED.

**2. Approve minutes — March 17, 2015, and March 18, 2015.**

Jim Warden made a motion to approve the minutes of March 17, 2015, as submitted. Loretta Lawrence seconded. Steve Gutowski, Loretta Lawrence, Red Muir and Jim Warden voted in favor. Jim Benoit abstained. MOTION PASSED.

Red Muir made a motion to approve the minutes of the special meeting on March 18, 2015, adding Gloria Warden, town clerk, to the list of visitors. Loretta Lawrence seconded. Steve Gutowski, Loretta Lawrence, Red Muir and Jim Warden voted in favor. Jim Benoit abstained. MOTION PASSED.

**3. Selectboard old business**

**(a) Carl Cole – Hinsdale property purchase.** Carl Cole reported on encouraging developments regarding the possible purchase of property owned by Clark Hinsdale III that is adjacent to town and school property. Voters at town meeting approved spending up to \$40,000 for the 2-plus-acre parcel. There was a discussion about a possible issue involving a water line. Cole said that lawyers for seller and purchaser could resolve these and other issues in preparing a deed. He said he had talked with Clark Hinsdale and that he did not have a problem with a closing after July 1, in the next fiscal year, to allow use of 2016 dollars in the purchase.

**(b) Elizabeth Langfeldt – Kelly Brush Foundation 10th annual century bike ride.** Elizabeth Langfeldt attended the meeting, representing the Kelly Brush Foundation, and asking for permission to use town roads during the 10th annual Kelly Brush century ride on September 12, 2015. She mentioned that the foundation would be using a private security firm rather than municipal and state police to control traffic at significant intersections, including three crossings of Route 7 in Ferrisburgh. Jim Warden said that private firms are not allowed to direct traffic on state roads. Langfeldt said the foundation would look into that issue. Loretta Lawrence made a motion to allow use of town roads, asking the foundation to follow up on the intersection issue. Jim Warden seconded. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED.

**(c) Charlie Paolantonio – insurance endorsement changes for Union Meeting Hall.** Charlie Paolantonio told the board that CrossRoads Chapel, which is renting the Union Meeting Hall from the town, had determined that its insurance would not cover town officials or town contractors doing work on the building. Board members said the town’s insurance would cover those situations, and thanked Paolantonio for the update.

**(d) Tim Davis – proposal to apply for USDA grant.** Tim Davis asked the board to allow him to represent the town in applying for a U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development Grant. The \$50,000 grant would be used to fund a feasibility study for the development of an agricultural incubator space, also called a food hub, on the town property at the intersection of Routes 7 and 22A. He said he had determined that the town’s share of support for the project could take the form of “in-kind” contributions by town officials and residents, and that he, Carl Cole and Craig Heindel had agreed to donate time to work on the project. He also said that Tom Denecker, whose purchase of the property fell through, said he would donate traffic and archaeology studies that he had paid for. Davis said that Robin Scheu, executive director of the Addison County Economic Development Corporation, would act as fiscal sponsor for the purpose of the grant application. The town would be the official applicant, with Davis preparing the grant application on the town’s behalf. Discussion ensued, with selectboard members expressing concern about whether the process would commit the town to spending any money, and whether it was likely that an agricultural enterprise would be interested in the parcel. Davis said he believed there would be no cost to the town, and that if they did win the grant they would have moved the ball forward and have a better understanding of what was possible with the parcel. Bob McNary suggested and Tim Davis confirmed that the town could decide against taking the grant if the terms did not seem to match the board’s expectations. Jim Benoit made a motion to have Tim Davis represent the Town of Ferrisburgh, the applicant, in pursuing a \$50,000 Rural Development Grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Red Muir seconded. Jim Benoit, Steve Gutowski and Red Muir voted in favor. Loretta Lawrence and Jim Warden voted against. MOTION PASSED. Steve Gutowski said he would be in touch with Robin Scheu and hoped that Tim Davis would have more information to share with the board at its next meeting on April 21. The grant application deadline is May 1, 2015.

**(e) Garrit Smits – credit card/debit card processing: selectboard discussion to show support or opposition to town accepting credit and debit cards for payment of property taxes and other town office fees.** Garrit Smits, town treasurer, asked for the board’s thoughts on whether the town should allow property tax and other town payments by credit card. After researching the subject, he decided that the Chase Paymentech system was the best option, since its fees are reasonable and it allows signing up month by month, without a long-term commitment. Smits suggested charging a 3 percent service fee on credit card payments to cover the costs added to each transaction by credit card companies. A discussion followed, during which it was suggested that people would like to use credit cards to take advantage of cash-back or airline mile rewards on property tax bills, one of their largest payments each year. Smits said that he felt it would be offering a convenience to residents of Ferrisburgh, one that many people have requested. He also mentioned that there are 50 or 60 other towns in the state that accept credit card payment, and reiterated that the town could turn off the service quickly if it did not seem to be making sense, financially or practically. Jim Benoit made a motion that the town adopt a system to allow credit card payments. Red Muir seconded. Jim Benoit, Steve Gutowski, Red Muir and Jim Warden voted in favor. Loretta Lawrence voted against. MOTION PASSED.

#### **4. Selectboard general business**

**(a) Discussion of upstairs/downstairs rental approvals, charges and deposits.** It had been suggested at the previous board meeting that there were discrepancies in the application of the rules for rental of the community room upstairs and the meeting room downstairs in the town hall, particularly

regarding waiver of the \$500 damage deposit for the downstairs space. Steve Gutowski said he felt that the current policy, which allows waiver of the hourly fee for certain non-profit groups in town but requires all to provide a damage deposit, was working well. Board members also said they felt comfortable having town office personnel make decisions on fees and deposits for spur-of-the-moment meetings and gatherings taking place during regular office hours. No action taken.

**(b) Approval of the purchase of a John Deere mower.** Jim Benoit made a motion to approve the purchase by the highway department of a John Deere commercial mower, model Z951B, for \$7,200 from Yandow Sales and Service in North Ferrisburgh. Jim Warden seconded. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED.

**(c) Approval of an ad seeking a new employee for the highway department.** Jim Benoit made a motion to approve an ad for a highway/grounds maintenance worker for the town road crew. Jim Warden seconded. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED.

## 5. Selectboard general business

### (a) Appointments

- **Addison County Solid Waste District – Robert Peisch, one-year term.** Jim Warden made a motion to appoint Robert Peisch to a one-year term on the ACSWD. Jim Benoit seconded. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED.
- **Planning Commission, Zoning Board, Conservation Commission.** To better organize the terms and get a proper rotation for appointments in the future, the board was asked to reappoint members of the Planning Commission, Zoning Board and Conservation Commission. Jim Benoit made a motion to appoint the members of the Planning Commission. Loretta Lawrence seconded. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED. Loretta Lawrence made a motion to appoint the members of the Zoning Board. Red Muir seconded. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED. Jim Benoit made a motion to appoint the members of the Conservation Commission. Loretta Lawrence seconded. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED. The members and term-ending dates are as follows:

**Planning Commission (4-year terms):** Gail Blasius, 2016; Walter Reed, 2016; Al Chamberlain, 2017; Robert Beach Jr., chair, 2017; Anne Cohn, 2018; Arabella Holzapfel, 2018; Bessie Sessions, 2019; Michael Quinn, 2019; Keith Wagner, 2019.

**Zoning Board (3-year terms):** Robert Beach Jr., 2016; John Paul, 2016; Alyth Hescocock, 2017; Michael Delaney, 2017; Julie Adams, 2018; Rayne Herzog, 2018; Charlene Stavenow, chair, 2018.

**Conservation Commission (4-year terms):** Craig Heindel, 2016; John Medenwald, 2016; Karen Pettersen, 2017; Dennis Armell, 2017; Amy Dohner, 2018; Jen Cirillo, 2018; Vacancy, 2019.

- **Tree Warden – Clifton Mix.** Jim Warden made a motion to appoint Clifton Mix to a one-year term as tree warden. Jim Benoit seconded. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED.

Gloria Warden, town clerk, asked if she should advertise vacant positions on town boards and commissions and board members thought that it would be a good idea to put out one ad including all vacancies.

## 6. Public comment

Silas Towler asked whether use of a shared mound system on an adjacent lot would be part of the purchase of the Hinsdale property. Board members said Carl Cole was aware that the mound system should be part of the deal.

Bob McNary said that an entry in the "Public Comment" section of the minutes for March 17, 2015, should reflect his suggestion that the town develop an action plan for repairs to and maintenance of town property.

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

**(a) English Carroll & Boe – schedule of billing rates and policies.** Jim Warden made a motion to have the town send a signed receipt to the town's law firm regarding current billing rates and policies. Jim Benoit seconded. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED.

**(b) Homeward Bound – contract for April 1, 2015-March 31, 2016.** Red Muir made a motion to approve the animal holding facility contract for 2015 with Homeward Bound, Addison County's Humane Society, for Option 2, which includes a flat rate of \$550. Jim Warden seconded. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED.

**(c) Historical Society – hall rental for lecture – April 12, 2015.** Jim Benoit made a motion to rent the upstairs space in the town hall to the Ferrisburgh Historical Society for April 12, 2015, from 1-4 p.m., waiving the rental fee. Jim Warden seconded. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED. Silas Towler, president of the historical society, dropped off a thumb drive with 836 photos of the construction of the town hall for the town's records.

**(d) Brett Danyow – downstairs meeting room – Large Farm Operation, public comment meeting.** Loretta Lawrence made a motion to rent the downstairs meeting room to Brett Danyow on April 15, 2015, from 10-11 a.m., waiving the rental fee. Jim Benoit seconded. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED.

**(e) Sally Torrey – Rogers & Hazard Relief Society – upstairs hall for meeting – June 2, 2015.** Jim Warden made a motion to rent the upstairs meeting hall to the Rogers & Hazard Relief Society on June 2, 2015, from 6:30-8 p.m., waiving the rental fee. Jim Benoit seconded. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED.

**(f) Basin Harbor Club – liquor control board licenses.** Loretta Lawrence made a motion to approve nine separate liquor license renewal applications for 2015 for buildings, grounds and a tour boat at the Basin Harbor Club. Jim Benoit seconded. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED.

**(g) Resolution – issue of solar siting in our state and locally.** Red Muir made a motion that the board support a resolution calling for increased input for Vermont municipalities in the siting of renewable energy projects in Certificate of Public Good proceedings before the Public Service Board. Jim Benoit seconded. Jim Benoit, Steve Gutowski, Red Muir and Jim Warden voted in favor. Loretta Lawrence voted against. MOTION PASSED.

**(h) Certificate of Highway Mileage.** Red Muir made a motion to approve a certificate of highway mileage for the year ending February 10, 2015, to be sent to the Vermont Agency of Transportation. Loretta Lawrence seconded. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED.

## **8. Correspondence**

**(a) Counseling Service of Addison County Inc. – a "thank you" for funds.** The town received a thank-you note from the Counseling Service for funds allocated during the 2015 town meeting.

## **9. Other business**

**(a) Selectboard warrant.** Loretta Lawrence made a motion to approve the selectboard warrant, which details town expenses, for a total of \$169,704.02. Jim Benoit seconded. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED.

Gloria Warden, town clerk, said the town had received a refund of \$191.10 from the U.S. Postal Service for 2015 town reports that were not delivered to areas in town with the 05473 zip code.

Bob McNary submitted a letter to the board, signed by him and other members of the town's Energy Committee, supporting the development of solar energy and offering to meet with residents considering solar projects. Board members said they had no problem with the committee getting this message out to townspeople.

Jim Warden shared his notes and handouts from a meeting of officials from Addison County towns with the Vermont State Police at the New Haven barracks.

**(b) Discussion of town clerk's office personnel.** (Possible executive session.) Loretta Lawrence made a motion at 9:20 p.m. to enter executive session to discuss town clerk's office personnel. Red Muir seconded. All voted in favor. Jim Warden excused himself from the executive session.

– *End of minutes from before executive session.* –

Respectfully submitted,

Tim Etchells

– *Minutes from after the executive session follow.* –

Red Muir made a motion at 9:40 p.m. to leave executive session. Jim Benoit seconded. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED.

No action taken.

## **10. Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 9:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Loretta Lawrence, board clerk