

**Town of Ferrisburgh
Selectboard Minutes**

February 7, 2017

Members present: Steve Gutowski, Loretta Lawrence, Michael “Red” Muir, Jim Warden.

Absent: Jim Benoit

Town officials present: No town officials were present.

Visitors present: Craig Heindel, Clark Hinsdale III, Victor Lavoie, Silas Towler, Monica Tupper.

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

Loretta Lawrence, chair, called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. She asked for a motion to amend the agenda, adding **3) Selectboard new business (c) Deb Healey resignation letter.**

Steve Gutowski made a motion to amend the agenda as described above. Jim Warden seconded. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED.

2. Approve minutes — January 17, 2017 (regular meeting); January 24, 2017, (budget work session).

Steve Gutowski made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 17, 2017, regular meeting, as presented. Jim Warden seconded. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED.

Red Muir made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 24, 2017, budget work session, as presented. Steve Gutowski seconded. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED.

3. Selectboard new business

(a) Lund Family Center — 9th Annual Ride and Walk for Children — May 14, 2017. Loretta Lawrence announced that Sophia Shems, event coordinator, was unable to attend the meeting due to inclement weather. This agenda item is tabled until the next regular selectboard meeting on February 21, 2017.

(b) Approval of Town Charter language. Discussion ensued regarding section 3. Appointed Officers, particularly part (d). The board felt that by requiring applicants to be residents or voters in the town would reduce the number of applicants, which may exclude the best person for the job. After discussion, Red Muir made a motion to approve the town of Ferrisburgh Charter with the noted change: “A person appointed to the position of Town Treasurer or Town Clerk need not be a resident or voter of the town of Ferrisburgh.” Jim Warden seconded. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED.

(c) Deb Healey — resignation letter. Loretta Lawrence read a letter from Deb Healey, chair of the town auditors, resigning her position in order to run for town treasurer on Election Day, March 4, 2017. Jim Warden made a motion to accept the resignation of Deb Healey. Steve Gutowski seconded. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED. Steve Gutowski stated that he would like the selectboard to unanimously support Deb for town treasurer.

4. Selectboard old business

(a) Plank Road — second request for speed cart. Loretta Lawrence had contacted Josh Donabedian, transportation planner for the Addison County Regional Planning Commission, to follow up on previous discussions regarding a traffic study on Plank Road in spring 2017. Loretta Lawrence stated that she still has not had a reply from Josh. Jim Warden stated that the traffic counter/tubing cannot be used in the winter, and that may be why we have not heard back regarding this request. Red Muir asked Loretta to contact Daniel Crossman, owner of the residence at 2166 Plank Road, to inform him that the board is still pursuing this issue. Loretta informed the board that regional planning was still looking for payment for a bill it submitted on October 31, 2016. The town received a second notice. The board approved the bill on November 15, 2016. Pam Cousino, assistant treasurer, will investigate and check with the treasurer to see if the check was actually mailed out. If not, Pam will re-issue a check and mail it out next week.

5. Selectboard general business

(a) Vermont Green Line (VGL) Committee update. Craig Heindel, chair of the town's VGL Committee, 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 \$1,527.80 from the VGL escrow account. This account, which funds continuing expenses such as legal bills, is fully funded by Vermont Green Line Devco (VGLD), not by the town. Jim Warden seconded. Loretta Lawrence, Red Muir, and Jim Warden voted in favor. Steve Gutowski abstained. MOTION PASSED.

Craig updated the board regarding several issues. The additional \$20,000 for 2017 has not yet been added to the VGL escrow account. Vermont Green Line Devco is working on it internally and will send additional forms to be signed for 2017 to the town clerk. VGLD submitted a Public Service Board filing noting that National Grid has become the majority investor in the project. Craig feels this is a positive sign as National Grid is a huge international company that continues to move forward on the project. Progress on the host town agreement continues.

Craig also informed the board that January 31 was the deadline for non-statutory parties to request intervenor status for this project. Joe Rivers, who lives on Sand Road, signed the required form listing potential impacts on his well and foundation if VGLD blasts in the area. Janice Perry, who lives on Hawkins Road, has been in contact with Craig because the Agency of Natural Resources is requiring Anbaric and National Grid to consider an alternate landfall for the cable coming out of Lake Champlain.

She is concerned this alternative landfall may impact her property.

Craig asked the board to consider a replacement member of the selectboard to join the town's VGL Committee since Jim Warden will resign his position effective March 2017.

(b) Change time of March 7, 2017, selectboard meeting. After discussion, Steve Gutowski made a motion to change the time of the March 7, 2017, regular selectboard meeting to 5:30 p.m., due to Town Meeting Day. Red Muir seconded. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED.

6. Public comment

Victor Lavoie asked the board why it plans to spend \$200,000 to replace a truck that has only 200,000 miles. He went on to say that if you had purchased the extended warranty on the older truck, you could get 500,000 miles. Loretta Lawrence replied that Road Foreman John Bull would best be able to address this matter. Loretta continued by saying that John attends selectboard meetings once a month to give a department report; she will contact Victor if John will be on the next meeting's agenda.

Victor's Lavoie asked why the town is in the mowing business. Members of the board described how bidding companies have been at odds with each other and not provided the best contracted services. Since John Bull needed a part-time employee for the winter, it had been decided that the same person would do the seasonal mowing.

Clark Hinsdale III questioned why the draft town plan has rezoned some of his land on US Route 7. Loretta Lawrence explained that the proper protocol is to first go to the planning commission and ask to be on its agenda. When the final town plan draft is ready, the planning commission will hold a warned public hearing. Then, the planning commission will send the final town plan draft to the selectboard. At that time, the selectboard will hold a special warned public hearing before the final town plan draft is approved.

Clark Hinsdale III brought up a second point. He commented that a Front Porch Forum post by a Charlotte, Vermont, resident asked any homeowners on Lake Champlain in North Ferrisburgh to consider letting him moor a sailboat in exchange for shared usage. Clark emphasized that a lack of

regulation in Ferrisburgh allows a resident to have up to nine rental slips per property without needing a town permit. He asked for the town plan to include this issue. Again, the selectboard reminded Clark that he needs to take his concerns to the planning commission. The board thanked Clark for providing this information.

A lengthy discussion ensued between the board and the visitors present regarding the performance of the current treasurer. Referring to the late payment of bills, Monica Tupper suggested a system that includes a tickler file.

Jim Warden commented that although systems are in place, he found out today that a bill stamped with a November 2016 date has not yet been paid. He went on to say that bills sometimes disappear after being date stamped.

Red Muir explained that the communication between the treasurer and the assistant treasurer is not perfect. Red commended Pam Cousino, assistant treasurer, stating that given the circumstances, she is doing the best to her ability to pay bills on time.

Steve Gutowski said that there are more effective ways to run the office, but when you have an elected official, you cannot tell the person how to do the job.

Craig Heindel spoke about the value of treasurer candidate Deb Healey. He said she has worked in the business world for a lot of years, and served on the conservation commission for 10 years. Craig stated that she will be very organized. Steve Gutowski said he couldn't agree more with Craig.

Clark Hinsdale III described the high quality of service he has received over the years by past town clerks and treasurers. He stated that Pam Cousino is an absolute gem, and Gloria Warden is a seasoned professional, as is Ken Wheeling. He noted that with a small crew, this situation is really having an impact. He has never seen this office so stressed as he has the past couple of months. He said that if you get the word out about how it is here, things would change.

Red Muir stated that as a taxpayer he would like the board to make a motion to give a vote of no confidence for the current treasurer, and make a motion to endorse Deb Healey as treasurer for the upcoming election. Jim Warden said he agreed 100% with Red's position.

Silas Towler suggested that sending a letter to the editor of the *Addison Independent* is an option for willing members of the selectboard; he said it could be written by the board in its official capacity as elected officials.

Steve Gutowski said it is about who will move this town forward, saying he whole heartily supports Deb Healey in the treasurer's position.

Red Muir stated that he is fed up with the things that have happened just this week regarding the treasurer's office. He also stated that when the federal government penalizes you twice for paying late, there's no excuse for that. Red stated that this is public information . . . unless you get online and read those minutes, people will not know what it going on with the treasurer's office.

7. Other business-There were no items under general business for this meeting.

8. Correspondence

(a) Vermont League of Cities & Towns (VLCT) — special membership meeting February 15, 2017. The purpose of the meeting is to vote on a proposal to amend the VLCT Bylaws, as they pertain to adoption of the VLCT Municipal Policy. The meeting will be held at 1:30 p.m. at the Capitol Plaza Hotel and Conference Center on 100 State Street in Montpelier, Vermont.

(b) Town to Superintendent — snowplowing services for Ferrisburgh Central School. A letter was sent to Superintendent of Schools JoAn Canning, stating that as of July 1, 2017, the town will no longer be providing snowplowing services, including sanding and salting, to Ferrisburgh Central School. This action was due to district unification budgets taking effect on July 1, 2017. The new unified school district has now budgeted a line item for snowplowing for all of the five schools within the unified district.

(c) Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department — Green Mountain Conservation Camp Program for children ages 12 to 14. By letter, Education Manager Ali Thomas described hands-on activities that will teach children about wildlife, safe use of firearms, fishing, and other outdoor activities. For more info, visit http://vtfishandwildlife.com/learn_more/conservation_education/green_mountain_conservation_camp.

(d) Spring Selectboard Institute — March 18, 2017. The workshop will be held at the Capitol Plaza Hotel and Conference Center on 100 State Street in Montpelier, Vermont.

(e) Letter to VTRANS Highway Safety and Design regarding traffic study at intersection of US Route 7, Old Hollow Road, and Stage Road. Loretta Lawrence sent a letter to Jonathan Harrington, project manager for VTrans Highway Safety and Design, following up on a request for a traffic study at the named intersection in North Ferrisburgh. She stated that there is a petition circulating requesting that the selectboard formally contact the State of Vermont.

9. Selectboard to approve or sign

(a) Ferrisburgh Historical Society — hall rental agreement for February 12, 2017, from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. Jim Warden made a motion to rent the upstairs community hall to the Ferrisburgh Historical Society, waiving the rental fee but requiring the \$500 deposit and proof of insurance. Steve Gutowski seconded. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED.

(b) Selectboard warrant. After review, Steve Gutowski made a motion to approve the selectboard warrant, which details town expenditures, for a total of \$116,587.21, requesting that the treasurer bill the owners of three residences for false alarms. Red Muir seconded. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED.

10. Adjourn

Steve Gutowski made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:04 p.m. Red Muir seconded. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean Silveira