

Town of Ferrisburgh
Selectboard Minutes – DRAFT
July 16, 2019

Members present: Jim Benoit, Rick Ebel, Clark Hinsdale, Michael “Red” Muir. (Jessica James had previously informed the board that she would not be able to attend this meeting.)

Town officials present: Bonnie Barnes, zoning administrator; Deb Healey, town treasurer; Brian Goodyear, lister

Visitors present: Jessy Amblo, Melinda Kinzie, Bessie Sessions.

1. 6:30 p.m. regular meeting – call to order.

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

2. Approve minutes – July 2, 2019, regular meeting.

Jim Benoit moved and Red Muir seconded a motion to approve the minutes as presented. All in favor. MOTION PASSED.

3. Selectboard new business

a) John Bull – highway operations report – The board received an e-mail earlier in the day from John indicating that he would not be attending tonight’s meeting. Chairman Ebel opened the floor for discussion of any highway matters. Jessy Amblo shared a list of concerns regarding the North Ferrisburgh Hollow repaving project. Specific concerns included the center of the right-of-way moving six inches closer to his property potentially pushing 6 more inches of his property in the town right-of-way, variable widths of gravel on the south side of Hollow Road, erosion east of the cemetery, is there a walking path and, if so, who has the liability, the plan for the center line and fog lines, and his belief that a project of this magnitude should have a written plan but not necessarily a fully engineered plan. (Note – follow-up e-mails from Jessy were distributed to all selectboard members following the meeting). Melinda Kinzie also spoke about her concerns regarding the Hollow project. She stated that the gravel shoulder by her house was four feet wide rather than 18 inches. She also indicated that she had sent “two or three” e-mails to the Highway Foreman without receiving a response. Chairman Ebel recommended to Melinda that she copy him when writing to the Highway Foreman. Members Jim Benoit, Red Muir, and Rick Ebel shared their observations regarding the Hollow Road project to date and all indicated that no sidewalks were under discussion by the selectboard. Chairman Ebel also shared that the issue of pedestrian crossings and connectivity were part of the planning discussion surrounding the planning of the proposed traffic lights at the Route 7/Hollow Road intersection. Chairman Ebel asked member Jim Benoit to follow up with John Bull regarding what the final project will look like when completed.

b) Natalie Salley – hall rental agreement – This item was not addressed, pending further information from the applicant.

- c) **Houston/State Board of Appraisers Appeal Hearing Settlement Status** – Lister Brian Goodyear reported on the status of this negotiation. Member Clark Hinsdale recused himself from the discussion and left the room as he has a pending property tax appeal.
 - d) **Tax Rate – set 2019-2020 tax rate** – Treasurer Deb Healey shared information and handouts regarding the statewide property tax rates for residential and non-residential property in Ferrisburgh. Deb is working with a spreadsheet developed in past years to recommend a municipal tax rate for the coming year. Deb wants to have others review her work prior to providing a recommendation to the selectboard for the upcoming special selectboard meeting on July 23rd. Deb shared that it looks like the town budget will end the year “in the black.”
 - e) **Purchasing Policy discussion** – Jim Benoit moved and Red Muir seconded a motion to set the financial amount requiring the town to use the bid process be set at \$3,000. The motion also included requiring the proper insurance documents and “Hold Harmless” documents for contractors doing non-bid projects under \$3,000. All in favor. MOTION PASSED.
4. **Selectboard old business**
- a) **Vorsteveld tree cutting in ROW – update** – Chairman Ebel indicated that there were no substantive updates at this time. Treasurer Deb Healey indication that the legal bills on this matter have now exceeded \$20,000.
 - b) **Building maintenance updates** – Member and Building Committee Chairman Red Muir gave an extensive update on deferred maintenance issues with the Town Hall and the Union Meeting Hall. He reported that Renee Gagnon had provided the Town with insurance papers to get on the town’s list of contractors interested in doing jobs for the Town. Red gave an overview of the roof, foundation, siding, and drainage issues he has observed on the Town Hall. The board discussed the issue of reviewing construction documents to determine what, if any liability we believe the general contractor, Breadloaf Construction, may have for any of these issues. Red pointed out that Silas Towler had over 1,000 pictures of the Town Hall Construction and that these pictures may be helpful in determining what went wrong on some of the construction issues. Red will follow up with Silas and also get copies of the original engineering plans and construction contracts for the Town Hall Project. On the Union Hall, Red toured the property with Mr. Gagnon. This building may not be subject to review by Historic Preservation and Mr. Gagnon pointed out that there were modern materials such as PVS and cement board that could maintain the historic appearance of buildings and last much longer than conventional construction materials. The biggest issue with the Union Hall is the roof bowing out due to a broken cable. Mr. Gagnon strongly recommended that this cable be fixed before any other work is done on the building. Red Muir recommended going forward with the Mountain Air proposal for the heating system repair. Jim Benoit moved and Red Muir seconded a motion to accept Mountain Air’s quote of \$1,691.00 for the project. All in favor. MOTION PASSED. Red will

call Silas Towler and organize a Building Committee meeting. Rick will follow up with Jessy Amblo on his offer to look at the slate roof issues on the Town Hall.

5. Selectboard General Business

a) **Bonnie Barnes, Zoning Administrator – request for Soter permit refund** – Bonnie succinctly explained her reasons for supporting this refund request and that the project never actually went forward. Jim Benoit moved and Clark Hinsdale seconded a motion to approve a refund of \$50.00 to Ms. Soter. All in favor. MOTION PASSED.

b) **Discuss date/time for employee reviews** – Chairman Ebel set the time for employee reviews for July 23rd at 5:30 p.m. following the agenda item of setting the tax rates for the coming year.

6. Public Comment – There was no public comment.

7. Other Business – There was no other business.

8. Correspondence – The Notice of Education Tax Rates from the Vermont Tax Department, the request for Rental Housing Inspection Data, and the announcement of upcoming Health Officer Training sessions were shared and discussed.

9. Selectboard to approve or sign – After review by the board, Red Muir moved and Jim Benoit seconded a motion to approve the warrant in the amount of \$132,864.11. All in favor. MOTION PASSED.

10. Adjourn — Red Muir moved and Jim Benoit seconded a motion to adjourn at 8:30 p.m. All in favor. MOTION PASSED.

Respectfully submitted,

Clark W. Hinsdale, III