

**Town of Ferrisburgh
Selectboard Minutes
July 16, 2024**

Members present: Clark Hinsdale, Jim Benoit, Chris Campbell, Walter Reed II, Steve Fleming

Town officials present: Pam Cousino, Town Clerk, Reilly Laberge, Highway Department Foreman, Laurie Curler, Assistant Town Clerk, John Bull, Highway Department Superintendent, Bill Wager, Fire Chief, Karen Petersen, Office Clerk, Brian Goodyear, Lister

Visitors present: Jerry Henderson, Jean Richardson, Elizabeth Arms, Craig Heindel, Bonnie Barnes, J.P. Seeley, Justin Rose, Franz Collins, Heather Potter, August Miller, Jeanne Kelly, Nan Benson, Rick Benson, J.C. Ewing

1. 6:30 p.m. Call regular meeting to order

Clark Hinsdale called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Clark Hinsdale added agenda item 4) a.1, Flood Damage – Craig Heindel.

2. Approve Minutes – Regular meeting July 2, 2024, Special Meeting May 21, 2024, Special Meeting June 25, 2024, Special Meeting July 2, 2024

Jim Benoit moved to approve the regular meeting minutes for July 2, 2024 as presented. Steve Fleming seconded the motion. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED

Walter Reed II moved to approve the special meeting minutes for May 21, 2024 as presented. Jim Benoit seconded the motion. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED

Jim Benoit moved to approve the special meeting minutes for June 25, 2024. Steve Fleming seconded the motion. Jim Benoit, Chris Campbell, and Steve Fleming voted in favor. Clark Hinsdale and Walter Reed abstained. MOTION PASSED

3. Public Comment

None

4. Selectboard New Business

a. Flood Damage Update – John Bull

John Bull provided an update on the road repairs they've made due to the storm on July 10th. He reported all roads are now passable but some will require more work. Eight culverts were impacted and there were many other washouts. John stated there will be an engineering study done for the Old Hollow Road culvert. He has discussed a culvert and stormwater survey with Regional Planning and they indicated they could do it for free if they have an intern next summer.

Chris Campbell praised John & Reilly and the entire road crew for a great job and fast repairs following the flooding.

1. Flood Damage – Craig Heindel

Craig Heindel has gathered information on the damage to the Old Hollow infrastructure. He mentioned the USDA has funding for private properties that must be applied for in

coordination with the town. A meeting is scheduled to review this area on August 1st with the regional river engineer and John Bull. Pam Cousino reported she has found some information from the National Resources Conservation Services that has funds that can cover up to 75% and must be executed with a town sponsor. Craig proposed the idea of creating a Flood Resiliency Committee to include all involved parties. Clark Hinsdale requested this committee be put on the agenda for future meetings.

b. John Bull – Highway Report

John Bull reported he is researching the status of the Town Beach Road whether it remains a Class 4 Road or was converted to a trail. The state has erected signs indicating no horses or bikes are allowed.

He is also looking at future maintenance of the LT 3 trail that connects Fields Road to Middlebrook Road.

The large paving projects are scheduled to begin in 3 weeks.

c. Garry Clark – Culvert on Cross Road Inadequate – Flooding Property

Garry Clark stated he believes the culvert on Cross Road is causing flooding on his property. John Bull and Jim Benoit will make a site visit to evaluate the culvert.

d. Request for Speed Limit on Button Bay Road

Jerome Henderson requested a speed limit be posted on Button Bay Road due to speeding. John Bull stated he has conducted speed studies on that road and will compile the data. Chris Campbell stated he will contact the Sheriff's Department and the State Police and ask for some patrols in that area.

e. Highland Way Fire Pond Repair Enforcement

Jean Richardson provided information on the Highland Way Fire Pond stating the residents of the Hollow questioned if this pond was playing a role in the flooding. John Bull and Bill Wager reviewed the site and do not believe it contributes to the flash flooding. They did find that the pond appears to have failed, there is a gash in it, needs dredging and re-building with outlet pipes. Jean has researched ownership of the pond and found in the deeds that five landowners are to cover the cost of the pond and fire hydrant maintenance. Bill Wager proposed that the pond be evaluated by an engineer. Follow up on this will be included in the storm mitigation process.

f. Set Municipal Tax Rate

Pam Cousino presented the calculations to determine the 2024-2025 Municipal Tax Rate.

Steve Fleming moved to approve the Municipal Tax Rate of .3794 for the 2024-2025 year. Chris Campbell seconded the motion. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED

Chris Campbell moved to approve the total tax rate (Municipal Tax Rate + School Tax Rate) for residents at 2.4587 and non-residents at 2.2954. Jim Benoit seconded the motion. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED

g. Request for extension of VA property tax discount – one time

Sarah Quigley from the Office of Veterans Affairs requested approval of a late request for a veteran property tax exemption on behalf of a Ferrisburgh resident.

Chris Campbell moved to approve the request for a veteran property tax exemption for James Armstrong. Jim Benoit seconded the motion. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED

5. Selectboard Old Business

a) Insuring Union Meeting Hall at Historical Value

Rick Kerschner reported via email that he has been trying to find an appraiser and has learned that a rebuild cost provided by the historic preservationist expert could be used to set a premium. He has asked Miles Jenness if he could provide this.

b) Appointments

Addison County Regional Planning Delegates

Arabella Holzapfel – 1-year term

Steve Huffaker – 1-year term

Tim Davis – 1-year term

TAC (Transportation Advisory Committee) – Steve Huffaker – 1-year term

Alternate for TAC – Arabella Holzapfel and Tim Davis – 1-year term

Jim Benoit moved to approve the Addison County Regional Planning Delegates, the TAC delegate and TAC Alternate Delegate as listed in 5.b. Chris Campbell seconded the motion. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED

c) Brown Church Proposal Discussion – Possible executive session

8:20 – Chris Campbell moved to go into executive session to discuss the reappraisal bids as premature general public knowledge would clearly place the body at a substantial disadvantage 1 V.S.A §313(a)(1)(A), inviting Pam Cousino, Laurie Curler, Brian Goodyear, and Carol Allen. Jim Benoit seconded the motion. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED

8:25 – Chris Campbell moved to go into executive session to discuss the Brown Church offer inviting Pam Cousino, Laurie Curler, Carol Allen, and Nan & Rick Benson. Jim Benoit seconded the motion. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED

8:56 – Jim Benoit moved to close the executive session. Steve Fleming seconded the motion. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED

8:56 – Jim Benoit moved to reconvene the open session. Chris Campbell seconded the motion. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED

Chris Campbell moved to authorize Clark Hinsdale to present a counteroffer to the Bensons. Jim Benoit seconded the motion. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED

6. Selectboard General Business

a) Union Meeting Hall updates

No update

b) Update on changing Fire Department to a Municipality

No update

7. Other Business

Jim Benoit reported that during the bike race on Saturday he was on Sand Road leaving Little Chicago Road when 8 bikes never stopped at the stop sign and pulled out in front of him. Clark Hinsdale reported he has pictures of bikes 4 abreast on Greenbush Road. Carol Allen stated they were riding 4 wide on Botsford Road. Pam Cousino will note these for next year's race.

Jeanne Kelly expressed her thanks to everyone for their stellar performance during the recent gas truck fire.

8. Correspondence

a) Thank you from Addison County Economic Development Corp.

Received a thank you note from the Addison County Economic Development Corp acknowledging the value of collaboration.

b) Email from Chris Thompson

Pam Cousino responded to an email from Chris Thompson clarifying the town's animal ordinance.

9. Selectboard to Approve or Sign

a) Real Capital Consulting Inc. Appraisal Contract

The contract was not available and will be added to a future agenda.

b) Resign Fire Contract with Vergennes (clean copy)

The marked-up contract has been cleaned up and is ready for signature.

Jim Benoit moved to approve and sign the clean copy of the fire contract with Vergennes. Chris Campbell seconded the motion. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED

c) Selectboard Warrant

Steve Fleming moved to approve the warrants for \$92,155.07. Walter Reed II seconded the motion. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED

Jim Benoit requested that Deb Healey's name be removed from the Global Monticello account.

10. Adjourn

Chris Campbell moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:03 p.m. Jim Benoit seconded the motion. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Allen