

Town of Ferrisburgh  
Selectboard Minutes – Approved  
August 18, 2020

**Members present:** Chris Campbell, Jessica James, Michael “Red” Muir, Jim Benoit. Clark Hinsdale joined the meeting late.

**Town officials present:** Pam Cousino, town clerk; John Bull, road foreman. All town officials participated electronically using Zoom.

**Visitors present: See roll call**

**1. 6:30 p.m. Call regular meeting to order.** Jessica James called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m. by requesting a **roll call** attendance of all participants in the meeting: Jessica James, Red Muir, Chris Campbell, Jim Benoit, Clark Hinsdale, Dana Bibb, Jean Richardson, Pam Cousino, Kristina MacKulin, John Bull, Carol Allen, Janice Perry

Jessica James asked for a motion to amend the agenda to include correspondence from Addison Northwest Supervisory District Business Manager Elizabeth Jennings regarding education tax changes to item 7(a) under Other Business. Jim Benoit moved to amend the agenda as suggested by Jessica James for item 7(a). Chris Campbell seconded. All in favor. MOTION PASSED.

Jessica James asked for a motion to amend the agenda to include correspondence from Steve Huffaker, who is on the Transportation Advisory Committee, regarding a FY 2020 Transportation Planning Study Request form to item 7(b) under Other Business. Chris Campbell moved to amend the agenda as suggested by Jessica James for item 7(b). Jim Benoit seconded. All in favor. MOTION PASSED.

Jessica James asked for a motion to amend the agenda to include correspondence from Daniel Hofman regarding postponement of discussion and meetings of the Ferrisburgh and Vergennes Boundary Committee to item 7(c) under Other Business. Clark Hinsdale moved to amend the agenda as suggested by Jessica James for item 7(c). Jim Benoit seconded. All in favor. MOTION PASSED.

**2. Approve minutes — August 4, 2020, special meeting and August 4, 2020, regular meeting.** Jim Benoit made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 4, 2020, special meeting, as submitted. Clark Hinsdale seconded. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED. Clark Hinsdale made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 4, 2020, regular meeting, as submitted. Chris Campbell seconded. All voted in favor, with Jessica James abstaining. MOTION PASSED.

**3. Selectboard new business**

**(a) John Bull — highway operations report.** John Bull reviewed for the board the road upgrades to Satterly Road being completed with the help of a grant. There are about a dozen culvert changes that need to be done; some were discovered during the culvert inventory. There have been issues with radios since they were changed about five years ago. John said he has been working on joining with the fire department to possibly use the same repeater, which will save the town about \$4,000. The only issue would be if there was a fire call then the road crew would have to use a different channel, but John does not expect that to be an issue.

**(b) Fire Protection Agreement with city of Vergennes.** Discussion ensued regarding the 2021 fire protection agreement with the city of Vergennes. The amount of \$85,359 was \$1,267 less than last

year. Jim Benoit asked why Ferrisburgh's grand list portion is 38% of the total value used to determine the fees for the Vergennes fire department. It was mentioned the Ferrisburgh grand list value is higher than Vergennes, and only includes the area that is not covered by the Ferrisburgh Fire Dept. Clark Hinsdale feels it should only include the built portion of the grand list and not the land value, which does not require fire protection. He feels the board may need to relook at this in a couple of years, but for \$85,359 things should be left as is for right now. Red Muir moved to sign the contract for FY21 for a total of \$85,359 with the city of Vergennes. Chris Campbell seconded. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED.

**(c) Village Zoning District committee.** Clark Hinsdale has been working as the selectboard liaison with the Land Use Regulation Update Committee (LURUC). He spoke about having a sub-committee for the village district. It would be separate from LURUC and consist of other members as the current members felt anything the town might do with Vergennes should be a different committee. This would allow the rest of the by-law changes proceed. Clark wondered if the board should solicit members for this committee from the zoning board, planning board, and selectboard. He said no action should be taken at this point. Jean Richardson wondered if it should not be called something other than a village zoning district, as that may be confusing. Jessica James wrapped up the discussion by suggesting a couple of Selectboard members go to the planning commission to discuss this further, renaming this possible committee and then going back to the Selectboard for further discussion and appointments.

**(d) Vermont Department of Public Safety — Vermont State Police — shaping approach to policing.** There was discussion about the letter received from the Vermont State Police that had invited community partners to participate in shaping the department's approach to policing across Vermont. No was action taken.

#### 4. Selectboard Old Business

**(a) Animal Control Officer update.** Jaimeelyn Gaboriault reported on the latest updates. The owners of the property on Middlebrook Road have been working on changing things. Part of the issue is they are up against ledge and are dog breeders. Even though there have been changes made, there are still some noise issues. She said she is not receiving many calls otherwise because missing dogs, etc. have been posted on social media and are usually resolved before she is aware of the issue. She is currently working on noise and vicious dog complaints. Jessica James asked that an incident report be filled out so that going forward there is a record in the town office. Jaimeelyn also mentioned fines are very low; she did not know if that should be looked at and perhaps changed. Jessica asked Jaimeelyn to send to the board the information she has gathered regarding what other towns are charging. Chris Campbell asked if there were specific regulations regarding dog breeders. Jaimeelyn responded there are currently no state regulations; these complaints need to be resolved by the town. Jean Richardson mentioned there are two types of home businesses and only one requires a permit. The homeowner should confirm with the zoning administrator whether a permit is needed. Jessica said she would check with the zoning administrator regarding the need for a permit. She asked Dana Bibb to keep her apprised of the situation.

**(b) Appoint selectboard minute taker.** After some discussion, Clark Hinsdale moved to appoint Carol Allen as minute taker for the selectboard, at \$20.00 per hour. He said he felt both candidates were well qualified. Seconded by Chris Campbell. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED.

**(c) 3133 Hawkins Road — tentative work agreement.** Jessica James remarked that the agreement had been received from the attorney today and tabled to the next regular selectboard meeting on September 4. Janice Perry has been advised not to sign the agreement and wondered if the two

attorneys could get together to reach a compromise. The board will give the town attorney contact info to Janice Perry for her to pass on to her attorney.

**(d) Delinquent Tax Collector — Deb Healey.** Currently Ferrisburgh doesn't have a delinquent tax collector and we will need to hire someone to fill that position. Chris Campbell spoke about the delinquent tax collector compensation. He felt that it was a self-funding position from the penalties and interest that are collected. The board asked Deb to put together information regarding the number of hours spent to do the job and submit this to the board so they can determine how to proceed.

**(e) Vorsteveld tree cutting in ROW update.** No update. The matter is still in the court process.

## 5. Selectboard general business

**(a) COVID-19 updates – discussion of Ferrisburgh Central School standard operating procedures and letter to Addison Northwest Supervisory District.** Kristina MacKulin was present to let the board know the schoolboard is trying to be as transparent as possible. She also mentioned that the superintendent collaborated with 16 other school districts to come up with the plan for school this fall. It will be a hybrid schedule with some in person time and some remote learning.

## 6. Public comment

Carolyn Blaise spoke about an incident at the town beach where lots of trash had been strewn about. She went back the next day to take photos, but someone had cleaned it up. She was not sure what the rules are as there are no signs. Jessica James will ask the Addison County sheriff to do occasional sweeps of the parking lot. She asked Carolyn to let the town clerk know if there are more instances of trash. Red Muir suggested that at the very least the town should put up signage regarding trash and information regarding the ordinance.

## 7. Other business

**(a) Change in union district tax rate.** The homestead/residential education tax rate will be changing. There was an error in the calculation, which will lower the residential tax rate. Jessica James wanted to make sure all board members were aware of this issue as it will cause a lot of work to get new tax bills out. Both Vergennes and Ferrisburgh have already sent out tax bills.

**(b) FY2020 Transportation Planning Study Request form.** Steve Huffaker had mentioned that there was a FY2020 transportation planning study request. He informed the board that if there are any areas that would benefit from a planning study, now would be the time to complete the form. It was the board consensus that things are in good shape at this time but should confirm with John Bull.

**(c) Postponement of discussion and meetings of the Ferrisburgh and Vergennes Boundary Committee.** Jessica James mentioned that Dan Hoffman, city manager of Vergennes, told her the meetings will have to be postponed until the aldermen have a quorum.

## 8. Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

## 9. Selectboard to approve or sign

**(a) Union Meeting Hall sign approval.** At the August 4 selectboard meeting the board had approved a sign for the Union Meeting Hall, but since it was not on the agenda it was tabled until this meeting. Chris Campbell moved to approve a sign for the Union Meeting Hall, not to exceed \$400. Red Muir seconded. All voted in Favor. MOTION PASSED.

**(b) Selectboard warrant.** Red Muir made a motion to approve the selectboard warrant, which details town expenditures, for a total of \$23,469.47. Chris Campbell seconded. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED.

## **10. Adjourn**

Chris Campbell made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:16 p.m. Red Muir seconded. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED.

Respectfully submitted,

Pam Cousino