

**Town of Ferrisburgh
Selectboard Minutes
November 17, 2020**

Members present: Chris Campbell, Jessica James, Jim Benoit, Clark Hinsdale

Town officials present: Laurie Curler, Assistant Town Clerk, Deb Healey, Treasurer, John Bull, Highway Department Foreman, Bonnie Barnes, Zoning Administrator. All town officials participated electronically using Zoom.

Visitors present: Jean Richardson, Ashley LaFlam, Tom Steadman, Peter Ross, Cliff Mix

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

Jessica James called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

2. Approve Minutes – Regular meeting, November 2, 2020, Budget Meetings, October 20,2020, and November 2, 2020

Jessica James asked for approval of the minutes. Jim Benoit moved to approve the regular meeting minutes of November 2, 2020 as submitted. Clark Hinsdale seconded the motion. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED.

Jim Benoit moved to approve the budget meeting minutes of October 20, 2020 as submitted. Chris Campbell seconded the motion. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED.

Jim Benoit moved to approve the budget meeting minutes of November 2, 2020 as submitted. Clark Hinsdale seconded the motion. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED.

3. Selectboard New Business

(a) John Bull – highway operations report

John Bull presented the highway operations report. They continue to prepare for the upcoming season, getting equipment ready. Cory finished cleaning up the lawns and cemeteries. They are trimming up brush around stop signs and intersections, cleaning up dead trees and will continue this for the next couple of weeks. The crew replaced a couple of failed culverts on Fuller Mountain Road. John attended a class for managing through COVID. There is a follow up meeting on Thursday. It focused on the what ifs, how will they meet the demands. They will meet and come up with a plan. There was discussion around possible impacts, i.e. reduced or less timely services and other town's plans. Jim Benoit complimented John on the gravel use on dirt roads and asked if he had considered buying a specific roller to use when fixing culverts as it's been beneficial in his business.

(b) Appeal of Planning Commission's approval with conditions to Environmental Division, 20-ENV-0009, Davis Site Plan Review

Bonnie Barnes provided some background regarding the appeal of the Davis site plan. The fence was built without a building permit. The neighbor was upset with the fence and made a complaint. Bonnie investigated and wrote a letter to the fence builder and they went for an after the fact permit. Because it was on the lake it seemed to need site plan review and it went before the planning commission. The planning commission approved the plan with the exception that the first 20' of the fence must be cut down to a 4' height as it interfered with the neighbor's view of the lake. The fence builder applicant has appealed the decision to the Environmental Court, challenging 3 or 4 provisions of the zoning by-laws. The neighbors are probably not going to participate and defend the decision of the planning commission. Bonnie

suggested the town may want to enter a notice of appearance. Clark Hinsdale asked if it would be customary for the court to start by ordering remediation. Bonnie indicated the first thing to happen would be a telephone conference and she thinks the court would explore opportunities for settling the matter before it goes any further. Jessica James asked if there was a motion to approve a notice of appearance by the Town of Ferrisburgh. Clark Hinsdale moved that the Town of Ferrisburgh should file a notice of appearance. Jim Benoit seconded the motion. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED. Bonnie Barnes will communicate this decision to Kevin Kite and include Jessica James.

(c) Approve voting 2021 Town Meeting articles via Australian ballot

The Vermont League of Cities and Towns has provided guidance on voting for Town Meeting day 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Vermont Legislature has passed Act 162 that will allow the town to vote on town meeting in 2021 only via Australian ballot. Jim Benoit moved to approve that the articles for Town Meeting Day will be voted upon by Australian ballot for 2021 only. Chris Campbell seconded the motion. Clark Hinsdale asked if the contribution requests would be one article for voting or one article for each request. This will need to be determined in the future based on what is the best way for the tabulator. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED.

4. Selectboard Old Business

a) Interview/appoint Delinquent Tax Collector

Tom Steadman was present and had submitted an email expressing his interest in the Delinquent Tax Collector position. Tom lives in Monkton and has served that town in many roles, including tax collector, and is not currently on any boards in Monkton. After some questions from the board and Tom, Jessica James asked if they wanted to move to appoint or did the board want more time. Clark Hinsdale moved that the position of Delinquent Tax Collector be offered to Tom Steadman. Chris Campbell seconded the motion. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED.

b) Building Committee Update

i. Union Meeting Hall

Ashley LaFlam presented the update on fund raising. They are in the process of requesting funds from 3 organizations and preparing materials to present to them. They will be submitting an application for the Preservation Trust grant which has a potential of \$50,000 to \$100,000 that could be put toward the roof fund. There is good momentum with these donors. The pumpkin event had 25 participants with the pumpkins being lit for two nights. Ashley is now working with the Ferrisburgh Elementary School on a thankful tree with paper ornaments where students can write what they are thankful for. They would like to open it to residents as well and have them submit via email what they are thankful for. The plan is to light the tree in the evening. Jean Richardson mentioned they now have great printed material to give out when approaching more donors.

Red Muir had circulated two proposals for the electric work with Jean Richardson's assistance. RCI submitted a bid of \$3,150 and Shaw Kipp submitted a bid of approximately \$6000. The proposals are for outside lights, exit lights, power outside of the building, and includes the state permit. The Building Committee voted and recommends accepting the RCI bid. Discussion was held around the need to establish a

capital budget plan for the town buildings and Clark Hinsdale suggested this should be added to the 2021 goals. Clark Hinsdale made the motion to grant the Building Committees request of retaining RCI for electricity/exit signs on the Union Meeting Hall. Jim Benoit seconded the motion. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED

ii. Town office building

Jean Richardson presented the Building Committee report. On the Sister's house, Clover State will not be available until January to replace the roof. In the meantime, they have contacted the person who previously patched the roof to make repairs until the new roof can be installed.

iii. Vergennes-Ferrisburgh Study Committee update

Clark Hinsdale provided an update on the Vergennes-Ferrisburgh Study Committee. The contacts in Vergennes are no longer in the positions and as people get into their new positions they want to get going again. He met with Howard Hall, the Panton Selectboard Chair. Howard proposed that the boundary discussions be approached collectively rather than as individual towns. He spoke to David Rafael, the chairman of the Panton Planning Commission, and they want to be very involved in the Vergennes economic development corridor that's being proposed. A meeting today reviewed the proposal going out to bid by consultants to fine tune and perform public outreach to inform all communities of the projects impact. A policy committee will be formed to represent all affected towns and the Selectboard of each town will be met with and asked to appoint a member to the committee.

iv. Vorsteveld tree cutting in ROW update

A scheduled site visit was canceled due to COVID-19.

5. Selectboard General Business

c) Tree Warden re: emerald ash borer update

Cliff Mix, the Ferrisburgh Tree Warden, presented some data and his thoughts on how the town should prepare for the emerald ash borer to come, it is not here yet. With John Bull's and volunteer assistance they have inventoried the trees. Most ash trees are in the town right of way, with only a few in front of the Town Meeting Hall being on town property. The ash tree count found 1,675 ash trees, with a diameter of 4 inches and above, in Ferrisburgh. It can take up to five years for evidence of the emerald ash borer to be noticeable in lower levels of the tree as it starts at the top. By the time you notice it the trees will deteriorate rapidly and can come down in large pieces that could fall on power lines. There are 42 trees at 37 locations that have a diameter of 24 inches or more. Green Mountain Power has said they will take care of trees in their right of way. Eighteen trees are of low risk (will not fall on a structure or power line or in GMP ROW) leaving 24 trees for the town to manage. The cost for a tree company to remove a tree is approximately \$1500 per tree which would be about \$36,000 for 24 trees. Cliff suggested that the town might want to put aside some money for the tree removal. Some may want to try and save some of the trees which would require an arborist. John Bull mentioned some trees are significant landmarks and would the town or homeowners want to save them. Cliff Mix indicated it will take a boom truck or lift to safely remove them. Clark Hinsdale asked if the town should consider purchasing their own equipment for the town to remove the trees or could the town contract on a wholesale basis. Cliff Mix indicated the 4 to 8 inch diameter trees

could be handled by the town. Peter Ross said the trees at Long Point have been inventoried. He found 360 trees with a diameter of 5 inches and above and 173 trees with a diameter of 10 inches and above. He has spoken to different tree services about when they should start to remove them and they suggested now. Long Point has not decided to do that yet. They are assessing camp owners over the next 7 years to create a fund for the removal. Peter priced the removal and found the \$1500 estimate Cliff Mix gave was probably accurate.

d) Town ordinance for trees in ROW

Discussed the need to establish a committee to develop a tree preservation plan for the ordinance.

e) COVID-19 updates

Due to the most recent guidance on COVID-19, the town offices are asking residents to call, email and use the drop box when possible to protect everyone. The vault will need to remain open.

6. Public Comment

No public comment

7. Other Business

No other business

8. Correspondence

a) Elderly Services – thank you note for funding

Jessica James mentioned a thank you note had been received.

b) Elderly Services – will cancel funding request for 2021 – will continue for 2022

Jessica James summarized a letter from Elderly Services indicating they will not request funds for 2021, due to COVID-19, but will resume in 2022.

9. Selectboard to approve or Sign

a) Listers correction – Michael McGarry, Parcel ID #04/01/03.6CO, 101 Danyow Drive

Jessica James asked for a motion to approve the Listers correction for Michael McGarry, 101 Danyow Drive. Jim Benoit moved to approve the Listers correction for Michael McGarry, Parcel ID #04/01/03.6CO, 101 Danyow Drive. Chris Campbell seconded the motion. All voted in favor with Clark Hinsdale abstaining. MOTION PASSED

b) Listers correction – Roger Collom, Parcel ID #99/99/99.1111, 244 North Road

Jessica James asked for a motion to approve the Listers corrections for Roger Collom at 244 North Road. Clark Hinsdale moved to approve the Listers correction for Roger Collom, Parcel ID #99/99/99.1111, 244 North Road. Jim Benoit seconded the motion. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED

c) Resign Parcel mapping contract with Christine Chamberlain Mapping, was R.J. Turner Co

Deb Healey explained that R.J. Turner is retiring and it's a new company. Clark Hinsdale asked if the Lister's made the recommendation. Deb Healey indicated yes. Clark Hinsdale moved to approve the resigning of the parcel mapping contract with Christine Chamberlain Mapping. Chris Campbell seconded the motion. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED

d) Selectboard warrant

Jessica James asked for a motion to approve the warrants. Jim Benoit made a motion to approve the selectboard warrants in the amount of \$959,987.20. Chris Campbell seconded the motion. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED

10. Adjourn

Jessica James asked for a motion to adjourn. Clark Hinsdale moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:37. Jim Benoit seconded the motion. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Allen