

**MINUTES
SELECT BOARD MEETING
TOWN OF COVENTRY**

Tuesday December 26th, 2017 at 5:00 p.m.

Board Members Present:

Michael Marcotte/Chairman; Bradley Maxwell; Scott Morley

Town Officials Present:

Amanda Carlson/Town Administrator

Kate Fletcher/Delinquent Tax Collector

Adam Messier/ Treasurer

Deb Tanguay/Town Clerk

Martha Sylvester/Recreation Committee Director

Moe Jacobs/Planning Commission

Skip Gosselin/Planning Commission

Israel Sanville/Planning Commission

Carol Simmons/Planning Commission Administrative Assistant

Jeanne Desrochers/Cemetery Association Director

David Barlow/Trustee of Cemetery Funds

Guests:

Charles Pronto and Mike Paradis / Newport City Ambulance Service

Press:

Chris Roy/Newport Vermont Daily Express

Elizabeth Trail/Barton Chronicle

1. Mike Marcotte called the meeting to order at 5:03 p.m.

2. Approve the minutes of the December 4th, 2017 meeting

- Brad Maxwell made the motion to approve the minutes of the December 4th meeting as written. Seconded by Scott Morley.

- Minutes of the December 4th, 2017 meeting unanimously approved as written and signed by the Board.

3. Allow for public comment

- No public comment noted.

4. Fire District Report

- Jeanne Desrochers provided the Board with an update on the Coventry Fire District and the situation with the drinking water.
- Levels of arsenic continue to slightly exceed the State accepted maximum level and the public notice continues to be in effect with the recommendation not to drink.
- After exploring alternate sourcing options, the Fire District has decided to continue to utilize the existing well and move forward with treatment options.
- A treatment pilot project implemented earlier in the summer was successful and a final design plan is underway.
- The Fire District plans to conduct a bond vote in the next few months with construction estimated for completion in the fall of 2018.
- The Fire District has applied for several grants that would aid in the cost that could be upwards of a million dollars total.
- Scott Morley asked if the Fire District would entertain the idea of the Town assuming responsibility of the Fire District.
- Jeanne Desrochers responded that there were many factors to consider and the other Fire District Directors would need to be consulted.
- Mike Marcotte expressed his concern for the whole Town assuming costs that only affect 60 users and that any discussions going forward with the Town would need to take this into consideration.

5. Review of Town Plan with Planning Commission

- The Board received the draft report from the Planning Commission for review.
- Planning Commission Chairman, Moe Jacobs, apologized for the late submission. The Planning Commission was working with outside sources delaying the project.
- Moe stated that there will be some updates made to the flood resilience section at meeting the following day. The Board will receive the updated copy for review.
- The Board thanked the Planning Commission for the work on the Town Plan. The Board will review the draft Town Plan and discuss at the next meeting.
- Once the Board has approved then the Planning Commission can begin the process of official adoption for the Town.

6. Skip Gosselin Re: Solar Project for Town Meeting Warning

- Skip Gosselin presented the Board with a request to include an article on the warning for the 2018 Town Meeting. The article would ask voters to approve a Town owned solar project.
- Skip stated that the project would benefit the Community Center, Town Garages, School, Fire District and street lights. The total estimated cost is anticipated to be around \$500,000.
- Scott Morley stated that the specific article language needed to be presented in order for the Board to consider placing on the warning for the Town to vote on.
- The Board granted Scott Morley unanimous authority to meet with Skip Gosselin later in the week to work together to create the specific article language for consideration at the next meeting.
- No decision by the Board at this time.

7. Listers Office Discussion on Equalization Study Funds Received

- No Listers present for comment.
- Mike Marcotte stated that one of the Listers approached him about the funds received from the State for participating in the equalization study. The Town receives \$1 per parcel for a total this year of \$602.
- In the past, one of the Listers and the former Town Clerk divided this money between them for completing the study together.
- At Mikes request, Amanda Carlson, contacted the VLCT and the PVR department to verify the statutes on this. The response was that the money could be used however the Town chose and there were no regulations associated with it.
- Other Towns were also surveyed and no other Town was found to distribute this payment directly to the Listers.
- The Board agreed unanimously that the Listers will be paid their regular hourly rate for any work completed in the office and that all State monies received will be deposited to the general fund for expenses.
- The Board discussed the written recommendations from ED Clodfelter from NEMRC regarding the Listers department. Among them was the need for a Town wide reappraisal; however, the current state of the records proved to be lacking. Ed stated that it would require a serious time commitment for the next year in order to get the Listers records up to date enough to even begin a reassessment.
- The Board discussed the option of asking the voters to move the office from elected officials to a hired a skilled assessor for the time it would take to update the records and start the reappraisal process.
- The Board will consider the options, consult the VLCT for statutes on the change of office and discuss at the next Board meeting.

- It is anticipated that a full Town-wide reappraisal would not be started until 2019 and completed in 2021 due to scheduling with qualified companies.
- The Board will review Request for Proposals at the next meeting to begin the process of securing a contract for the future work.

8. Discussion with Trustee of Cemetery Funds

- Trustee of Cemetery Funds, David Barlow, presented the Board with information from the Attorney's Office outlining the steps needed to establish the Cemetery Association as the Cemetery Commission.
- After much research done by the Cemetery Board and David, the consensus was that they were acting in the capacity as a Commission and not an Association.
- The process involves deeding assets to the Town and then asking voters to accept the change from Association to Commission. The Town would then vote for the Commission members.
- The Board agreed unanimously that this change needed to be implemented and asked David to proceed for the 2018 Town meeting.

9. Discussion with Town Clerk

- Town Clerk, Deb Tanguay, stated she had been working with NEMRC to fix errors in the Animal Licensing Module. There was a lot of incorrect and incomplete data.
- Deb will be sending out post cards to all residents notifying them that 2018 dog tags are due by March 31, 2018. She also spoke with the Animal Control Officer who can complete a dog census and report findings as part of the contract the Town has with her.
- Deb stated that the rabies clinic is scheduled for March 17, 2018 and requested the Board approve the \$2 discount for dogs licensed on this day.
- Brad Maxwell made the motion to approve the \$2 discount for all dogs licensed at the rabies clinic on March 17, 2018. Seconded by Scott Morley.
- Deb notified the Board of some upcoming events being hosted at the community center. State training will be offered to area clerks on January 17 and February 7, 2017 for elections and vital records.
- Scott Morley stated his appreciation for all of Deb's efforts to welcome the community into the offices.

10. Health Club Reimbursement Policy

- The Board reviewed the policy with the changes made as was requested.
- Brad Maxwell made the motion to approve the Health Club Reimbursement Policy and Proof of Residency form as presented for implementation on January 1, 2018. Seconded by Scott Morley and unanimously approved by the Board.

11. Hi Acres Bridge Fish & Wildlife License

- Mike Marcotte stated he spoke with the Fish & Wildlife Department after a request for permit was issued to the Town.
- The temporary bridge at Hi-Acres Road is partially placed on State land which requires a permit and a bond to cover any damages that occur.
- The permit was overlooked when the emergency bridge was brought in, however, now that it will be staying until the spring, the State has requested the permit be formalized.
- The permit fee is \$50 and the Fish and Wildlife Department will take a \$500 deposit that will be returned once they are satisfied the land has been returned to its original condition.
- Town Administrator, Amanda Carlson, stated the initial permit application has been submitted to the Fish & Wildlife Department but no response had been received for the Board's approval yet.

12. Newport Ambulance Service Budget Request

- Charles Pronto from the Newport Ambulance Service stated that there have been many discussions regarding this year's request for funding from the three municipalities it serves.
- With a significant increase proposed, Charles explained the factors associated with the increase.
- Mike Marcotte stated that he and the Town Administrator Amanda Carlson, had attended several meetings to discuss the Ambulance budget and what can be done moving forward to mitigate costs.
- The Ambulance Board presented a cost that was reduced from its original proposal in November.
- Scott Morley stated his hesitance to contract at the increased cost and that he didn't feel it was financially responsible for the Town to agree to such increases.
- Mike Marcotte recommended the Town contract with the Newport Ambulance Service for the requested amount, stating that he did not want to compromise the safety of the residents; however much work would need to be done during the year to try and avoid large cost hikes in the coming years.
- Brad Maxwell made the motion to approve the budgeted line item for the Newport Ambulance Service for the 2018 calendar year at \$31,287.00. Seconded by Scott Morley and unanimously approved by the Board.

13. 2018/19 Proposed Municipal Budget Review

- The Board unanimously agreed to table the budget review for the next meeting.

14. Treasurer's Financial Report for Preceding Month

- Treasurer, Adam Messier, stated that due to some necessary system corrections he was unable to provide the Board with the November 2017 financial report. The report will be reviewed at the next meeting.
- Treasurer, Adam Messier, presented the Board with a copy of the Levy given to the Delinquent Tax Collector for the 2017 Property Taxes. Total outstanding taxes as at November 3rd, 2017 was \$92,595,.16.
- Adam stated that a substantial portion of this has been collected by the Delinquent Tax Collector since this time.
- Delinquent Tax Collector, Kate Fletcher, stated that after speaking with Attorney Brian Monaghan they have discovered too many issues to confidently hold a tax sale prior to Town Meeting.
- Kate stated that due to things not being properly processed and accounted for in the past, the Attorney has some legal concerns that need to be addressed before they move forward.
- The Board reviewed a Resolution to Engage Attorney to Conduct Tax Sale from Brian Monaghan's Office. This will allow his office to proceed with the preparations for a tax sale with a date to be determined.
- Brad Maxwell made the motion to approve the Resolution to Engage Brian Monaghan to proceed with a tax sale. Seconded by Scott Morley and signed by Mike Marcotte on behalf of the Board.
- Due to ongoing issues being investigated by Kate Fletcher as the Delinquent Tax Collector, Mike Marcotte expressed his concern over allowing the position to go back to being elected before the issues could be resolved and the tax sale completed. Mike stated he would like to consider keeping the position appointed for one more year to see project completion.
- The Board agreed to consider the circumstances and discuss when compiling the 2018 Town Meeting Warning.

15. Other Business

- Town Administrator, Amanda Carlson, reviewed the State Parcel Mapping Program offered.
- The program would pay for the research cost of tax mapping, and the Town would be responsible for the printed and electronic maps produced.
- The program allows the Town to request to be paired with their current mapping company, or request a new company.
- The Board discussed the advantages and disadvantages of requesting a new company to work with the Town. It was the consensus of the Board that with all of the questionable records in

the Listers Office, it would benefit the Town to have a new company compare the data and research the information to ensure accuracy.

- Brad Maxwell made the motion for the Town to enter into the State Parcel Mapping Program. Seconded by Scott Morley and unanimously approved by the Board.
- Brad Maxwell made the motion to request a different tax mapping company then previously used. Seconded by Scott Morley and unanimously approved by the Board.

- The Board agreed to have three meetings in January 2018 for budgeting and approving the Town Report.
- January 2018 meetings will be held at 5 p.m. on;
 - Tuesday January 2nd, 2018
 - Monday January 8th, 2018
 - Monday January 22nd, 2018
- In February the Board will return to the schedule of the first and third Monday of each month at 5:00 p.m.

16. Sign Orders

General Fund Account:

Payroll	For week ending 12/09/17	\$2,985.55
Payroll	For week ending 12/16/17	\$3,235.80
Payroll	For week ending 12/23/17	\$2,935.90
Accounts Payable	12/21/17	\$36,206.01
Accounts Payable	12/26/17	\$675.00
Accounts Payable	12/26/17 Property Tax Refund WEC	\$2408.80
Signed by the Board for the Treasurer to draw checks totaling		\$48,447.06

Buildings and Maintenance Restricted Fund Savings Account:

Accounts Payable	12/26/17 – Building Renovations	\$5,711.69
Accounts Payable	12/26/17 – Building Renovations	\$2,587.50
Signed by the Board for the Treasurer to draw checks totaling		\$8,299.19

Road & Bridge Restricted Fund Savings Account:

Accounts Payable	12/26/17 Hi Acres Bridge	\$3,375.00
Signed by the Board for the Treasurer to draw checks totaling		\$3,375.00

17. Meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

The next Select Board meeting will be held on Monday January 2nd, 2018 at 5:00 p.m.

Michael Marcotte / Chairman

Bradley Maxwell

Scott Morley

Amanda Carlson / Town Administrator