

MINUTES
SELECT BOARD MEETING
TOWN OF COVENTRY
MONDAY APRIL 20TH, 2020 AT 4:30 P.M.

Board Members Present:

Scott Briere/Chair; David Gallup; Phil Marquette

Town Officials Present:

Amanda Carlson / Town Administrator

David Barlow / Treasurer

Guests:

Don Whipple / Coventry Town Foundation

Press:

Robin Smith / Orleans County Record

Joseph Gressler / Barton Chronicle

The following meeting was held electronically by video and audio conference call.

1. Chair Scott Briere called the meeting to order at 4:38 p.m.

2. Allow for Public Comment

- Resident Martha Sylvester has been taking care of the flag in the Village Common and due to time constraints asked the Board to seek a new volunteer to take over the responsibility.
- Martha Sylvester stated that the Northeast Kingdom International Airport was celebrating its 75th year and suggested to the Board that this would be a good opportunity for economic development promotion and events.
- Martha Sylvester resigned from her volunteer position as Green Up Day Coordinator with the Town.
- Green Up Day has been rescheduled for 2020 from the first Saturday in May until May 30th, 2020 due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

- Road Commissioner David Gallup stated that the Road crew had begun roadside clean up and due to a high volume of discarded needles he did not feel it safe to allow Town residents to continue to participate in the annual event.

3. Town Foundation

- Town Foundation Board member Don Whipple stated that all residents had received a postcard stating that gift cards were available for essential needs for any Coventry residents affected by COVID-19 on request.
- Don stated that due to lack of contact information on rental units, the Town Foundation hopes that landlords will ensure their tenants receive the information.
- The Town voted to appropriate \$250,000 to the Town Foundation at the 2020 Town Meeting from the 2021 fiscal year funds. Typically appropriations are paid out in October, however; in special circumstances the Select Board can consider requests for funds to be paid in July at the turn of the fiscal year.
- Don Whipple stated that the current economy provided an optimal situation for long term investing and requested the appropriated funds be disbursed to the Town Foundation as soon as possible.
- The Select Board was unsure if they were legally allowed to disburse funds prior to the start of the new fiscal year and will verify with the Town Auditor and/or Town Attorney.

At the request of Robin Smith; the Board unanimously agreed to amend the agenda and address agenda item #6 ATV Ordinance.

6. ATV Ordinance

- The Board reviewed the revised ATV Ordinance.
- Town Administrator Amanda Carlson stated that the Vermont League of Cities & Towns template was used and language verified with VLCT for liability and insurance purposes.
- Resident Jessica Punt stated her concerns over opening up the Town roads and how it would affect the safety on Cook Road where she resides. Cook Road is a Class 4 road and narrower than most making it difficult for trucks to accommodate recreational vehicles.
- Phil Marquette stated that he understood the roads would be opened up to allow residents to access the trails and not for the roads to be used for regular ATV travel.
- Scott Briere stated that the ATV Club was expected to map the access points and encourage drivers to only use roads to connect their trails.
- The Board discussed the safety requirements included in the proposed ATV Ordinance including the need for all riders to comply with State registration and safety laws and have valid liability insurance in place.
- The Board agreed that after setting up the initial guidelines they would need to continue to review the ordinance regulations yearly and make adjustments as necessary.

- David Gallup stated that in the past he had been against ATV traffic; however, after opening up additional roads last year and not receiving any complaints, he felt this would be a positive thing for the Town in promoting recreation. David also stated that he felt that if Coventry residents wanted to use the roads beyond trail access then they should be allowed to do so.
- Scott Briere made the motion to approve the ATV Ordinance as written. Seconded by David Gallup and unanimously approved by the Board.
- The Board unanimously agreed to review the ATV Ordinance and success in February 2021 to consider adjustments.

4. COVID-19 Update and Discussion on Public Facilities and Municipal Operations

- Coventry Fire District Clerk Martha Sylvester requested the Board allow the Fire District Prudential Committee to meet at the Coventry Community Center in order to address urgent business affecting the district. The public would be offered access to the meeting by teleconference making the only people in the building the committee members who need to be able to share and review documents.
- Scott Briere stated that he felt the Governors orders should be respected and followed until May 15th, 2020 with no meetings being allowed in the public space.
- David Gallup stated his sympathies for the District's frustration stating that it is being felt by everyone trying to conduct business during this time.
- Phil Marquette agreed that public safety was the number one concern.
- Phil Marquette made the motion not to allow any public, committee or entity meetings at the Community Center and Town Offices until the State Executive Order was lifted on May 15th, 2020. Seconded by David Gallup and unanimously approved by the Board.

5. 2020 Local Emergency Management Plan

- Emergency Management Director Phil Marquette reviewed the 2020 Local Emergency Management Plan with the Board. The LEMP lists the necessary contact information for emergency situations including designated shelters and vulnerable populations.
- Scott Briere made the motion to approve the 2020 Local Emergency Management Plan as written. Seconded by David Gallup.
- David Gallup made the motion to authorize the Chair Scott Briere to sign the LEMP on behalf of the Board. Seconded by Phil Marquette.
- David Gallup made the motion to approve the VT Alert notification authorizing the Emergency Management Director, Select Board Chair, Road Commissioner and Town Administrator authority to submit notifications to the system when necessary; and authorize the Chair to sign on behalf of the Board. Seconded by Phil Marquette and unanimously approved by the Board.

- 6. ATV Ordinance**
 - *Amended agenda. Item addressed earlier in the meeting after agenda item #3.*

- 7. Orleans County Sheriff's Department 2020 Contract**
 - The Board reviewed the 2020 Orleans County Sheriff's Department Contract received from newly appointed Sherriff Jennifer Harlow.
 - The only noted change to the contract was the hourly rate of services increasing from \$49.50 per hour to \$52.40 per hour.
 - David Gallup made the motion to approve the 2020 Contract from the Orleans County Sheriff's Department as written and authorize the Chair to sign on behalf of the Board. Seconded by Phil Marquette and unanimously approved by the Board.

- 8. FY2019 Audit Management Letter**
 - After reviewing the FY2019 Audit Management Letter recommendations, David Gallup asked Treasurer David Barlow if he has considered an Assistant Treasurer in response to Pace & Hawley's recommendations on reconciling accounts. David Barlow stated that he has been looking for a suitable person to fulfil this role.
 - David Gallup made the motion to approve the FY2019 Audit Management Letter as presented by Auditor Nathan Hawley; and authorize the Chair to sign on behalf of the Board. Seconded by Phil Marquette and unanimously approved by the Board.

- 9. Treasurers Report of Financials for March 2020**
 - Treasurer David Barlow reviewed the Report of Financials for March 2020.
 - No action taken by the Board.

- 10. Budget Status Report**
 - The Board reviewed the FY20 Budget Status Report.
 - No action taken by the Board.

- 11. Other Business**
 - David Gallup made a motion to approve the Resolution for the Town of Coventry to join to Communications Union District as approved by the voters at the 2020 Annual Town Meeting. Seconded by Scott Briere and unanimously approved by the Board.
 - Appointed at the March Reorganizational meeting; David Barlow and Phil Marquette will be representing the Town on the CUD Board.

 - The Board discussed soliciting additional paving quotes with the anticipated decreased prices on oil affecting the paving materials. Road Commissioner David Gallup will speak with paving suppliers for more information.

Meeting Adjourned at 6:02 p.m.

The next Select Board meeting will be held on Monday May 4th, 2020 at 4:30 p.m.

Scott Briere / Chairman

David Gallup

Phil Marquette

Amanda Carlson / Town Administrator