

MINUTES
SELECT BOARD MEETING
TOWN OF COVENTRY
Monday October 15th, 2018 at 4:30 p.m.

Board Members Present:

Mike Marcotte / Chairman; Brad Maxwell; Scott Briere

Town Officials Present:

Amanda Carlson / Town Administrator

Kate Fletcher / Lister

Lyell Reed / Lister

Martha Sylvester / Recreation Committee Chairwoman

David Barlow / Trustee of Cemetery Funds

Phil Marquette / Planning Commission

Guests:

Jeanne Desrochers / Coventry Fire District Prudential Committee

Melissa Gallup

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- 1. Chairman Mike Marcotte called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.**

 - 2. Approve the minutes of the October 1st and October 8th, 2018 Meetings.**
 - Amendment: Revised minutes of the September 26, 2018 meeting provided for Board approval.
 - Brad Maxwell made the motion to approve the minutes of the October 1st, 2018 and October 8th, 2018 meetings as written; as well as approve the minutes of the September 26th, 2018 meeting as amended. Seconded by Scott Briere. Minutes were unanimously approved and signed by the Board.

 - 3. Allow for Public Comment**
 - Resident Martha Sylvester questioned the process for appointment to the Coventry Fire District Prudential Committee and if interviews had been conducted.
 - Prudential Committee Chairwoman Jeanne Desrochers stated that interviews were the responsibility of the Select Board and the Fire District was only obligated to provide a recommendation.

4. Interview Candidates Interested in Filling Vacancy on Coventry Fire District #1 Prudential Committee

Possible Executive Session in Accordance with 1 VSA § 313 (3)

Anticipated Select Board Action of Appointment to Fulfill Vacancy

- *On October 1, 2018 the Select Board posted a Notice of Vacancy for Coventry Fire District Prudential Committee Member. Qualified candidates were asked to submit a letter of interest no later than October 10, 2018.*
- *Two letters of interest were received from; Melissa Gallup and Frank Carbonneau.*
- *The Coventry Fire District Prudential Committee received the applicant's information at their meeting held on Wednesday October 10, 2018 for review.*
- *The Coventry Fire District meeting minutes of October 10, 2018 reflect the Prudential Committee's decision to recommend Frank Carbonneau to fill the vacancy. This decision was also provided to the Select Board in writing by Prudential Committee Chairwoman, Jeanne Desrochers.*
- Select Board Chairman, Mike Marcotte stated that in accordance with 1 VSA § 313 (3), candidates had the option to discuss appointment of office with the Board in executive session.
- After being asked if she would like to exercise this right, the first candidate Melissa Gallup agreed to continue in the public forum.
- Brad Maxwell asked why Mrs. Gallup was interested in serving on the Coventry Fire District Prudential Committee.
- Melissa stated her interest in becoming more involved, assisting the entity to move forward and work on removing the division that existed within the Fire District and its voters.
- Melissa explained how her experience in her career could be applied with the same principals of policy and procedure; transparency and accountability; and overall management of financial health of the organization. Melissa stated her willingness to invest the time to learn and understand where the organization is at in order to set the measurable goals to move forward.
- The Select Board thanked Melissa Gallup for her time and willingness to serve the Community.
- Frank Carbonneau was not present at the meeting.
- The Board unanimously agreed to table further discussion until his arrival.

5. Property Assessment Appeal Proposed Settlement Agreement

Possible Executive Session in Accordance with 1 VSA § 313 (1)

- Brad Maxwell made the motion to enter into executive session in accordance with 1 VSA § 313 (1) stating that premature public knowledge would put the Town at a substantial disadvantage. Seconded by Scott Briere and unanimously approved by the Board to enter into executive session to include the Select Board and Town Administrator Amanda Carlson.
- The Board entered into executive session at 4:44 p.m.
- The Board exited executive session at 4:47 p.m.

- Brad Maxwell made the motion to approve the Settlement Agreement as provided by Town Attorney Brian Monaghan; and grant authority for Attorney Monaghan to proceed with the agreement as required on behalf of the Board. Seconded by Scott Briere and unanimously approved by the Board.

6. Listers Office Update

- Resident Martha Sylvester questioned if there was a conflict of interest with a Town Lister also being a local Real Estate Agent.
- Chairman Mike Marcotte stated that there is no legal conflict and that the office is elected and therefore up to the voters to decide if they feel a conflict exists.
- Lister Kate Fletcher provided the Board with a written report listing the recent activity in the office.
- Kate explained the additional time and duties associated with tax season to revise tax bills and update State payments.
- Additional pending projects and tasks were discussed. No decisions or actions taken by the Board.
- The Listers met with NEMC, the company selected to conduct the Town wide Reappraisal, the week previous, to discuss the project and procedures. NEMC will be preparing a contract for the Town to review in the coming weeks.
- Kate Fletcher stated that there was discussion at the meeting about the reappraisal site visits and the need for a Town Lister to be present at each. NEMC stated that they provided a team of qualified individuals and for efficiency it was not productive to have local officials on every inspection. The Listers will be welcome to attend when available; however, attempting to accommodate schedules would severely prolong the process.
- The Board unanimously agreed that the additional wage costs, and time delays were not productive for the reappraisal process.
- The Select Board unanimously agreed that the Listers Office hours on Wednesday evenings from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. were not proving to be productive. With the other Town offices closed for the day, access to information limited the ability to assist residents.
- The Board unanimously agreed that the scheduled Listers office hours on Monday from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. was sufficient and requests could be made by appointment outside of that time.
- The report stated that Lister Lyell Reed had items to address with the Board. As Lyell was not present, the Board unanimously agreed to table the agenda item and continue discussions when he arrived.

7. Discussion with Kate Fletcher on Terms of Employment and Responsibilities of Office
Anticipated Executive Session in Accordance with 1 VSA § 313 (3)

- The Board unanimously agreed to table agenda item #7.

8. Treasurers Report of Financials for Preceding Month

- The Board reviewed the Treasurers report of financials for September 2018.
- The Board discussed the Investment Account Balances and changes over the last several months.
- Brad Maxwell made the motion to approve the Duplicate Account Information form provided by Fidelity Investments authorizing duplicate monthly statements be sent directly to the Town Treasurer Adam Messier. Seconded by Scott Briere. Mike Marcotte signed the Authorization Form for Fidelity Investments on behalf of the Board.

9. Quarterly Budget Report Review

- The Board reviewed the quarterly budget report for all departments.
- Accounts requiring allocation adjustments were noted and discussed.
- Town Administrator Amanda Carlson stated that the overall budget was on target for the first quarter.
- Budget discussions for next fiscal year will begin in the next couple of months.
- Amanda Carlson will arrange meetings with the emergency service providers to review the proposed contracts for the coming year.

10. Discussion with Treasurer Adam Messier Regarding Duties of Office and Responsibilities
Anticipated Executive Session in Accordance with 1 VSA § 313 (3)

- Chairman Mike Marcotte stated that the Statutes for executive session did not apply to Elected Officials and conversations with the Town Treasurer would be held in the open meeting.
- Mike Marcotte stated that the financial duties needed to be assessed and the work load balanced and adjusted.
- Mike stated that the Town Administrator, Amanda Carlson has been taking on too many tasks that were not included in the scope of her position requiring her to work additional hours to complete. Mike stated that Amanda needed to be relieved of these additional duties.
- Mike stated that the Board has the authority to hire a bookkeeper to perform the financial duties not assigned by Statute to the Treasurer.
- The Board unanimously agreed that the delegation and separation of duties needed to be considered to ensure the checks and balances put in place continued.
- The Board reviewed a chart of the financial duties that identified who was currently completing each task and the frequency required.

- With the Treasurers salary budgeted for eight hours of work per week, the Board asked Treasurer Adam Messier to review the list of duties and confirm if the current tasks are fulfilling that time, or if he felt some items could be taken over.
- Once the Treasurer confirms what he is capable of completing in his budgeted time, then the Board can address the balance of the workload and discuss the requirements needed to fill a bookkeeper position.

11. 2018 Fiscal Year Audit Progress Report

- The Board reviewed a letter from Auditor Nathan Hawley of Pace & Hawley, LLC stating that there were significant items that needed to be addressed before an audit could be completed for the 2017-2018 fiscal year.
- Pace & Hawley could complete the work required for adjusting the Capitol Asset and Investments accounts prior to completing the audit; however the work is outside the original audit engagement and is estimated to cost an additional \$1100 to \$1500.
- Treasure Adam Messier stated he would like clarification prior to adjustments being made. The Board stated he would need to make himself available to meet with the Auditor for the next site visit as he has not been able to attend for previous meetings.
- In addition to the work proposed by Pace & Hawley, Amber Baker from NEMRC Accounting has been working through some of the additional questions posed by the Auditor. Amber's assistance is required for some follow up research to adjust receivable accounts.
- Town Administrator, Amanda Carlson, stated that with the proposed work from Pace & Hawley, site visits and offsite work from NEMRC that was required; there is an estimated additional cost of \$4000 for work required in order to complete the audit of the prior year financials.
- Brad Maxwell made the motion to approve the proposal from Pace & Hawley for non-audit services at an estimated cost of \$1500. Seconded by Scott Briere with unanimous approval for Chairman Mike Marcotte to sign acceptance of the proposal on behalf of the Board.
- Brad Maxwell made the motion to approve Mike Marcotte to sign two Account Verification Forms for Pace & Hawley LLC that will be provided to Hunt Financial Services. Seconded by Scott Briere.

6. Listers Office Update

- The Board unanimously agreed to return to agenda item #6 and speak with Lister Lyell Reed.
- Lyell Reed stated his concern about the reappraisal process with relation to State wastewater permits.
- Lyell explained that in 2006 there was a change in the State permitting requirements for septic systems and if adjustments are made to the assessment cards then owners might not be in compliance. He used the example of bedroom count posing the question that if the permit was issued for a two bedroom house; the Town records show two bedroom; but it was discovered

on inspection that there were now four making it non-compliant with the wastewater permit; how would that be handled?

- Lister Kate Fletcher stated that this was posed to the reappraisal firm who stated that they would be assessing properties as they see them and the wastewater permits were not their responsibility.
- Lyell Reed stated his concern that since there was no zoning in Town, the Listers card is the official record when properties are researched for sale. He explained that as a Real Estate Agent he has, in the past and currently, represented the sale of a house that has more bedrooms than the Town has it assessed for but he publishes the property in accordance with the Town records.
- Lyell stated that his concern in Coventry was that if a house had been sold in previous years then updating this information could hold the Town liable.
- Mike Marcotte stated that if the Town knowingly does not record the accurate information it would be more of a liability, as well as it not being fair and equitable for the other tax payers to assume that difference in the tax value.
- The Board discussed the homeowners responsibility to comply with private wastewater permits and questioned if the Town had any requirement to research and/or report these situations.
- The Board asked Amanda Carlson to discuss with the Town Attorney so all obligations are understood prior to starting the reappraisal process.

4. Interview Candidates Interested in Filling Vacancy on Coventry Fire District #1 Prudential Committee

- The Board unanimously agreed to return to agenda item #4 as Amanda Carlson stated that an email message had been received from Fire District Prudential Committee Candidate Frank Carbonneau.
- Amanda read the email stating that Frank Carbonneau would be unable to attend to meet with the Board. Frank stated that he understood the other candidate to be extremely qualified and if the Board appointed Melissa Gallup he would support that decision.
- Brad Maxwell made the motion to enter into executive session in accordance with 1 VSA § 313 (3) to discuss the appointment of an official. Seconded by Scott Briere.
- The Board entered into executive session to include Town Administrator Amanda Carlson at 6:10 p.m.
- The Board exited executive session at 6:25 p.m.
- Brad Maxwell made the motion to appoint Melissa Gallup to the Coventry Fire District #1 Prudential Committee to serve until the next election of officers. Seconded by Scott Briere and unanimously approved by the Board.

12. Public Awareness for Special Town Meeting on November 14th, 2018.

- The Select Board discussed the need for public awareness for the Special Town Meeting on November 14th, 2018.
- The Board unanimously agreed that in addition to posting the notice in all three of the local newspapers, postcards would be mailed to all registered voters.

13. Better Road Grant Application and Letter of Support

- Amanda Carlson stated that she and the Road Commissioner will be working on the Better Road grant application that is due on October 26th, 2018.
- Last year the Town was awarded \$60,000 for the construction of a box culvert on Glen Road. The intent was to apply for the grant this year for a box culvert on Pine Hill Road and complete both culverts in the summer of 2019. With the close proximity of the two culverts, it would be more cost effective to implement them at the same time.
- The Town has also been awarded a grant from VTrans for the engineering for both projects.
- These two locations have been identified by several agencies as important and necessary to address and correct to mitigate potential problems caused by increasing water flow.
- Even with the grant funds, there will still be a substantial investment required from the Town. This project was considered when funds were allocated to the capital investment savings accounts.
- The anticipated total cost of both projects is \$285,268; if approved grant funds could potentially total \$136,290; with an anticipated Town contribution of \$148,978.
- Brad Maxwell made the motion to approve a letter for inclusion in the Better Road Grant application stating that the Select Board supports the two proposed culvert projects and that funds have been allocated to ensure the financial obligation is met. Seconded by Scott Briere and unanimously approved by the Board.

14. Community Center Halloween Event

- The Board discussed the upcoming Halloween events and request for decorations for the Community Center.
- Brad Maxwell made the motion to approve the expense not to exceed \$500 for Halloween supplies for the Community Center. Seconded by Scott Briere.

15. Other Business

- Self-Advocates Group of Newport in conjunction with Northeast Kingdom Human Services will be holding a Halloween Dance at the Community Center on Wednesday October 24th, 2018.
- Amanda Carlson requested the Board waive the rental fee for the event to support the non-profit group, stating that there were several Coventry residents involved with the organization.

- Brad Maxwell made the motion to waive the Community Center Rental fee for Self-Advocates Group for the October 24th, 2018 event as requested. Seconded by Scott Briere and unanimously approved by the Board.
- The Board reviewed the quote for printing of the 2018 Town Report.
- The Board unanimously agreed to continue with a full color report as was published last year.
- Repro Graphics provided a quote for \$3,589 for 500 copies. The Board discussed the quantity and agreed that as they were not being mailed this year, the quantity should be reduced to 400.
- Amanda Carlson will request the amended quote with the Board authorizing her to proceed with signing acceptance for the 400 full color copies at the price per book indicated.
- Amanda Carlson stated that she has had several failed attempts at getting a secondary quote on the repairs to the generator at the Coventry Village School.
- The Board unanimously agreed that the maintenance could not wait and D&D Electric will be contracted to proceed with making the necessary repairs.
- Original quotes for parts was estimated at \$2200; however the full scope of work and labor has not yet been identified.

16. Sign Orders

General Fund Account:

AP #19-12	10/11/18 - VMERS Quarterly Balance Due	\$ 6.36
AP #19-13	10/15/18 – 2018 Voted Appropriations	\$ 15,790.00
AP #19-14	10/16/18 – General Accounts Payable	\$ 58,947.42
PR #19-16	Payroll for Week Ending 10/13/18	\$ 5,908.12
Signed by the Board for the Treasurer to draw checks totaling		\$ 80,651.90

Buildings & Maintenance Restricted Fund Savings Account:

10-15-18	Green Mountain Electric – Lighting	\$ 470.00
Signed by the Board for the Treasurer to draw checks totaling		\$ 470.00

17. Meeting adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

The next Select Board meeting will be held on Monday November 5th at 4:30 p.m.

Michael Marcotte / Chairman

Bradley Maxwell

Scott Briere

Amanda Carlson / Town Administrator