



Select Board

Town of Hinesburg
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Meeting Minutes – October 21, 2020

- Draft -

Attending the Meeting: Phil Pouech, Merrily Lovell, Mike Loner, Jeff French, Renae Marshall, Joy Dubin Grossman, Dennis Place, Maggie Gordon, Jeff Cook, Anthony Cambridge, Brett Lindemuth, Matthew Lapierre, Christina Deeley, Mike Webb, Tom Ayer, Melissa Levy, Steve Gladstone, Andrea Sambrook, Andrea Morgante, Peter Erb.

Meeting called to order at 6:03 p.m. via zoom.

Consider a Motion to Enter Executive Session Under Provisions of 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)&(a)(3)

Phil moved the Board go into executive session and include Renae and Joy. The purpose is to provide an update on a legal issue and public discussion could put the Town at risk. Second by Mike and approved with 4 yes votes.

Phil moved to enter executive session under provisions of 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)&(a)(3). Second by Mike and approved with 4 yes votes.

Mike moved to come out of executive session, second by Merrily and approved with 4 yes votes.

Additions / Deletions and Public Comment

There were no changes to the agenda.

Matt Lapierre commented that at the last meeting it was mentioned there would be postings to FPF and links to the Town Website regarding the Town ambulance decision. He feels it is important to have official information come from the Town and/or the Select Board as opposed to the primary interested party (the HFD). At the last meeting there was (and he continues to see) confusing and conflicting information regarding the budget and differences in contracting out service. He asked for official information on these issues be posted on FPF.

Town Administrator Report

- Meeting with department heads regarding budgets

- Meeting with the solar contractors
- Continuing to work with the committee on the grant for Restart VT Marketing and Stimulus program for support of local businesses
- Set up the Public Hearing via zoom to be held on October 28 for the Wastewater Upgrade Bond vote and Ambulance public question
- Updated the Town website with the revised ambulance budget and tax impact spreadsheet. Reminder to use the Town website for the most accurate and up to date information on those items
- Wrapping up work items for Hinesburg in preparation for leaving

Select Board Forum

Phil wanted to acknowledge that this is Renae's last Select Board meeting and moved to recognize the extraordinary service and leadership of Renae to the Town of Hinesburg. Phil moved to accept the resolution dated October 21, 2020. Phil read the resolution (copy attached to the minutes). Second by Mike and approved with 4 yes votes.

Phil noted the need to schedule the forming of a hiring committee for the Town Administrator position. Also, to put on the agenda a review of Town Administrator structure vs. Town Manager structure.

Phil asked Board members to think about how the Town will hold Town Meeting in March 2021 and voting options.

Phil noted there have been questions about the diversity committee, which is an ad hoc committee. He is looking for feedback from committee members. Mike suggested breaking the committee into sub groups. Mike noted the committee intends to write a mission statement.

Merrily asked the Board if they still want to post the CDC guidelines regarding Halloween and the Board agreed it was a good idea.

Consider Joining the Howard Center Community Outreach Program

Renae has been talking with Chief Cambridge and Brett Lindemuth about the program and all agree it would be a good addition for the Town and the Police Department.

Jeff Cook, of the Howard Center, gave a presentation of the program explaining how it works and the benefits of the program.

Chief Cambridge noted a question that is frequently asked " how should the police move forward". He said this is how we moved forward not just as a Police Department but as a Town. To make sure individuals with mental health issues are taken care of. He like that the service is not only open for police to use but people can reach out to the Community Outreach directly.

Brett said he worked as an officer in Richmond for 7 years and was drawn to the community care taking function part of policing. When Richmond joined the program in July 2019, he realized this was the right way to help these people. He noted it is more than just mental health but includes housing crisis and substance abuse issues.

Mike asked about office space for the team member. Jeff said they can share a desk and just need to work off a laptop in the Police Department building.

Merrily asked if we can start before January. Renae said they talked about that in a meeting with other representatives of the Howard Center. They thought it would take a while to get everything in place and complete the training.

Mike moved to have Hinesburg join the Howard Center Community Outreach Program during the current fiscal year with an effective start date of January 1, 2021 and authorize the acting Town Administrator to sign the agreement with the expectation Hinesburg would become a long-term partner in this program. Second by Jeff and approved with 4 yes votes.

Select Board Candidate Interviews

There were three candidates in attendance to interview. Phil asked each to briefly introduce themselves noting any highlights.

Maggie Gordon said she has been on the Planning Commission since 2012. A highlight of her work on the PC was work on the stormwater regulations. She was involved in the work to get support to sell the old police station and not tear it down, the renovation of that building adds to the Village streetscape.

Christina Deeley said she is a librarian at CVU as well as the diversity / equity and inclusion coach. She ran in the democratic primary for the House of Representatives seat. Growing up, her family was involved in community and political events. She was part of the 2020 Vermont Emerge Signature Class helping women get involved in politics. If appointed she is not looking to run for election in March 2021, just looking to help out till then.

Dennis Place has lived in Hinesburg his entire life. He has served on the DRB for 13 years and 7 years on the Planning Commission. As chair of the DRB his goal is to keep the meetings comfortable for residents and work with them on their projects. He is dedicated on seeing what the future is for Hinesburg and would like to be a part of shaping that. His children want to live in Hinesburg and he wants to make it a great place to live and an affordable place to live.

Phil asked Renae about serving on the PC, DRB and Select Board. Renae said those are not conflicting offices the only thing to take note of is conflicts with meeting nights.

Phil noted this is a four month temporary position and he does not expect the Board to be taking any big initiatives, typically these months are dedicated to budget work.

Merrily asked Maggie and Dennis about the workload of serving on multiple boards and commissions especially with the strong possibility of the Select Board meeting every week through to January. Dennis said if he were on the Select Board he would give up his seat on the Planning Commission. Maggie said since it is just 4 months, she would try to do both. She does not know at this time if she would run for Select Board in March and would use this time to see if it is a good fit for her. She has discussed with Alex the issue of meeting nights and feels whether she is appointed or not that needs to be addressed as it is not a good situation for people to have to choose between two meetings.

Mike asked if they will be looking to be elected in March. Dennis is, Maggie is not sure and Christina is not.

Jeff asked each what would be an issue they would champion. Maggie said she has two ideas; one is to send an invitation to the residents noting what topics will be discussed in hopes of getting more participation / the second is to have a permanent standing committee to work with the Fire and Police Departments to provide information and make recommendations. Christina said with new development and continuance of development to look at impact fees, she knows this is being worked on but wants to be sure impact fees are there not only for police and fire but the library and the school. Dennis said stormwater is one of the biggest issues Hinesburg has been facing, the Town regulations are stricter than the State so we have done a good job so far but there is still more to do. There have been studies regarding the traffic issues and he would like to see what can be done to help alleviate the problem.

Mike asked each in the past year what was a decision the Selectboard that they would have taken a different position on. Maggie said for her it putting the ambulance question to a vote in the fall. She would have argued to postpone a vote and contract for that time and use the time to hire an independent consultant. Christina would not have voted to add an additional officer to our police force, she is not in favor of adding to the police budget. She is completely in favor of adding the Howard Center or individual Town social worker. She is not in favor of increasing the police budget especially in times of COVID when the budget is tight, but not looking to decrease it either. She likes the community police model Hinesburg has. Dennis said he feels the same regarding the hiring of the additional officer, he would have deferred that to a later date given the unemployment issue. After the grant money is used the residents will have to pay for this.

Tom Ayer wanted to advocate for appointing Dennis. He noted Dennis was born and raised in Hinesburg and lives outside the Village area. He is committed to Hinesburg, being on the DRB and Planning Commission and thinks he would be a good asset to the Town.

Matt Lapierre said he likes having as many voices as possible and is concerned with the issue of being on multiple boards. He would advocate for Christina.

Phill said all three are dedicated to the Town and he feels would be a good choice, this is a temporary appointment looking for someone to help with budget work. He agrees it is good to have a balance of men and women and supports appointing Maggie and feels she would have experience with budget work.

Merrily agrees all three are wonderful. She would prefer someone who has experience with the Town. She is glad Dennis is thinking of running in March. What stood out for her about Maggie, besides her experience, is that she is the only one that mentioned the importance of respectful interaction. Maggie is thoughtful which was indicated by her response regarding the ambulance question. She supports Maggie.

Mike agreed it was good to have three people stepping up. He does not think we could go wrong with any of the three. He thinks having inclusive, diverse boards are important and having more female representation on the Board could be valuable. He feels the voters should make the decision on who fills the position and so is not looking for someone who would be seeking re-election as he feels that would be an unfair advantage. He appreciates Maggie and Dennis' positions in the Town and their commitment to the Town but also thinks it is important to have as many voices in Town government as possible and sitting on multiple commissions can water things down a bit. He is leaning toward Christina.

Jeff said he has worked with both Dennis and Maggie on the PC. He liked what Christina had to say and in looking at her resume she has a great background for what the Town needs. Right now, he is looking at what has to get done between now and the election and leans toward Maggie for her skill set for budget work.

Phil moved to approve to appoint Maggie Gordon to serve on the Select Board till the March 2021 election on Town Meeting Day. Second by Merrily and approved with 4 yes votes.

Christina noted that when we demand experience from young women, we are excluding them from being a part of things. They may have children and careers and are not able to commit like dads and older women are. She found it disappointing to hear they are basing things off experience when some have not had the chance to have the experiences yet.

Jeff noted he hears what she is saying but right now the Board has three months to get through a lot of work and that is what his decision was based on.

Merrily noted her voice as a young woman with children is valuable and encouraged her to join a Town Committee to get her feet wet.

Phil said he heard very clearly what Christina said, he will not respond now but will let it sink in. It is a voice we all should hear.

Consider Recommendation from Revolving Loan Fund Committee to Reduce Interest Rate on RLF Loans

Melissa Levy explained the background on the request given current economic conditions.

Mike moved to reduce the interest rate on our revolving funds to a flat 5% for the existing and future loans from this fund. And to authorize the Town Administrator or acting Town Administrator to work

with the Addison County Economic Development Commission (ACEDC) to sign all of the necessary paperwork associated with this change. Second by Merrily and approved with 4 yes votes.

Consider Merging RLF Committee with Economic Development Committee and Reduce Membership

Merrily moved to merge the Revolving Loan Fund Committee with the Economic Development Committee and reduce the membership for the Economic Development Committee to five (5). Second by Phil and approved with 4 yes votes.

Update from Energy Committee on Proposed Revision to Lease Agreement with Aegis Renewables

Mike Webb discussed the difficulties on siting the solar at the landfill. This has required the developer to move the project and make a slight design change in the system.

There is vegetation on the cap that needs to be cleared. Aegis is proposing the Town pay \$4,000 for vegetation cutting, chipping and removal. Phil said whether we move forward with this project or not the Town has an obligation to maintain the cap free from vegetation. He feels whether we hire it out or use on own equipment the Town needs to plan on doing that.

There is additional expense for the design system of \$39,500. To cover this cost Aegis is proposing a reduction in lease payments of \$15,000 to the Town.

Phil noted he will recuse himself from the vote but had a question on the cap certification for ANR. Is there any risk after the engineering work it would not meet those requirements? Mike W said Aegis is confident it will be approved.

Mike L asked about the change of being on the cap. Mike W said Aegis assumed they would not be on the cap and the Town did not specify the area.

Jeff asked about the reduction in the number of modules. Mike W said he will ask Aegis about the change in the number of modules. He noted the output is not supposed to change from the previous design.

Phil asked if the other proposals assumed they would not be on the cap also? Mike W said there was nothing that indicated others were using a ballasted system or identified being on the cap.

Merrily moved to accept the Energy Committee proposed revisions to the lease agreement with Aegis Renewables as described by Mike Webb. Second by Jeff and approved with 3 yes votes and Phil recusing.

Crosswalk Request from Annette's Playschool

Andrea and Andy Sambrook were present to discuss this.

Renae noted in her initial discussions with Andrea she thought they were looking to get to the Carpenter Carse Library and she suggested to take the path between Anette's and the Community Alliance Church, use the crosswalk there and join back to the sidewalk after going through CVU property. CVU was supportive of the idea. The actual request is for continuity for walking from the village to the school.

Andy addressed the gap in the sidewalk from the existing one to the entrance drive of their building.

Phil asked if there has been any discussion of a second crosswalk with the Highway Department and Police. Renae said there has not and the preference is not to have two crosswalks. Phil noted a sidewalk of that length could be \$50,000 to \$100,000. Perhaps a gravel walkway could work.

Merrily asked about the path from Annette's to the Church driveway. Andrea said there is a path but it is not easy to use. Merrily asked about making it more user friendly and to accommodate a stroller.

***Action Item - Phil will work on setting up a meeting with CVU, Mike Anthony and the Sambrooks to discuss this.**

Consider Approving Costs for Town's Share of Creekside Stormwater Pond Work

The Town is responsible for 50% of the cost of the clean out.

Peter Erb noted there a lot of phragmites in and around stormwater ponds and it is important to make sure disposal is done properly.

Andrea Morgante that is part of the work Lewis Creek Association does with Charlotte and Shelburne. She agreed correct disposal is critical. Andrea will talk with Creekside and the highway department about disposal.

Merrily moved to approve the shared cost of the stormwater cleanout in Creekside, per the agreement, in the amount of \$15,000 and authorize the Town Administrator to follow through with that. Second by Mike and approved with 4 yes votes.

Phil noted if there are improvements that need to be made the Town will look at that proposal.

Consider Request to Include Lewis Creek Association Funding as a Separate Line Item in Town Budget

In the past they have been a part of the Conservation Commission budget. Andrea does not think it is necessary to have it as a separate line item. It can be included in various places in the Town budget.

***Action item – Merrily will contact the Conservation Commission to find out why they wanted to remove Lewis Creek Association.**

Consider Signing Letter of Intent to Participate in the Municipal Road Grants in Aid Program

Phil moved to approve signing the letter of intent to participate in the Municipal Road Grants in Aid Program. Second by Jeff and approved with 4 yes votes.

Review Minutes from October 7, 2020

Phil moved to approve the minutes from October 7, 2020 as amended. Second by Merrily and approved with 4 yes votes.

Consider Approving Warrants

Phil moved to approve the warrants, including payroll, as submitted by the Town Treasurer.

Jeff moved to adjourn at 10:05 p.m., second by Mike and approved with 4 yes votes.

Respectfully submitted,
Valerie Spadaccini, Clerk of the Board