

Select Board Meeting
Mount Holly Town Office
50 School St
Mount Holly, VT 05758

January 14, 2025
6:00 pm

MINUTES

Attendance: Mark Turco (Chair), Jeff Chase, Diana Garrow, Caitlin Boyle, Elizabeth Karle, Clinton Woolley, Carol A Garrow-Woolley, David Johnson, Stephen Michel, Dennis Devereux, Christine Pratt, Zena Gates, June Capron, Bill Austin, Tiffany Austin, Gary Norton, Lori Norton, Faith Tempest (Zoom)

1. **Call to Order** at 6:00 pm
2. **Pledge of Allegiance**
3. **Consideration of any changes and/or additions to the agenda.** Mr. Turco added one item regarding the easement requested by Green Mountain Power; added to Old Business.
4. **Approval of December 10, 2024 Minutes.** Ms. Garrow made a motion to accept the minutes as drafted; Jeff Chase seconded; unanimously approved.
5. **Reports**
 - a. **Highway and Transfer Station Update - Clinton Woolley.** Mr. Woolley noted that the highway crew has been kept busy with plowing and sanding. At the Transfer Station, the attendants are working on cleaning out the old warming shed to make room for the new.
 - b. **Town Treasurer Update - Elizabeth Karle.** Ms. Karle noted there is not a lot of activity this time of year. The Town's Delinquent Tax Collector has collected about \$120,000 in delinquent taxes, which reduces what's owed by about half.
 - i. **Monthly Income and Expenses Report:** Ms. Karle noted there is not a lot of activity this time of year. The Town's Delinquent Tax Collector has collected about \$120,000 in delinquent taxes, which reduces what's owed by a little more than half.
 - ii. **Finalize and Approve FY26 Budget.** Mr. Turco noted that Fire Chief Billy Austin had passed a social services request from Okemo Valley Technical Rescue, for a \$2,500 allocation to be put to voters for FY26. Carol Garrow-Woolley noted that if the allocation is being sought as an article to be voted on the Town Ballot, it will need to be accompanied by a voter-backed petition by January 16. The Board has discussed request Okemo Valley Television's request for a budgeting allocation for increased A/V costs, in addition to its current allocation request article on the Town Ballot Ms. Karle noted that the Town had received the new budget from the Mount Holly Fire Department and that those numbers had been integrated into the proposed FY26 Budget. She said that when all projected funding allocations are taken into account, there would be a 10.75% increase in the Town budget to be raised by tax, over FY25. The total to be raised by tax in the projected FY26 budget would be \$1,391,770. Resident Zena Gates asked whether residents had any influence over the school budget. Mr. Turco confirmed that the school budget will be put to voters as a Ballot article in March, and that a community meeting regarding the budget will be held on January 15. Mr. Turco made a motion to approve the FY26 budget as proposed; Jeff Chase seconded;

unanimously approved.

- c. **Fire Department Update - Bill Austin.** Mr. Austin addressed community concerns regarding first response calls. Mr. Austin noted that the Fire Department does respond to every call received, but that at times the Department's first response team cannot respond to a first response call; in these cases, Ludlow Ambulance Service responds to these.
- d. **Listers' Report - David Johnson.** Mr. Johnson noted that the final Grand List was sent to the state today; next month the Board can sign a certificate of no suits pending.
- e. **Animal Control Officer Report - Adam Karle.** Mr. Karle sent an updated ACO report to the Select Board; the Board noted that Mr. Karle has received some difficult calls recently and Mr. Turco urged residents to be respectful when making calls to Town officials.
- f. **Planning Commission Update - Jon McCann.** Mr. McCann sent a report that the Town of Cavendish has started working on new subdivision regulations and that he hopes MHPC will cooperate with that process; he attended a VLCT Wastewater training meeting; he noted that the MHPC has two projects in review under the current subdivision regulations.

6. New Business

- a. **Set Date for Select Board Meeting with Attorney in Susco v. Mount Holly et al..** The Board set a date of January 27 at 2 pm for the meeting with the attorney, pending his availability.
- b. **Discussion of Delinquent Tax Collection Statutory Changes.** The Clerk noted that there are new statutory changes regarding delinquent tax collection; the Board will set a future meeting with the Delinquent Tax Collector to further discuss these changes.
- c. **FEMA Cost Offer - Beaver Meadow.** FEMA's revised cost offer for the Beaver Meadow culvert repairs is proposed at ~\$426,000, which represents 90% of the total project costs; an additional 8% would be paid for by the state and 2% by the Town. Jeff Chase noted that this cost offer is closer than previous offers to what the project will actually cost. Mr. Chase made a motion to accept the FEMA cost offer; Mr. Turco seconded; unanimously approved.
- d. **Appoint Ethics Liaison to State Ethics Commission.** Mr. Turco volunteered to serve as the municipal liaison to the State Ethics Commission.
- e. **2025 Mileage Certification Updates.** The Road Foreman noted that there are no updates to the Town's mileage certification. The Clerk will submit the Certification without changes.
- f. **Discuss Solid Waste Sticker Reorder.** The Board noted that the Town Clerk can reorder stickers as needed.
- g. **Adopt Revised Purchase Order (COI and W9 Requirements).** The Board reviewed new language regarding COI and W9 requirements for vendors and requested one other addition regarding insurance limits and Workers Comp coverage, with exemptions provided for sole operators without employees.

7. Old Business

- a. Discussion of Town Treasurer as Appointed Position.** Tabled.
- b. Shifting Treasurer Duties - Treasurer Request for Asst. Treasurer Pay Rate of \$25-\$30/hour.** Mr. Turco made a motion to approve a new Assistant Treasurer's pay rate at \$25-30/hr, commensurate with experience; Mr. Chase seconded; unanimously approved.
- c. Green Mountain Power Easement Request - Route 103.** Mr. Turco noted that Green Mountain Power submitted an adjusted easement request, with the pole and anchor/guy moved to the location requested by the Select Board in its December meeting. Mr. Turco noted that he will reach out to Karen Kotecki to further understand the easement language prior to signing. Mr. Chase noted that if/when the pole is placed, the Town would like the Cemetery Commissioner to be present.

8. Citizen Comments. Mr. Turco noted that the Town cannot assist disabled vehicles in the roadway; individual drivers must call a private towing service to help if needed. Ms. Garrow also noted that the Town has received an update from VTrans regarding the reconstruction of the Bowlsville Bridge; the project will begin in Summer 2027 due to funding delays, and the property owners have been contacted by the State and are in cooperation and support of the bridge repair.

9. Announcements

- a.** Dog License Registration Deadline is April 1.
- b.** Town Office Closed on January 20 for MLK Jr. Day.

10. Review & Sign Orders

11. Executive Session: Title 1 V.S.A. S 313(a)(3) - personnel (if needed)

12. Adjourned at 7:31 pm

Submitted by Caitlin Boyle, Select Board Clerk