

**Town of Moretown
Office of the SELECTBOARD**

Notice of unapproved minutes of the February 4, 2007 Selectboard meeting

Members present: Paula Mastroberardino, Rae Washburn III, Stephanie Venema, Don Wexler, John Hoogenboom

Guests: Paul Gillies, Ron Shems, Jeff Hand, Jeff Ladue, Mary Jo Davis, Eric Howes, Carl Wimble, Vera and Ron Ward, Sheila Griffith, Bridgette Remington, Ki Samson, Tom Salmon, Fred Duplessis, Susan Goodyear, Amy and David Deutl, Hoover Austin, Sheriff Sam Hill, Sgt. Brett Meyer, Kara Herlihy, Cheryl Brown

Paula called the meeting to order at 5:30

Paula moved to enter into executive session at 5:30 p.m., to discuss the Hendrickson tax appeal whereby premature general public knowledge would clearly place the town at a substantial disadvantage. Stephanie seconded. All were in favor.

Paul Gillies, Ron Shems, Jeff Hand, Jeff Ladue and Mary Jo Davis were asked to stay for the discussion.

Paula moved to come out of executive session at 6:00 p.m. Stephanie seconded. All were in favor.

Financial reports/year end balances – Tom Salmon, Fred Duplessis, Paul Gillies, Susan Goodyear and Town Auditor Bridgette Remington were present for this discussion.

Paula asked Susan the status of the request for the Selectboard to have all year end fund balance reports.

Susan gave the Board reports stating that the general account ending balance was not available because Michelle from Sullivan, Powers Co., has not come to reconcile the bank statement as yet.

Fred said Michelle is coming tomorrow to reconcile the bank statement and to consult Susan re: year end closure of all accounts.

Paula said the Selectboard wants to be able to have time to review financial reports and be satisfied with the information in the reports so they can support the Town Meeting article requests. Paula added, the partial information we have received last week was unclear and there were a few discrepancies that needed to be researched. Because the Treasurer position will turnover at Town Meeting, it might be a good time to have Sullivan, Powers do another audit and have the State Auditors office involved in the overview.

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Fred said Sullivan, Powers is not currently contracted to do a year end audit. He said they would certainly be able to do an audit, after Michelle finishes the reconciliations, but not before Town Meeting. Fred said after Michelle finishes the reconciliations, the Selectboard should be able to get all of the financial reports for the Town Report. However, they will not be audited reports unless the town auditors audit them. Fred said Vermont State Statutes are pretty clear that elected town auditors warn to meet, meet, audit and report the financial records of the town and school. He said it is the town auditor's responsibility to audit the financial records.

Bridgette said because the Selectboard had contracted accounting firms to do the year end audit for the last two years, the town auditors assumed the Board would be hiring an accounting firm again this year. Bridgette said there is no way the town auditors have time to audit the financial reports, several of which they do not have yet, at this late date and the reports must be to the printer by this Thursday or Friday.

Discussion followed about whether to have a full audit, which is a very involved process which would include findings, reports and recommendations all of which take considerable time and is expensive, or the second option would be to have an "agreed upon procedures" whereby all parties involved – Selectboard, Town Treasurer, and CPA, agreed that the auditing procedures to be done, without necessarily reviewing all accounts, would satisfy the needs of all involved.

Susan requested that a complete audit be done because of all the backroom mumblings, so it is positively clear that everything is ok before she leaves and the new Treasurer takes over. The Selectboard so noted the request Susan's request was presented in writing as well).

Paula said the town reports has not had audited numbers in it for the last two years.

Fred said unless your town auditors are willing to audit the financial reports that you will be getting, the reports in the town report will not be audited again this year. He said because Moretown's fiscal year ends 12/31, it is not unusual for the town reports to be un-audited reports because of the timeline for bank statements, year end interest statements, etc all of which need to be reconciled prior to year end closure.

Bridgette said she provided Susan with a list of the reports the auditors do not have. The list includes the Statement of Receipts & Disbursements, General Fund and Statement of Taxes Raised.

Paula asked Fred, if Michelle is here, can she pick out four or five account to review for the town report?

Fred said no, that would be an "agreement" and could not be done before the town report needs to be ready. Fred suggested the town change its fiscal year end to June 30th.

Paul said that was a good idea but suggested that the town come up with a plan as to why you are changing the year end, hold public meetings with 30 days notice and well advertised, and vote on the issue next town meeting.

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Tom suggested forming an audit citizen committee that could form a plan that could look at moving forward with Sullivan, Powers prior and future recommendations in a structured timeline. He thinks the town should consider a March 2008 independent audit and then plan a June 2009 audit once the fiscal year end has been changed in March, that way you can have a plan in place for making decisions.

Paula moved to have Sullivan, Powers & Co. audit the financial records for January 1, 2007 thru March 4, 2008. John seconded. All were in favor.

Paula asked Tom if he would stay in touch with the audit?

Tom said yes, and asked the Board consider forming a finance committee, of which he would play a role in the audit process, with Fred's approval.

Fred agreed and said Sullivan, Powers will provide a written report some time in April 2008 of the audit results.

Public comment: there was no one present tonight for public comment

OLD BUSINESS:

New town garage project – Hoover came in tonight with a survey of the Ward Clapboard Mill property the town intends to purchase. The survey was revised in Decemeber 2007 to show the proposed 2.5 acres sale area as well as a 14' right of way to Route 100B adjacent to the Fekert property. Don wonders if that right of way could be used for other purposes ie: a park entrance, second access to town land. Hoover is not clear on the use of the access or where exactly it is. The idea is open for later discussion.

A purchase and sales agreement between the Town and Ward Clapboard Mill was received, for the town to purchase 2.5 +/- parcel of property along the Mad River (behind the current sand pile). Hoover wants to be sure a first right of refusal was offered to the town in the contract, to purchase the remaining acreage Ward is retaining should he decide to later sell that property. After a quick glance, it appeared the option was not included in the agreement Hoover will call Holly Ward and ask if it can be included. The agreement also includes monthly payments from the town. Hoover will ask Holly to change the payment arrangement to reflect that the town will make a yearly payment as was first discussed. Cheryl will ask Paul Gillies to review the Agreement, letting him know a revised copy including the two issues (1st right of refusal/yearly payment) will be coming.

Hoover said some of the neighbors attended last weeks DRB hearing and they would like the sand pile moved to lessen the noise and dust. Moving the sand pile is part of the proposed project as the septic will be where the current sand pile is so that concern has already been addressed. Hoover said the DRB still has concerns about storm water runoff and Doug Reed is addressing that issue. Hoover said Doug supplied the DRB with additional information regarding storm water runoff today. The DRB also has concerns with landscaping and it appears some of the surrounding residents do also. Landscaping will be addressed as well.

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Personnel/Benefit Plan – Stephanie said there are questions from the road crew about overtime/comp time and on call pay that she does not know how to address in the personnel plan. There was discussion that comp-time is treated as one and one-half times for each hour (the same as overtime).

Discussion included the option of using comp-time, or being paid for comp-time that was not used, by a certain date or be forfeited. Should there be a limit placed on the amount of comp-time that can be accrued (would the accrual date be year end?). Craig would be responsible to remain within the amount budgeted for payroll so he will have to manage the comp-time and encourage the use of comp-time during the slow months.

On call - The general consensus of the Board was it would be difficult to pay a person who was sent home early for a pending storm – then ending up not having to work. It appeared the easiest solution would be to pay the men for the hours they work.

Chris Gray submitted an invoice to be paid for 40 hours (to be paid at the rate of time and one-half/overtime rate) of unused comp-time from 2007. The Board approved the invoice and the pay will be included in the 2/21/08 payroll. (see comp-time pg. 5)

Stephanie will incorporate tonight's comments into a draft in **bold** for 2/18/08. The thought of the Board was to continue working on the Plan but wait to adopt it until after Town Meeting elections so if there were any new Board members, they had the opportunity to review the Plan before it was adopted. ***more later tonight**

WASHINGTON COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT – Sheriff Sam Hill and Sgt. Brett Meyer came in tonight to talk with the Board about services that are offered by WCSD.

Sheriff Hill provided an analysis which included hourly averages spent patrolling from 2005-2007. He said about an average of seven hours per week has been spent patrolling Moretown Roads over the last three years. At that same rate the cost for the WCSD services would be \$11,800 for 2008. Moretown received \$6,116 in 2007 from the Judicial Bureau from fines, offsetting the \$10,000 placed in the town budget for contracted law enforcement.

Discussion followed about WCSD reducing the number of hours spent patrolling if Moretown wanted to reduce the budget. Sgt. Meyer spoke about other services provided by WCSD such as snowmobile complaints, and about speed control methods that the town might do to deter speeding.

The 2008 Law Enforcement Contract with Washington County Sheriff's Department was signed by the Board and \$10,000 was again placed in the budget for the services.

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More Old Business:

Reports for the Town Report – Additional year end reports were provided by Susan. The Town Auditors have provided Susan with a list of outstanding reports. Paula will review the reports provided by Susan and talk with Michelle of Sullivan, Powers and Bridgette Remington later in the week to find out the status of financial reports for the Town Report.

E911 – Paula reported that Shane Grace had three corrections on past E911 addresses. Shane will charge \$25 for each correction and pass along an invoice for \$75. Paula said every time Shane has a 911 address, he will submit a bill for \$25. Shane will also be getting a key to the town office so he can use the fax machine and copy machine.

***More Personnel/Benefit policy** – Stephanie said none of the other valley town have on-call pay for their road help and added that her goal is to have a decent personnel policy by 3/1/08.

Stephanie will add tonight's discussion to the draft, which includes language on pages 18, 1 & 2 of the VLCT modal policy/definition of persons covered, and meet with Craig to review the overtime/comp-time draft.

Employee Health Insurance – Is the current health insurance package really the best for all employees was the question John was to investigate.

John said yes, but unless the town puts in the entire \$1500 per year deductible, a second account, such as a Flex Spending Account, is needed to suit the needs of some employees that meet their deductible early in the year. John said the benefit of a Flex Spending Account is the account is town money so if a person quits, that employee does not get free money as is the case with a Health Savings Account. John reminded the Board of their decision to not change the health benefits this year but rather to investigate other methods of handling the employee's deductible.

Don agreed and added that maybe we should fund the HSA's with the entire \$1500 now.

Stephanie suggested funding the HSA's with the second quarter's payment now.

John moved to fund the Health Savings Accounts with another \$375. Rae seconded. All were in favor.

Comp-time - Rae moved to pay Chris Gray for 40 hours of comp-time at the rate of one and one half times per each hour. Paula seconded. All were in favor.

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NEW BUSINESS:

Riders in town vehicles – Stephanie reported of a question of whether or not it is acceptable for riders in town plow trucks. Stephanie said she told Craig she would bring the question to the Selectboard.

She said VLCT/the town's insurance has stated that they would discourage non-town employee riders but the town's insurance would cover a liability claim. Any claim would result in a review and change the town's loss file accordingly.

The decision was to tell Craig VLCT's comments and that the Board has liability concerns but that they do not have strong objections since the riders are most likely close friends or family members, but the final decision is up to Craig.

Energy Committee - Don reported that Karen Horn has volunteered to be the Energy Coordinator for the Moretown Energy Group (MEG). A town action committee would work on town and school buildings toward an energy saving strategy.

Don moved that the Selectboard authorize the organization of an Energy Committee. Paula seconded.

Discussion – the committee will present information at Pre-Town Meeting and Town Meeting by way of presentation of flyer. Notice will be given of the new organization so anyone who wants to be part of the Committee is made aware of the opportunity. Notice of meeting and minutes of the meetings will be made available.

Hendrickson tax appeal – Paula moved on the advise of town's council, to allow the town's attorney to take steps to dismiss the Hendrickson tax appeal. Stephanie seconded. John, Don, Stephanie and Paula approved. Rae opposed stating that he opposed because he supports the decisions of Board of Civil Authority.

MLI tipping fees/gas to energy – Paula reported that Michael Marcott, Chair of the Coventry Selectboard and State Representative said Coventry does not have tipping fee on their Host gas to energy operation at the Coventry landfill and that Coventry landfill receives less in tipping fees from Casella Waste than Moretown does from MLI. Michael also said that the Town of Coventry is contemplating a re-write of their Host Agreement.

For 2007, the Host Tipping Fee rate was \$3.23 per ton. Moretown landfill received 118,314 waste tons subject to tipping fees during the year. The 2008 Host Fee will be \$3.37 per ton.

Reports & Communication, Mail

Overload permits for Allen Lumber and McCullough Crushing were signed.

Invoices and warrants were reviewed and approved.

John moved to adjourn at 9:45 p.m. Rae seconded. All were in favor.