

**Town of Moretown
Office of the SELECT BOARD**

DRAFT – Notice of unapproved minutes of the 8/4/14 selectboard meeting

Board members present: Reed Korrow, Rae Washburn, Michelle Beard, Tom Martin, John Hoogenboom

Guests included: Raymond Munn, Martha Douglass, Dean Moulton, Lisa Ransom, Scott Baughman, Martin Cameron, Kate O’Neill, Don LaRocca, Craig Eilers, Jeff Zweber of Engineering Ventures, Cheryl Brown as assistant to the board

Public Comment:

Ray Munn – reported that trash has been building up again over the last 2-3 weeks at his neighbor’s property on the Moretown Common Road. Earlier this summer Moretown’s Health Officer was forced to get involved to get trash cleaned up at the same residence.

Cheryl will let Dick Valentinetti know about this new issue.

Martha Douglass – asked how much had been spent so far on the Blodgett matter.

Tom thought the total to be about \$7,500 including the survey of the trail.

Martha then asked if there was mention at the mediation that the plan agreed to at that time (discontinuing part of the town trail) would impact a person’s property. She was told it was not mentioned at the mediation.

Dean Moulton – asked if the Investment Committee (IC) meetings have been warned.

John didn’t know; Cheryl hadn’t been notified of any IC meeting to warn them, so apparently not. The IC hasn’t met in a long time. But unless it’s an emergency meeting, they will set their next meeting to a date certain to continue their deliberations.

Approval of Minutes:

6/16/14 – Michelle moved to approve the minutes of 6/16/14 as printed; John seconded. Michelle, John and Tom were in favor. Reed and Rae abstained from voting.

7/7/14 – John moved to approve the minutes of 7/7/14 as printed; Rae seconded. Rae, John, Reed and Tom were in favor. Michelle abstained from voting.

7/21/14 – Rae moved to approve the minutes of 7/21/14 as printed; Michelle seconded. Rae, Michelle and John were in favor. Reed and Tom abstained from voting.

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Reports & Communications, Announcements:

Bridgette Remington – email resigning as a planning commissioner, but requesting to be appointed as a planning commissioner alternate.

Tom moved to accept Bridgette’s resignation as a planning commissioner and to appoint her as an alternate on the planning commission; John seconded. All were in favor.

Dara Torre – email requesting appointment to the Moretown planning commission replacing Bridgette Remington.

The usual process is to advertise any vacancies on town boards, so before making any appointment the vacancy will be advertised on Front Porch Forum. Cheryl will let Dara know.

Jonathan Siegel – email requesting re-appointment to the planning commission for another term.

Reed moved to re-appoint Jonathan Siegel for another 4-year term on the planning commission; Michelle seconded. All were in favor.

Eric Howes – email requesting re-appointment to the Moretown DRB as an alternate.

John moved to re-appoint Eric Howes to the DRB as an alternate for a 1-year term; Michelle seconded. All were in favor.

Pat Travers – Local Project Manager for the sidewalk renovation project - email asking who from the town would be his contact for technical business.

Cheryl will be Pat’s contact.

Mowing town properties – There were concerns expressed that the old town office property and the town hall property were not being mowed. Cheryl contacted Greg Wagner because he is doing the mowing now, and he said he was told to do only the school property.

Later in the evening when Martin came in, he said he talked with Greg about that and Greg agreed to mow the town properties as well.

Website Administrator back-up – There is a need for a backup website administrator when Steve Sharp is unavailable, specifically to post time sensitive meeting agenda’s and meeting minutes. JB Weir had expressed interest in helping Steve out as needed.

Tom moved to appoint John Weir as website administrator backup; John seconded. All were in favor.

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Lynch Hill partying – Rae reported having hear from Jeff Langmaid at Fountains Forestry about partying on their clients private land. Jeff indicated that basically every Saturday night there is partying and a bon fire.

Tom asked if anyone had called the State Police?

Rae indicated to Jeff that he should call them.

Ray Munn said he will take a ride up there some Saturday night and check things out.

OLD BUSINESS:

Host Town Agreement for cell IV – The next step- Now that the board has identified some of the criteria for the document, Tom thinks they need to take the outline of objectives and work in private on a draft contract for the lawyer to review, but not until there is a complete application for cell IV before the State.

Maloney culvert – No news.

Blodgett litigation status – Court hearing on Monday, August 18th at 10:00 a.m. John and Michelle will attend.

Town Office project – Demo of the old town office building – When asked if the road crew could tear down the old town office, Martin said they could as time allowed, if it would save the town money.

Cheryl indicated that the building can be torn down, but we are waiting for the sub-grantee agreement for the grant to cover the town’s 25% share before incurring any costs. She should have the agreement later this week then all work can begin.

Sidewalk project - Pat Travers will post the request for proposal for design services when he gets back from vacation later this month.

Moretown Mountain Road project – Martin Cameron and Jeff Zweber from Engineering Ventures were present for this discussion.

Jeff gave an overview of the project and engineering plans. He thinks the plans best fix the town’s needs and meet VTrans standards without moving the road to the North, to repair a 1,000 ‘ section of the road. The total project cost estimate is \$400,000.

Martin said he is trying to get a road surface that will last; the \$400,000 is the result. The grant maximum is \$175,000.

Currently the town has a VTrans grant for about \$160,000.

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Discussion followed about the worry of the road failing before it's fixed; it is getting late in the construction season so bids should go out soon if it is going to be done this year; breaking the project down into two phases; utility poles need to be moved on some portion of the project area; getting easements in place to work outside of the town's right of way; and the cost to repave/shim and overlay the road this year would be between \$8,000 and \$17,000 depending on which method is done. Martin is not in favor of doing the temporary repair method if it can be helped.

Jeff will put together a Request for Proposal (RFP) incorporating tonight's discussion that will break down the project into two phases. Jeff will pass a draft RFP along to Martin for review.

For the record, Rae said DuBois Construction plans to bid on this job, so after tonight he will refrain from answering any questions pertaining to this project.

Set the 2014 tax rate – Tom said the Schoolboard was invited tonight to see the process of developing the town tax rate. He said the School Directors do a good job of keeping the Moretown Elementary School rate as low as possible. It's at the State level where the problem is and people should contact their legislators to talk about reforming the education funding formula.

Discussion followed:

- There is a disconnect between Vermont schools and Montpelier about funding education, and somehow we need to get the word out that this needs to be fixed;
- MECA – who finances MECA; the program funding in the “red” and who covers the difference; how many Moretown Elementary teacher also work for MECA; does the school get reimbursed for use of the building; who pays the retirement; who establishes the tuition rate; what is the benefit package for the workers and who supervises them or is accountable; what are the salaries, qualifications of the MECA directors; and how can taxpayers find out about the financial business of the MECA program.
- Kate did a great job of answers questions about MECA that were asked her tonight, saying that MECA is funded via tuitions and pays its expenses from those tuitions through a separate account handled by WWSU; the schoolboard watches those numbers very carefully each month to be sure the deficit doesn't happen again or the program will close. Other than that, the MECA program is its own little entity run by its directors. Kate added that the MECA program is a benefit to the Town and to the kids, because they get to stay in their school and play with their friends, versus having to go to an independent daycare provider.
- Kate will send Cheryl a link to the MECA program that will hopefully help to answer questions about the program that she doesn't have. Kate also suggested that the MECA directors come to a selectboard meeting and explain the program and benefits, and to better explain the financial business of the program.

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A draft worksheet of the proposed tax rate provided to the board at their last meeting was reviewed again tonight and found to be correct.

John moved to set the tax rate as follows; Michelle seconded:

Residential:

Municipal	\$ 0.2629
Education	<u>\$ 1.6480</u>
Total	\$ 1.9109

Non-Residential:

Municipal	\$ 0.2629
Education	<u>\$ 1.4717</u>
Total	\$ 1.7346

Discussion: Rae asked if there was anything the selectboard could do to adjust the non-residential tax? The answer was no, that the State sets the education rate. All were in favor.

More old business:

Investment – Don gave an overview of his impression of Schwab relative to municipal investing, and found their products comparable to TD Ameritrade, saying he feels comfortable with them and would like to invite them to a Selectboard meeting with the intent to use their services, if the board agrees after the meeting.

New Business:

Bids to assess the pre-Irene Fair Market Value of the old town office building –

Requests for proposal were sent to at least eight appraisers. Two bids were received as follows:

John R. Waldo, SRA	not to exceed \$ 2,250
Martin Appraisal Services, Inc	\$ 1,800

Waldo would have the appraisal done by September 5, 2014; Martin would take approximately 6 weeks to get the appraisal done – late September.

Tom moved to accept the bid of Martin Appraisal Services, Inc to assess the old town office building pre-disaster of 8/27/11, as bid for \$1,800; John seconded. All were in favor.

Financing the new dump truck – Memo from Cherilyn letting the board know that the Merchants Bank had the best interest rate to finance the new truck and equipment. Tom signed the purchase agreements and invoices so Cherilyn can proceed with the financing process.

Warrant #'s 39, 40 and 41 were signed as presented.

John moved; Rae seconded to adjourn at 8:30 p.m. All were in favor.