

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

DRAFT – Notice of unapproved minutes of the 2/1/16 Selectboard meeting

Board members present: Rae Washburn, Jason Aronowitz, Tom Martin, Michelle Beard, John Hoogenboom

Guests included: Steve Smith, Dean Moulton, Don LaRocca, David Bosworth (Merchants Trust), Tracy Brannstrom, Cheryl Brown as board assistant

Tom called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

Public Comment Period:

Steve Smith –

Thermal Camera – Steve came in to show the board the malfunctioning thermal camera that failed at a fire last week. He said the camera is used for finding “hot spots” at every structure and chimney fire they have, and is a vital piece of equipment. Steve would like to get a new unit sooner than later and asked the board for permission to buy the camera from Reynolds on sale/rebate for \$8,499. The unit retails for \$17,095.

Cheryl furnished a grant application for approval for funding from VLCT to pay 50% of the cost for the unit.

The fire department budget was reviewed. There is a possibility a debt retirement line item was over budgeted. This could help pay for the unit if approved. Also discussed was purchasing the unit before the grant is awarded. Steve will talk with Reynolds about the situation and find out about payment arrangements.

Fire coverage – Steve said the daytime coverage for a fire call could be better. They are a volunteer department and the members work. There was discussion about inviting the town employees to become members of the fire department since they are usually working around town.

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Reports & Communication, Announcements:

Short Term Disability Insurance – Full-time employees receive short term disability insurance coverage through the town. The company the town has been purchasing the insurance from for several years (AIG), has decided to terminate all small group coverage as of 3/31/16. Craig Eilers is the town's broker. Cheryl will ask Craig to get quotes to replace the coverage.

Vermont Testing invoice – Cheryl notified the board that she is holding an invoice from Vt. Testing for work related to the new town office. The invoice would put the Vt. Testing quoted price, over quote. Vt. Testing (Jacques) said he was authorized on site to do the work. Henry is checking into the matter.

List of non-profit requests for town meeting – Michelle noted that Dara Torre (town auditor) provided a listing of non-profit requests and a summary of services provided for town meeting day, so people can see what they are voting for.

Town Office construction business –

Rae reported meeting with Henry Erickson and Larry Ruggles last week and reviewed the construction. He is generally pleased. Larry remains pretty confident that the project will be complete by July. The new windows all set - the building will be air tested – Rae is concerned about the grade being high. Perhaps after trees are planted and landscaping is done, it will be ok.

John and Tom will meet at Maclay Architects tomorrow to pick out colors. The board will be provided with a list of furniture needs.

David Bosworth and Don LaRocca – Investments - Points of interest –

- The market was very difficult last year. The town's portfolio went down as much as 3.7%.
- \$500,000 was invested in stocks and bonds long term.
- Dave feels the town's position is still correct. Look at the long range.
- Dave will email quarterly reports to those who provided him email addresses tonight.

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- Based on the current investment plan, the board is looking at a return of 5% or more as the benchmark.
- International investments are historically diversified investments and have higher returns on the long term (6%-7%), but also have higher management costs.
- We paid about \$4,000 in management fees (.8%) in 2015. The question came up whether or not we should have been charged .6%. Cheryl will look up the minutes to see what the threshold is to meet the 06% rate. The board thinks it is \$500,001.
- There are two accounts – one with an initial investment of \$500,000; and a second with an initial investment of \$50,000 (short term investments).
- No changes were made to the investment plan. Later in the meeting, Jason talked about investments related to a return over the bench mark. An option might be Vanguard investment products to eliminate management fees. It is a possibility that an investment committee will be reorganized to have quarterly discussions such tonight's.

More Reports & Communication, Announcements:

Sand pile screening costs – John reported that cost for a 3'-4' arborvitae tree would be \$50 per tree. \$2,000 was put into the highway budget for landscaping improvements.

Zoning Revisions – Revisions and new zoning regulations were given to the Selectboard on 1/19/16 and the question to approve them was supposed to be on the town meeting warning.

After reviewing the proposed revisions and the new subdivision regulations, the board felt it necessary to allow more time for voters to review the proposed changes. There will be no article for town meeting but there will be an article in August asking voters to approve the revisions. In the meantime, there will be a public hearing.

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Approval of Minutes

1/19/16 – There was discussion about the wording of the draft minutes. The following amendment and clarification was made to those minutes and included in the motion to approve them:

- **River Road snowplowing on 1/18/16 (page 3) – will read** – *Tom relayed the message to Martin, who said he made the judgement call to plow late.*
- **Cherilyn (page 1)** – clarification – Michelle is looking into benefits, wages etc., via the VLCT benefits book, but she is not looking into different duties of the town clerks or their office hours, which would involve calling them.

Tom moved; John seconded to approve the minutes of 1/19/16 as amended. All were in favor.

OLD BUSINESS:

Henry Erickson contract – was only for a 9 month period, which began in June 2015. John and Tom will discuss this with Henry when they meet with him tomorrow to pick out colors for the town office.

Update the website – The board would like JB to update the website after town meeting, to better organize things like committee minutes.

Letter to delinquent taxpayers – The Selectboard drafted an informational letter that will be sent to the 2015 delinquent taxpayers who's tax payment had a 10/30/15 postmark, and to those whose payment was received on Monday, 11/2/15. A copy of the Vermont Law relating to abatement will be attached. A form that needs to be used by the taxpayer to request abatement of penalties and interest fees will also be included with the letter. Taxes were due this year on 10/30/15. A change made on Town Meeting Day.

Capital Budget – Jason is working on the capital budget updates for the town report.

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School budget – Rae has concerns with the wording used in the school articles. In his opinion, the article wording seems misleading to the voters about any increase or decrease in actual spending.

Discussion followed about the lack of input the schoolboard has on the creation of the town budget/articles and vice versa. So as a board they will have minimal comment on the school budget/articles, and they think the school directors will bring forth the topic to the voters at town meeting.

Excavator repair – Rae is working with Martin for quotes to fix the excavator.

Audit of 2015 financial – Pace & Hawley complete a review of the 2015 town finances. The Selectboard commends Cherilyn on the excellent audit report. There were no recommendations made by the CPA for suggested changes. The Selectboard appreciates the excellent work.

Documents for signature:

\$8,499 VLCT grant – application for a new fire department thermal imaging camera was signed.

RUGGCO Contract – amendment due to change orders - approved.

2016 Road & Bridge Standards – approved.

Overload permit – for Newport Sand & Gravel – approved.

Warrants were approved as follows:

16005 – P/R – e-check 2098-2106

16006 – A/P – ck# 17513-17520

16007 – A/P – ck# 17521-17534

Warrants and check numbers were verified as being consecutive with prior warrants.

Tom moved; John seconded to adjourn at 8:30.