

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

**DRAFT – Notice of unapproved minutes of the 12/5/16 Selectboard meeting**

Board members present: Tom Martin, Rae Washburn, John Hoogenboom, Michelle Beard, Jason Aronowitz arrived at 7:00 pm

Guests included: Kate O’Neill, Don LaRocca, David Bosworth of Merchants Trust, Rebecca Baruzzi of the Mad River Valley Recreation District (MRVRD), representatives from the Soccer & Lacrosse Association, other members of the MRVRD, parents and friends supporting the purchase of the Kingsbury park

**Public Comment:**

**Kate O’Neill** came in tonight as a parent of a young child who plays soccer at the Kingsbury fields. She said the fields are a valuable resource, critical for the young people of our community and for the Mad River Valley. Kate supports the purchase.

**Reports & Communication, Announcements:**

**Town hall repairs** – During the process of drainage repair and having a waterproof membrane applied to the cellar wall, Rae noticed water was running behind some of the poor clapboards. This needed to be fixed right away. Bids were requested from three local carpenters. One bid was received. It was from Joe Gabaree for \$2,170. The bid includes removing and replacing about 200 square feet of clapboards, placing ice and water shield behind the clapboards; add metal flashing behind the clapboards around the door frame, and paint the clapboards before installation.

Tom moved to hire Joe Gabaree to make the necessary clapboard repairs to the town hall for a price not to exceed \$2,170. Johns seconded. All were in favor.

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**Planning Commission hearing 12/6/16** at 6:30 pm at the town offices, to hear comments on the new subdivision regulations to be voted on at Town Meeting. John and Tom plan to attend. The Selectboard will also hold a hearing.

**Ridge to River (R2R) watershed events** – John reported of an R2R meeting on 12/7 at 5:30 – 7:30 at the Big Picture Theater, to celebrate the MRV progress toward flood resilience since Tropical Storm Irene, and to learn about critical actions for building a stronger future in the MRV. R2R is a coalition of officials and community members from the five MRV towns, working together for a better watershed plan. John added that a Storm Smart Challenge is being developed.

**R2R will also hold an event on 12/13/16** from 9 am-10:30 am, at the Duxbury town garage, to meet with road crews from the local watershed towns to have a conversation about best practices relating to watershed. John said the best practices to be discussed, do meet State standards. Moretown’s highway crew plans to attend the event.

**Approval of Minutes from 11/21/16 –**

**Amendments** – page #2 –

**Star** - *The entire board agreed to hang the star to show a united and supportive community.*

**Mad River Park sale** – *the 45% was not actual, it was what was proposed as Moretown kids using the Kingsbury field.*

Rae moved; John seconded to approve the minutes of 11/21/16 as amended. All were in favor.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the town and school** for maintenance of the parking lot and recreation fields. Committee members met last Monday, and outlined maintenance items for the parking lot and for the recreation fields / school grounds.

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The idea is that the school will take care of their sidewalk and split the cost 50/50 for the rest of the maintenance costs for the parking lot maintenance and for the mowing. The church should be in the mix at some point. The town's share of the maintenance cost would be put into the town's recreation fund for distribution.

**Blodgett litigation** – Paul Gillies is waiting for Steve Cusick to provide him with copy of the agreement signed by Blodgett, so the civil case can be ended.

Tom reported seeing Nancy Blodgett. She said everything has been signed, so we should have the document from Gilles shortly.

**Merchant Trust Investments – Don LaRocca** came in to update the board on the investment status, and to suggest options about how the board could proceed; such as changes in investment style; and pull out value. He said we began this investment about two years ago, and we are basically where we started – we invested \$500,000 and the cash value is now \$500,817, saying basically Merchants Trust has made more money managing the investments than the Town has made.

The largest share of our investments is in foreign entities, six of which failed to score according to Craig Eilers when Don asked Craig for his opinion. Don expressed his concerns with continuing with foreign markets particularly with the new US administration, and thinks it's time to consider a change in investment strategies to the US stock market or pull part or all of the money out of Merchants Trust and put it back in the bank while we are even, and reassess our investment options. Earlier this year we were down about \$25K.

**David Bosworth Merchants Trust** – Merchants uses a multi-manager approach with different strategies from each, including global diversified exposure. Merchants feels going forward this is still the way to go, but Merchants is willing to do what the Selectboard direct them to do. If the town would like to adapt to the US market and investments, they will do so. David advised that with the uncertainty of the new administration, the Merchants Trust Board still feels the international market is the way to go.

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Jason was approved to contact the Vt. State Treasurer's offices for investment portfolio information and if they are willing to share that knowledge.

The board will discuss their options more later tonight, and will have more discussion soon with Merchants Trust to discuss investment strategies.

**Board discussion without David present commenced, including:**

The town's option to pull all or part the money out of Merchants; the town could probably have made more money than \$800 over the last two years with a CD; the difficulty in finding a broker to handle municipal investments; pulling out all of the funds and put them in a CD and find out at town meeting what the voters want to do.

Tom moved to take all of the money out of the Merchants Trust and put it back into the Savings Reserve Fund. Michelle seconded.

Discussion: this will give us time to discuss options more a greater return.  
Vote: All were in favor.

**Mad River Park (Kingsbury) land sale** – Rebecca and other members of the MRV Recreation District were here tonight, as well as members from the soccer and lacrosse association, parents, and friends, all in support of buying the Kingsbury fields.

Rebecca came tonight representing the MRV Recreation District.  
Information and comments included:

- Worst case scenario Moretown would contribute \$133,000 toward the purchase. Best case scenario Moretown would contribute around \$31,000 toward the purchase. The difference being receiving the grant; additional fundraising; and donations. The final amount will be known in February.
- The board explained that it is difficult to budget before they have hard numbers. The budget is due in January to make the town meeting warning requirements. Moretown is not against the park purchase. We just need to know the facts before making any decisions.

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- What representation on the MRV Recreation District would Moretown have? Rebecca said something would be worked out so Moretown had a representative on the District.
- The Land Trust grant would be for half the purchase price of the cost of the land. None of the land if bought could be split off for conservation.
- The purchase would be an asset to the entire community.
- There were several comments of support from the guests.
- It would be Moretown's shortfall not to be part of the MRV Recreation District. A lot of Moretown kids use the fields.
- Lost taxes to Waitsfield would be under \$200 yr.
- Rebecca will come back in January and give an update.
- The Children's Fund may be an option toward the purchase.

### **More Old Business:**

**Town office grant amendment and extension** – Word today is that we should know in a week or so if the end date has been extended and the \$50k budget increase has been approved. In the meantime, mandated flood gates and acoustical improvements have been quoted and approved to begin.

Rae will look into it more, but he thinks that the area around the town office only could be paved with a "base", using the \$31K earmarked for the paving, and drainage work can be done as well, prior to the paving. The grant money expires 6/30/17. Once the drainage is repaired, it is possible additional drainage may be needed on Route 100B, which could be tied into the sidewalk project.

**Shortfall** – There was discussion about the formula used to set the tax rate. The board will look closely at that when setting the 2017 tax rate.

Michelle moved to borrow \$80,000 on a five-year note, to cover unbudgeted expenses related to improvements to the Moretown Mountain Road, at Northfield Savings Bank or Merchants Bank, whichever has the best interest rate. Tom seconded. All were in favor.

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Michelle moved to move \$50,000 from the Bridge and Culvert Fund to the General Fund. Rae seconded. All were in favor.

Michelle moved to lend \$200,000 from the Savings Reserve Fund to the General Fund, for a one-year period at an interest of 2.2%. Discussion: the \$200K will be added to the 2017 tax rate. Tom seconded. All were in favor.

Rae wants more details on why the shortfall. Cherilyn will provide that information.

**Sidewalks** – Vtrans is looking over the design, rights of way, and easements needed for the sidewalk project, that will hopefully move forward this summer. The board hopes to put the project out for bid in January, but it depends on the State moving forward quickly with the approval process.

**Warrants approved:**

**#67** – e-check 2320-2328 and check # 18357-18359

**#68** – check # 18360-18395

**Other documents approved:**

Sidewalk reimbursement request.

PCO # 26 for \$2600.00 to install window above between the town clerk's office and the meeting room, closing up the rooms.

Pace & Hawley letter of engagement to perform an audit of the 2016 financials. The full audit will not exceed \$9,500.

Motion to adjourn at 8:50 pm.