

**Town of Moretown
Office of the SELECTBOARD**

DRAFT – Unapproved minutes of the November 23, 2009 Selectboard meeting called to work on the town hall project costs, town budget, and Town Meeting articles

Members present: Rae Washburn III, Stephanie Venema, Dave VanDeusen, Rob Roberts
Guests present: Jonathan Siegel, Ron Shems, Cheryl Brown as assistant to the Board

Rae called the meeting to order at 6:00

Town hall: project costs – Dave is working on the costs.

Garden club - Stephanie reported having a conversation with Ruth VanHeuven, about an offer from someone to do a free landscaping plan at the town hall. Ruth is scheduled to come to the 12/7 Selectboard meeting to talk more about gardening plans.

Rennai heater – Gillespie Fuels has been called and will come to take care of the pipe still exposed from removing the Rennai from the town hall.

Highway:

E.F. Wall contract – to build the town garage. The town still owes E.F. Wall \$11,750 on the contract that will be paid as soon as a few items have been addressed.

Budget - Rae will find out what Craig's plans are for next year for road projects.

Ancient roads lookup – Through grant funding, \$5,000 has been spent so far to Paul Gillies for work on the ancient roads lookup. Paul estimates \$5,000-\$10,000 more to finish the project, depending on volunteer help available. Paul said the deadline for being able to add old roads to the highway map for free, is 2/10/10. Paul strongly suggests following through with locating old roads.

Discussion followed about how much to spend, or if money should be spent at all for the lookup. What would be the advantage to finding roads; what would happen to any old roads if no more work was done to locate the old roads; what legal matters might come up if suddenly an old road was identified and the public started using it; and what would happen if an old road identified was discontinued by the town, would it landlock a property.

Rae will contact Paul and talk with him more about some of the Boards questions.

Livable wage policy – Dave spoke of costs to bring everyone working for the town up to a \$13.55 per hour salary. He figures that would cost around \$6,900 and suggested subtracting that amount from the legal budget. Discussion about bringing the sidewalk plow person and one highway crew person up to \$13.55 per hour which would cost around \$3,500 and about subtracting that amount from the legal budget. Discussion followed about the need for a livable wage policy; about other benefits (like uniforms, insurance etc.), and what when added that brings their hourly rate up to; and the Selectboard support talking more about increasing the two employees to \$13.55 hour in April when the pay scale is discussed.

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Quarry litigation – Ron Shems came in to talk with the Selectboard about what they might expect for a time frame to act, and what associated legal costs might be for different scenarios.

1. Once a decision comes through from the Judge, there is a 30-day appeal period to file an appeal. There are limited circumstances for extending the 30-day appeal period.
2. Once a decision comes through from the Judge, the town has 10 days to file a Reconsideration request, whereby you ask the Judge to reconsider his decision. If we lose and want to file a Reconsideration motion, Ron would be willing to do the work for a “not to exceed price” which he would determine after he reviews the court decision.
3. Once the decision comes through, because this is an Act 250 permit, River’s has the option of revising his original application and re-submitting it.
4. Once a decision comes through from the Judge and we lose, the next step would be to file an appeal to Supreme Court. That process is pretty straight forward as old evidence is looked at and no new evidence is allowed. Both Attorney’s write a brief and that is about it.
5. An appeal could cost between \$20,000-\$30,000 depending on what the decision reads, and also whether or not the Neighbor’s file an appeal and the Town could be joint with that appeal, in that case the cost should be a lot less. Ron made it clear that the estimate is only an estimate, because it is difficult to determine costs at this time without a decision being out.

Discussion followed about not having enough time to have a vote within the 30-day appeal period and what happens then. Some think a decision is coming sooner than Town Meeting.

Articles –

Dave proposed four Town Meeting articles – Dave gave an overview of each article he would like to see for Town Meeting addressing; establishing a Livable Wage policy; establishing a Healthcare Fund that would be funded from time to time from Capital Savings Fund interest; establishing a Governance Charter that would allow town residents to be taxed at a lower rate than non-residents; and to send a portion of the 2010 landfill revenue to “income sensitive” Moretown residents in October of 2010.

Dave gave a presentation showing how the income sensitivity money would impact residents with different appraisals, by using about half (\$200,000) of the landfill money received that is currently being used to offset the tax rate.

There will be more discussion on the proposed articles at the 11/30/09 public forum.

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Budget draft – A draft budget including tonight’s adjustments, will be available for Monday, November 30th Town Meeting forum to be held at the town hall from 6-9 p.m. and copies should be available very soon to hand out.

Stephanie moved to adjourn at 8:10 p.m. Rob seconded. All were in favor.