

**Town of Moretown
Office of the Selectboard**

Notice of unapproved minutes of the January 4, 2010 Selectboard meeting

Selectboard present: Rae Washburn, Stephanie Venema, David VanDeusen, Rob Roberts, John Hoogenboom arrived at 6:10 p.m.

Guest present: Kara Herlihy, Raymond Munn, Amy Deutl, Hoover Austin, Eric Howes, Don Wexler, Don LaRocca, Doug Reed, and Cheryl Brown as assistant to the Board

Rae moved to call the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and gave a brief overview of tonight's agenda.

Public Comment:

Raymond Munn –

Town garage project – Ray asked how much more needs to be done to finish the town garage project. He said in March of last year, the Board expected it would cost about \$33,000 to finish the Ferris septic and build a fuel depot. The Ferris septic is done, are there plans to build the fuel depot in 2010?

Rae clarified that the Ferris septic was paid for from the general fund by taking from other line items in the town budget as was directed by the voters at the June vote, and therefore not part of the town garage project costs. Currently the town is renting a fuel tank from Gillespie Fuels, and Craig built a canopy to cover the fuel tank. There are no plans in 2010 to build a fuel depot.

Ray suggested the Board look at Waitsfield's fuel depot before we build one and added that it might be more economical to build a depot rather than rent a tank.

Constable budget – Ray asked why there is \$4,000 being proposed in the 2010 constable budget when after July 2010, if a constable is not trained their duties are limited.

Rae said \$4,000 was put in the constable budget but not for the town constable, but in case we have problems and need to hire Washington County Sheriff's Department (WCSD). A portion of the constable budget will be transferred to the law enforcement line item in the budget. Moretown has not entered into a contract with WCSD yet for 2010.

Constable term change – Ray said it might be time to change the constable term from a one-year term to a two-year term, if they are going to invest time in training etc. Changing the term requires a vote.

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Amy Deutl –

Capital Reserve Fund Certificate of Deposit (CD) – that will roll over for another 12 months. She asked the Board if they have any intent to use Capital Reserve monies in 2010, if so we should make other arrangements so it is accessible.

The Board requested that the monies be in an account that has the highest interest rate without penalties for early withdrawal, and requested that she check with banks and Craig Eilers for options.

MLI and Flood 08 – balance questions. Amy said she sent questions to Sullivan, Powers but she doesn't know if they will answer because the town has not entered into a new contract with them. Rob will address the questions directly with Amy.

IRS mileage rate – has decreased. Amy will adjust the mileage rate the town pays accordingly.

2009 audit questions – since the plan is not to have a professional audit of the 2009 finances, it might be helpful to have a review or compilation of the finances, so that information could be used for future audits. Amy will get prices from three sources to do the work before the board makes any decisions.

Eric Howes - came in to talk about the constable budget as well. He has concerns because of the lack of enforcement powers of untrained town constables after July 2010, and because it might open up the town to liability if untrained or uncertified constables do duties for the town.

Stephanie explained that extra money was put in the constable budget to hire WCSD if needed and that some of the money in the line item will be moved to the law enforcement portion of the budget.

Discussion followed that there is a vacancy in the 1st constable office and possibly the 2nd constable office as well next year.

Rae Washburn – announced that he will not be running for the Selectboard in 2010.

Don Wexler – Mad River Byway update – Central Vermont Chamber of Commerce, Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission, and Mad River Chamber of Commerce have asked for signage to be changed on Interstate I-89. Signage for granite quarries to be installed in the approach of Exit 6 from the south, and Mad River Scenic Byway to be installed in the approach to Exit 9 from the north. Don provided documentation that the Selectboard might sign to support the installation of the signage. Don gave a history about Moretown being awarded scenic byway recognition, being awarded a \$45,000 grant, signage/kiosk, and what they are working on.

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The Board approved that Rae sign the letter of support for the signage and thanked Don for all of his hard work.

Jeff Ladue/listers – were asked to come in and talk with the Selectboard about the reappraisal order issued by the State of Vermont. Jeff was unable to attend tonight's meeting but offered via letter, how the listers feel the Selectboard should proceed with the State mandated town wide reappraisal. Jeff indicated that Steve Twombly (the fellow who did the 2004 reappraisal), estimated the cost for an update would be about half the cost of a complete reappraisal, about \$40 to \$50 per parcel. Moretown has 857 parcels so the cost could be around \$43,000. As of 4/30/09, there was approximately \$42,000 accrued in the Reappraisal Fund. The Selectboard intend to put \$5,000 into the town budget for the Reappraisal Fund. After reading the lister's letter aloud, the Board asked Rae to call Jeff Ladue, and talk with him more about why the listers feel it would cost more to have someone other than Steve Twombly do the reappraisal, about getting bids from other appraisal companies, and about putting together a plan to forward to Property Valuations that specifies the town's plans to do the reappraisal.

Amy Deutl – facilitator for Treasurer/Selectboard – Amy sent the Selectboard a letter dated 12/23/09, suggesting that the town consider hiring an outside professional facilitator with mediation skills to help dissolve the tension and the adverse relationship that exists between the Board and the Treasurer.

Rae told Amy the Board is willing to enter into executive session if she would feel more comfortable discussing this topic, than in an open meeting.

Amy said she was ok with staying in open session.

Rae said as a Selectboard member, he does not feel there is tension or an adverse relationship between the Selectboard and Amy.

Amy spoke about the lack of communication between the Selectboard and her, and that the Selectboard needs to create a non-hostile environment in the town office. She said a few meetings ago one Selectboard member raised his voice, and she mentioned underlying issues between a couple of board members. She feels a facilitator would be a great asset for several reasons. She has questions about what the roles and responsibilities are, if they are defined, between the Selectboard and Treasurer.

Stephanie would like an explanation about her comment about hostile environment and offered again for Amy to speak privately with the Board. Amy said at this point she would like to go into executive session.

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Dave moved to enter into executive session at 7:02 p.m., to discuss labor relations and mediation, where pre-mature general public knowledge would clearly place the town or person involved at disadvantage. Stephanie seconded. All were in favor. Amy was invited to stay for the session.

Rob moved to come out of executive session at 7:58 p.m. John seconded. All were in favor.

After town meeting, the Selectboard is going to look into a workshop from VLCT, between the Selectboard, Town Clerk, Treasurer, and Administrative Assistant.

Town hall repairs and renovations update: Doug Reed and Hoover Austin came in tonight to update the Board on the progress. Discussion included:

- Even though Steven Badger was paid half the money to purchase the paint to finish painting the town hall, according to Doug, he has not purchased the paint yet so we are withholding all further payment until we see the paint on site. Doug said he told Steven Badger that we would not be paying him the remaining \$2,900 balance on the \$11,800 contract until the paint has been purchased and on site, and that the town expects him to finish the painting in the spring. The Selectboard will write Mr. Badger a letter telling him why we are not paying his invoice, and that the Selectboard expects him to finish the painting in the spring.
- Hoover is coordinating the carpentry work with the rentals. The windows should be done in a couple of weeks, and Hoover is working on the porch.
- The water filtration system and the outside water faucet have been installed.
- The elevator needs work. The drain is plugged, the foundation is cracked and needs to be fixed and the base cleaned out. Rae is working with Accessibility Systems regarding the deficiencies found during the State inspection on 11/20/09, but he has not been able to get a quote for the work that is needed.
- Kevin Collins is ready to meet with the town about what electrical work the town wants him to do free of charge. Hoover said the electrical room light, the entry light, and the elevator switch need repair.
- Ruts in the ground made by the lift during the repairs, need to be repaired in the spring.
- Doug Reed submitted a \$4,500 invoice, leaving a balance of \$500 on his contract to oversee the spring work.

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- Stephanie questioned how much insulation was put into the walls by Bugbee Insulation. Doug explained that because the walls are plank, Bugbee pulled off clapboards and drilled holes and blew in insulation where they could, and the rest was put into the attic. Doug said he came on the job just as they were leaving, but that is what he was told. Doug will do calculations for energy savings from the added insulation and furnace replacement, for Dave's grant work.

John Hoogenboom moved to enter into executive session at 9:10 p.m. to discuss labor relations, where pre-mature general public knowledge would clearly place the town or person involved at a disadvantage. Stephanie seconded. All were in favor.

Rae moved to exit from executive session at 9:20 p.m. Stephanie seconded. All were in favor.

2010 budget and article work commenced.

Budget - The proposed budget and capital improvement plan as presented by the capital budget committee were reviewed and changes were made.

Articles – The articles being proposed for town meeting were reviewed, including the articles proposed to the Board by Dave.

Dave moved to enter into executive session at 9:35 to discuss possible recipients for community assistance, where public knowledge would clearly place the person involved at a substantial disadvantage. Stephanie seconded. All were in favor.

Dave moved to come out of executive session at 9:40. Rae seconded. All were in favor.

Discussion on the articles included:

Livable wage article –

- Floor vote or Australian vote if the article is approved by the Selectboard. The livable wage article is aimed as a purchasing tool policy, not toward town employees.
- Rather than the Selectboard approve an article proposed by Dave, should there be a petition?
- How would such an article be monitored? By statement from contractors, when placing a bid for work, etc.
- The Selectboard could have a livable wage policy without having an article, possibly via a resolution.
- Revision to the wording of the article was discussed at length.

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Dave moved to have a livable wage article at town meeting with wording to be the concept of his proposal. Rae seconded.

Discussion followed about opening up discussion next week at a public hearing about the article. There was more discussion about having a petition for the livable wage article.

Vote: Dave and Rae were in favor.

Rob and Stephanie opposed.

John abstained from voting. Motion failed.

Dave moved to have a healthcare fund article at town meeting with wording to be the concept of his proposal. Rae seconded.

Discussion – This article as proposed affects some residents but not others, because some would benefit from its purpose and some would not. Also discussed was the fact that there are other services that people could take advantage of without a cost to Moretown taxpayers.

Vote: Dave and Rae were in favor.

Stephanie, Rob and John opposed. Motion failed.

Minutes:

12/7/09 – Stephanie moved the minutes of 12/7/09 be approved as written. John seconded. All were in favor.

12/14/09 – Stephanie moved the minutes of 12/14/09 be approved as written. Rae seconded. All were in favor.

12/21/09 – Stephanie moved the minutes of 12/21/09 be approved as written. Rae seconded. All were in favor.

12/28/09 – Stephanie moved the minutes of 12/28/09 be approved as written. Rae seconded. All were in favor.

New Business:

Health Savings Accounts (HSA) – Discussion about letters being written to all employees about the health insurance deductible change this year, and about offering a chance for employee input. There was discussion about paying 100% of the deductible this year because no notice of the benefit change was given beforehand, and about no raises being given this year.

Rae moved to deposit \$1,000 into each person's HSA who have single plan coverage, and \$1,500 into the two-person plan coverage HSA. Rob seconded. All were in favor.

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Dog licensing fees – After talking with other Town Clerk's in the area about what they charge for dog licensing fees, Cherilyn proposed a new licensing rate of \$10/\$14 for spayed and neutered dogs licensed before 4/1/10, and \$14 for non-spayed or neutered licensed after 4/1/10, and \$12/\$18 for dogs licensed after April 1, 2010.

The Board reviewed the license fees for other towns.

Rae moved the 2010 dog licensing fees will be \$8 for a spayed or neutered dog, \$12 for an un-spayed or neutered dog licensed before 4/1/10 effective 1/5/10, and \$10 for a spayed or neutered dog licensed after 4/1/10, and \$16 for un-spayed or neutered dog licensed after 4/1/10. Stephanie seconded. All were in favor.

Reports & Communication, mail

Town insurance –

Background check required - Notice from Denis, Ricker & Brown Insurance that our crime protection carrier requires a background check be done on all person handling monies. Cheryl will notify our agent that the town will implement the background checks within 60 days.

Bonding – When the new insurance was quoted, the price did not include the cost for bonding of the Town Clerk, Town Treasurer and Delinquent Tax Collector. When the application for the bid was prepared, it was clearly stated that as elected officials, the Town Clerk and Town Treasurer needed to be bonded as part of the insurance. Our new insurance carrier will cover the bonding costs.

Rae moved that the cost for bonding the Town Clerk and Town Treasurer bonding should be covered by Denis, Ricker & Brown Insurance, but the town will pay the cost for bonding the Delinquent Tax Collector. Rob seconded. All were in favor.

Town hall rentals – At their November 2nd meeting, the Selectboard approved the yoga group and the play group to use the downstairs only of the town hall. Since the repairs and renovations are not complete, they should not be using the upstairs.

Leslie Logan re: snow removal on Pony Farm Road – A phone call from Leslie Logan for a stern reminder that the town does not have permission from the Logan's to put, pile or ditch snow anywhere on their property.

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Memorandum of Understanding for emergency medical/ambulance services from the City of Montpelier – was signed by the Board.

Dave moved to allow Rae to sign the City of Montpelier Memorandum of Understanding for ambulance service. Rob seconded. All were in favor.

AFLAC Insurance – Cheryl will contact AFLAC representative Greg Lawson about when insurances for Cherilyn Lamson were effective and to clarify the billing.

Warrants – warrant # 1, 2, and 3 were approved as submitted.

Dave moved to adjourn at 11:15 p.m. Rae seconded. All were in favor.

