**Selectboard Meeting**

**Richford, Vermont**

**Approved Meeting Minutes**

**May 15, 2023**

Chair Pond called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm with members Wally Steinhour, Alan Fletcher, Sherry Paquette, and Kristen Sheperd present. Guests at the meeting included Joey Randall, Rowena Brown, Officer Andre Labier, Robert Wetherby, Town Clerk Kiley Deuso, Town Administrator Michael Olio, and Cameraman Gerry Vaisey.

The board said the pledge of allegiance.

Chair Pond recognized guests. He started with Robert Wetherby who had concerns about the accessibility of the fire station for residents. He learned a resident was denied access to the fire station when they were interested in viewing the new ladder truck. Selectman Steinhour asked who was on duty that day? Robert said Joey was there. Joey Randall spoke on the issue, saying he was on the phone with the EMT who let this person in. He was not at the station. Afterwards Joey notified the Fire Chief, and he learned that this person should not be in the building without supervision, due to being removed from the department as a fireman years ago. The person was then asked to leave the building from the EMT at the station. Chair Pond said he called the individual after and explained the situation to him. Robert asked if the individual was ever notified that he was removed from the department? Chair Pond responded with he received a letter in 2011. Selectman Steinhour added he believes Robert’s concern was addressed, and the individual is welcome to view the truck under fire department supervision.

Robert had a second concern he wanted to bring up. He said he was removed from the Richford Fire Department’s Facebook page which is run by the fire association. He asked why was he removed? Selectman Steinhour said that is a question for the fire association, as it is not under the purview of the selectboard. They are their own separate entity.

Next the selectboard discussed town properties. Selectman Fletcher said he did not have much to add, but suggested exploring some of the opportunities presented at the ARPA meeting earlier today from the state agencies. There were many opportunities brought forth, and maybe some could be utilized for these properties.

After covering the town properties agenda item, Chair Pond returned to recognizing guests. Officer Andre Labier attended to give his police report. He said it has been a busy time. There are people camping on a piece of town property beyond the end of Willow Street. He asked about starting the eviction process to get them out. The Selectboard agreed the eviction process should take place. Andre said he has received multiple calls about ATVs, four-wheelers, and reckless driving lately. Chair Pond said they added Andre to the ambulance and fire alert system, so he is made aware of what is going on in the area. Andre said it has been very helpful.

The selectboard moved to approve the 05/01/23 meeting minutes. Selectwoman Paquette made the motion to approve the minutes. Selectman Steinhour seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

Update from Town Administrator – The APRA tour from the state agencies and Governor Scott’s office was successful. Many municipal employees from other towns in Franklin County attended, and there was representation from local businesses. It was estimated that 56 people were present for the event, which was the largest turnout so far for the APRA tour.

Working on organizing a meeting with Trudell Consulting for the rail trail extension project.

The revisions for the assistant zoning administrator job description were added, and an email will be sent out to the selectboard to review the changes.

Working on converting the current water rules and regulations document to Microsoft Word. This was done so potential revisions / updates can be added to the policy.

Highway Report – Selectman Steinhour said they will need to go into executive session for personnel. The highway crew continues to work on stone line and ditch projects. They cleaned up the debris by the old hockey stick factory. Selectman Steinhour asked if Jeremy could identify where the water line is for that property? Chair Pond said he most likely can. Selectman Steinhour continued saying the highway crew is adding fill to the town’s section of property adjacent to the building, but worried about burying the water and sewer lines there. The Highway Foreman trimmed along the Post-Office retaining walls. Rowena Brown said beatification will work on planting flowers along the banks this week.

Buildings Report – Selectwoman Paquette reported the fire station conference room has an AC now. When FNESU vacated the Post-Office building, extra AC units became available, and one was given to the fire station.

A new mop sink is needed in the town hall boiler room. Selectwoman Paquette is planning to get it fixed along with adding warm water to the eye wash station.

The bathroom door in the library building needs a new lock. The one that was ordered does not fit. Bobby Peters looked at the leaking section of the library roof and is working on a quote to replace that section with a metal roof. There was a lot of information for potential library grants at the state ARPA tour meeting, and Selectwoman Paquette is aware the library is working on applications to access some of the funding opportunities.

Water and Sewer Report – Chair Pond said there was an issue on a Green Avenue that was supposed to be discussed with a resident at the meeting, but they did not attend. Selectman Steinhour said he thinks that the town should cover the costs if it is their issue. No cost amount has been given at this time. Chair Pond added Jeremy said they fixed the water line loop on Green Avenue which seems to have solved the residents’ issue.

Selectwoman Paquette added she forgot to mention in her report that she signed a one year contract with Brooksfield to service the backup generators at the fire station, high school, and elementary school, and two water pump stations. The total cost was $ 3,200.

Selectwoman Paquette is continuing to explore alternative heating options for the Post-Office building since the steam boiler needs to be replaced. No contacts have been made yet. Selectwoman Paquette passed around an official quote from Mercy’s Plumbing and Heating for a new steam boiler. The quote was $ 17,711. Selectman Steinhour suggested going to Vermont Natural Forest Products to see what connections they have for alternative heating sources.

Chair Pond continued with the water and sewer report. A hydrant by Pinnacle Peddler is going to be replaced. Chair Pond talked to Vermont Natural Forest Products because they desired to move their hydrant closer to the road. Chair Pond reported there have been calls about water leaking at the bottom of Green Avenue. The department said it is a valve that they closed and opened again. Water will leak from it until it starts to recede, but if it does not stop, the valve may have to be replaced.

The water department is required to purchase an OSHA compliant four-gas meter. The approximate cost is $ 1,200. It must be calibrated ever so often, which requires a $ 800 docking port, and gas cylinders that cost $ 325 a cylinder. Chair Pond proposes to share it with the fire department because they need one too, and they would use it more than the water department. Selectman Steinhour asked what is the cost split? Chair Pond said 60 % of the cost covered by the fire department, and 40 % covered by the water department.

Chair Pond motioned to purchase the four-gas meter with the 60/40 cost split between the fire department and the water department. Selectman Steinhour seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

Selectman Fletcher said he was able to make inquiries about the sewer line from the 105-bridge construction during the ARPA meeting. He will reach out to the contacts he made to discuss further. Selectman Fletcher added maybe the board could use the state revolving loan fund for the Golf Course Road water line project. It is an option worth exploring.

Parks, Playgrounds, and Cemeteries Report – Selectwoman Sheperd said there is not much to report. The hot water heater at the playground building was replaced.

There was no discussion in other business.

Selectwoman Paquette motioned to go into executive session for personnel at 6:35 pm. Selectman Steinhour seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

Selectman Steinhour motioned to come out of executive session at 7:52 pm. Selectwoman Paquette seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

As a result of the executive session, Selectman Steinhour motioned to approve the bankruptcy court settlement agreement with Larry Carr and to authorize town attorney Brian Monaghan to sign all documents necessary to effectuate the settlement and to authorize Selectboard Chair Andrew Pond to execute the quit claim deed to release the town’s interest. Selectwoman Paquette seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

Meeting adjourned at 7:53 pm.

Submitted by

Michael Olio – Town Administrator

Attest: