

Townshend Select Board

October 5, 2009

Minutes

Present:

Select Board: Steve Ovenden, chair; Bruce Bills; Michael Charles; Hedy Harris

In Attendance: David Dezendorf, Emergency Management Coordinator; Dale Davis, Town Barn Committee, chair; Craig Hunt, (Select Board administrative assistant); Hillary Cooke, Northern Benefits, Ltd.; Jaime Cone, Brattleboro Reformer; Rick Hege; Cynthia Davis

1. Call to Order: Following a Public Hearing to discuss the proposed Emergency Management Ordinance, which began at 5:30 p.m., at 6:05 p.m., Ovenden called the Meeting to Order.

2. Approval of Minutes: Charles made a motion: **To approve the Minutes of September 19, 2009 as corrected to include the Warrant figures, correct a typographical error under paragraph #7, and delete paragraph #10**, seconded by Harris. Following discussion, and suggestion that the Minutes differently identify those in attendance, the motion was carried by those present..

3. Additions and Deletions: Added under Old Business: Web-site posting update, and under New Business: Acknowledgement of receiving a request for unemployment insurance payments from a former employee, and discussion about VELCO's proposed helicopter landing zones in Townshend..

4. Warrants: Bills made a motion: **To approve the Warrants for September 19, 2009**, seconded by Ovenden. Following discussion about a credit card finance charges, the motion was carried by those present.

General Fund:	\$ 236,140.75
Highway:	\$ 42,601.11
Payroll:	\$ 8,452.15
Town Barn Construction:	\$ 128,298.88

Harris then made a motion: **To authorize the Treasurer to pay the Town Clerk and Highway Foreman's municipal credit card balances without prior Select Board approval, to ensure receipt of payment prior to the due date**, seconded by Bills, and carried by those present.

Ovenden presented the Board with other Warrants which had been overlooked, and following examination, made a motion: **To approve the Warrant to pay the costs of the September 30, 2009 delinquent tax sale, and acknowledge the other Warrants presented, which were copies of ones the Board had already approved**, seconded by Charles, and carried by those present.

Tax Sale Warrant:

5. Reports:

Town Clerk's Report: None at this time.

Treasurer's Report: None at this time.

Bookkeeper's Report: Ovenden acknowledged receipt of a report from the Bookkeeper dated October 5, 2009, and receipt of a list of Reserve Account balances for fiscal year 2009-10..

Highway Foreman's Report: Ovenden reported in the Foreman's absence that paving on Windham Hill Road was complete.

Town Barn Committee Report: Following a brief recess by the Board, Dale Davis informed members that under the construction contract for the new Town Barn, Josselyn Brothers was to pour a pad for the compactor and run underground electric lines to the location for the compactor. Davis reported that the contractor would like a decision by the end of the week as to whether the compactor was to be brought back to its former location, or whether that pad should be poured at the new location on the Grafton Road turn. Following discussion, Hunt was requested to find out what was involved in making the new (present) location of the compactor permanent. Anticipating the application and approval process to take some time, however, Charles made a motion: **To have Josselyn Brothers follow through with the Town Barn plans as agreed to, and provide a concrete pad and electrical hook-up for the compactor, as in those plans,** seconded by Ovenden, and carried by those present.

Dale Davis continued with report that construction activities for the new Town Barn were still running about a week behind schedule, but that the floor for the garage had been poured, that the steel work for the garage should be complete within a week, and that the sand/salt shed was nearing completion.

6. Members of the Public: Ovenden requested, and by general consent, the order of the Agenda was changed to recognize Rick Hege for discussion about the Town's webpage and e-mail accounts. Hege provided members with an overview of the website's capabilities and design as a tool to reach people from outside of Townshend, while providing information to local residents. Hege encouraged the Board to collaborate with the Townshend Business Association for the promotion of Townshend.

Hege then explained his position as an independent contractor who has contributed many hours of his time in developing and maintaining the Town's system, emphasizing that the purpose of various e-mail accounts was to provide a means for anyone to contact Town officials and disseminate public information, rather than to provide an internal and secure platform for discussions among officials. E-mail correspondence is not private, Hege said, and though requested by the Board to prevent a former Select Board member from receiving "Select" e-mail, would not do so without a formal motion approved by the Board.

As to removing himself from having access to that "Select" e-mail, Hege said that as maintenance manager and an integral part of the system, he could not, suggesting that if Board members wanted to discuss matters privately, they do so using their own personal, and not the municipal account.

With regard to a requested change in the "Selectlist" e-mail address, Hege informed the Board that it could be easily done, and take about an hour and half to re-route the 32, or so, subscribers to the new address, but that he'd want the Board to provide him with a new name for the address.

Hege also explained that he had received numerous requests to post or link to the Town's website, but that as all endeavors take time, and some are quite complicated, and that because of potential expense to the taxpayer, he had not and would not honor casual requests, but require specific instructions from the Select Board.

Harris questioned Hege about different levels of labor involved in posting to the website, and Hege conveyed that it was relatively simple to provide a link to an existing page, but that generating graphic designs and formatting could be technically complicated or artistically involved.

Charles asked about the system's 10 megabyte limit on e-mail, given that some files being received are quite large, and Hege offered to check on the cost of increasing the limit to 100 megabytes.

Charles offered to post pictures of the Town Barn construction on his own website, and provide hosting, which Hege said that he could link the Town website to.

Charles then made a motion: **To have Allie Evans's name removed as a recipient to the select@townshend.net e-mail account**, seconded by Harris. Discussion ensued, with Ovenden arguing that as Evans was out of the country, and willing to consult with the Board, e-mail was the only effective means of communicating with her. Charles countered that as Evans was no longer a member of the Board, and could be contacted using other e-mail address, she should not retain right and access to Select Board mail. The question was called, and with one vote in the affirmative, one in the negative, and two abstentions, the motion failed.

Discussion then turned to the posting of Townshend's Ordinances and Policies on-line, which Hunt promised to finish typing up in the next week. Hege recommended that Ordinances be on a separate page from Policies, and promised to provide the Board with an estimated cost of posting these on-line at their next meeting.

Emergency Management Officer's Report: At 8:15 p.m., David Dezendorf was recognized by the Board, and presented a draft survey that could be sent out to identify those most in need in the event of an emergency. Dezendorf requested that members review the survey and provide him with their comments. Discussion ensued as to the potential sensitivity of some of the information being requested, and about who might have access to it, or how and where the information would be stored.

7. Members of the Public: At 8:20 p.m., the Board recognized Hillary Cooke of Northern Benefits, Ltd., and during a ten minute discussion about the costs of municipal insurance, the Board agreed to provide Cooke with the Town's current insurance plan summaries and documents for comparison. Harris offered to coordinate with Cooke in a review of his findings.

8. Correspondence: Ovenden summarized a letter received from Tom Stretton of McSoley McCoy, & Co., dated September 21, 2009, proposing an audit of the Town's fiscal 2008-09 books for an estimated cost of \$11,500.00. Charles made a motion: **To execute the contract with McSoley McCoy, as presented, for a Town audit and for a sum not to exceed \$11,500.00, to be paid for out of the Town Barn Bond account**, seconded by Harris, and carried by those present.

9. Old Business: Regarding the Ancient Roads grant, Hunt informed the Board of the availability of \$5000.00 in grant money already allocated to Townshend for the study of Ancient Roads, requiring a signature on a form, and needing to be spent prior to

the end of this calendar year. It was requested that Hunt provide a copy of the plan and form to the Ancient Roads Committee.

Hunt was instructed to post and have published a Warning for the Emergency Management Ordinance meeting to be held on November 16, 2009.

Ovenden reported that he would be meeting this week to get estimates on the Town Hall ramp and sidewalk concrete work necessary to comply with stipulations in the Polling Place Access grant which the Town had received.

Hunt was asked to find out how lightbulb in the clock tower could be replaced.

10. New Business: Charles reported that at the September 30, 2009 delinquent property tax sale, as no one bid on the property being auctioned, he did so, as instructed, on behalf of the Town.

Charles nominated Hedy Harris to be Vice-chair of the Townshend Select Board, and, hearing no disagreement from her, made a motion: **To elect Hedy Harris to become Vice-chair of the Select Board**, seconded by Ovenden, and carried by those present.

Ovenden then acknowledged that the Town was in receipt of an unemployment insurance claim from a former employee, and reported that the forms had been filled out and returned.

Following discussion about various and potential adverse impacts upon Townshend, regarding three proposed helicopter landing zones, (near Celia Circle, Deer Valley and Simpson Brook roads), as relayed in a notice from Downs, Rachlin, Martin PLLC, on behalf of VELCO, dated October 2, 2009, and requiring response from the Town by October 7, 2009, the Board asked Dezendorf to draft a response.

11. Executive Session: None at this time.

12. Next Meeting: Reconvene & Budget Workshop October 12, 2009 at 5:30 p.m.

13. Recess: At 9:35 p.m., Charles made a motion: **To recess the meeting until October 12, 2009 at 5:30 p.m.**, seconded by Harris, and carried by those present.

October 12, 2009

Present:

Select Board: Steve Ovenden, chair; Bruce Bills; Michael Charles; Hedy Harris

In Attendance: Kim Ellison, Bookkeeper; Joe Daigneault, Treasurer; David Dezendorf, Emergency Management Coordinator; Cynthia Davis; Adriane Esquivo

1. Call to Order: Ovenden reconvened the meeting at 5:30p.m., and general discussion ensued regarding the 2011-2012 fiscal year budget. The Board agreed to continue holding budget workshops on those Mondays until Thanksgiving between regular Select Board meetings, beginning at 5:30 p.m.

Harris agreed to concentrate on the General Fund accounts and Charles on the Highway Funds. Additionally, Charles agreed to take on the role that Ovenden held as

the Highway Department liaison, and Ovenden agreed to take over Charle's positions on the Ancient Roads and Town Hall Renovation Committees.

Ellison was requested to research how other municipalities were handling highway equipment cost-accounting and depreciation.

No other business was brought before the Board.

2. Next Meeting: October 19, 2009 at 6:00 p.m.

3. Adjournment: At 7:15 p.m., the meeting was adjourned by the general consent of the members present.

Respectfully submitted,

Craig K. Hunt, administrative assistant