

Townshend Select Board Meeting Minutes

April 20, 2009

Present:

Select Board - Steve Ovenden, vice-chair; Hedy Harris, Bruce Bills, Michael Charles; Alene Evans, absent

Members of the Public - Cynthia Davis; Kurt Bostrom; Richard Carusona; Steve Adams; Elizabeth Agostini; Irvin Stowell, (arrived at 6:42 p.m.); June and Steve Orman; Craig Hunt, (Select Board secretary)

1. **Call To Order:** At 6:15 p.m., Ovenden called the meeting to order.
2. **Additions and Deletions:** None at this time.
3. **Approval of Minutes:** Ovenden made a motion: **To approve the Minutes of April 6, 2009**, seconded by Harris. Following discussion and amendment, the motion: **To approve the Minutes of April 6, 2009, as corrected**, was carried by those present.
Ovenden then made a motion: **To approve the Minutes of March 16, 2009, as corrected**, seconded by Charles, and carried by those present.
Harris then made a motion: **To approve the Minutes of March 23, 2009**, seconded by Ovenden, and carried by those present.
Ovenden then made a motion: **To approve the Minutes of March 28, 2009, as corrected**, seconded by Charles, and carried by those present.
- 4a. **Town Clerk's Report:** None at this time.
- 4b. **Treasurer's Report:** None at this time.
- 4c. **Bookkeeper's Report:** Charles read a brief report from the bookkeeper regarding proposed cuts in State aid to highways; the bookkeeper's request to have all timesheets submitted by noon on Monday's; and the transfer of money to the General Fund subsequent to the Treasurer's closing of two inactive River Valley checking accounts. Discussion followed about the potential impact upon the budget due to proposed cuts to the Highway funds by the State.
Charles explained his review of the Warrants over the weekend, and expressed the need to have the Bookkeeper or Treasurer available for explaining some of the payments, including Town Barn expenses, and late fee payments.
5. **Warrants:** Charles then made a motion: **To approve the Warrants, as presented, and request clarification from the Bookkeeper and Treasurer about the Town Barn account**, seconded by Harris, and carried by those present.

AP-0420	\$ 17372.02
PR-0420	\$ 3596.91

Harris then made a motion: **To request that Meri Robert's attend the next Select Board meeting**, seconded by Charles, and carried by those present.

6. **Highway Foreman's Report:** Kurt Bostrom reported on brush clean-up from the ice storm, with help from Department of Corrections labor, and requested that

while Walter Royce was out and recovering from surgery that he would like to hire help at the casual day-labor rate. After brief discussion, Ovenden made a motion: **To allow the Highway Foreman to hire a temporary worker at \$12.12 per hour for up to 40 hours per week and for a period not to exceed 6 weeks**, seconded by Charles and carried by those present.

7. **Town Barn Update:** Charles and Bostrom updated Members of the Board on the Town Barn project new bid process and contractor site visit. Irvin Stowell informed the Board that a legal notice had yet to be published in the paper with an invitation to bid and that local contractors hadn't any opportunity to learn the new specifications. Charles said that he would check with the attorney about the requirement for a published notice, but thought one had been put in. Cynthia Davis asked whether all the new bids would be given to the Select Board for review. Charles explained that he believed that the Town Barn Committee would review them after the deadline of May 4, 2009, and make recommendations to the Board, but that the Board would probably not want to spend its time going through them all.

Ovenden then made a motion to ratify a decision that the Board had made outside of public meeting forum: **To ratify the decision to spend up to an additional \$300.00 on attorney's fees for the Town Barn project**, seconded by Charles, and carried by those present.

Charles then made a motion: **To provide the Town Barn Committee with up to an additional \$2500.00 in funds for legal fees and public notices**, seconded by Ovenden, and carried by those present.

At 7:15 p.m., Ovenden made a motion: **To take a brief recess**, seconded by Charles, and carried by those present.

At 7:25 p.m., Ovenden reconvened the meeting, and prior to recognizing the public, read a letter Attorney Agostini, dated April 16, 2009, proposing that the Town discontinue Favreau's Corner Road.

8. **Members of the Public:** Charles made a motion: **To limit speaking by members of the public to 10 minutes, each**, seconded by Harris, and carried by those present. Richard Carusona was recognized by the Board and read a letter that he had sent to Steve and Clare Adams in January 2009, which, citing Minutes of Select Board meetings in February, he felt that Clare Adams had misrepresented to the Board. Mr. Carusona further informed the Board that the Adamses had Posted their lands and barred him from accessing his own. Lengthy discussion followed regarding the possibility of Townshend discontinuing Highways #50 and #51, which are Class 3 highways at Favreau's Corner Road, and that portion which is a Class #4. Irvin Stowell explained that it was not such a simple matter, but would involve hearings and require various State and Federal agencies. Charles was adamant that private land owners cannot be allowed to block access to a roadway, however designated. Attorney Agostini felt that if the roads were discontinued, right-of-ways would only have to be provided to landowners that had no other means of access. Harris felt that the Board needed to contact the Town's attorney for any opinions that may have been previously expressed on this issue, study the proposal by Attorney Agostini, and, at a later date, hear from Mr. Carusona as to his thoughts on the matter. Charles then made

a motion: **To have Steve Ovenden assess the factors involved in the discontinuance of Class #3 and #4 roadways**, seconded by Ovenden, and carried by those present. Richard Carusona, Steve Adams, Elizabeth Agostini, and the Ormans left at 8:05 p.m.

The Board then recognized David Dezendorf, who expressed his willingness to serve Townshend in the capacity of Emergency Management Officer while Tim Bell was deployed overseas. After brief discussion, Ovenden made a motion: **To appoint David Dezendorf temporary Emergency Management Coordinator in Tim Bell's absence**, seconded by Charles and carried by those present.

Bills then made a motion: **To appoint Mary Morgan as the Vermont / New Hampshire Visiting Nurse representative, seconded by Charles**, and carried by those present. Mr. Dezendorf left at 8:10 p.m..

9. **Old Business:** After discussion about the existing Townshend Town Hall use policy, Harris offered to revise the policy to be more comprehensive. Charles made a motion: **To approve the use of the Town Hall by Lisa's Love Charitable Organization on September 19, 2009, and to approve the use of the Town Hall by the Townshend Business Association on December 14, 2009**, seconded by Ovenden, and carried by those present.

Harris presented Board members with a revised Draft of the Townshend Personnel Policy, to which she had made corrections and modifications, and requested that Board members review the Draft prior to the next meeting.

With regard to the Lister's office staffing, and the need for temporary help, Charles agreed to talk with Howard Lott.

Ovenden reported upon meeting with V-Trans representatives pertinent to handicap parking in front of the Town Hall, and the need for a design other than the one presented by the Town Hall Renovation Committee, which would have had cars backing out onto Route 30. In related discussion, Charles asked what engineering plans had been drafted by which the cost estimates for sidewalk repairs were requested of the voters and approved at Town Meeting. Ovenden and Charles agreed to look further into these matters.

Ovenden reported having looked at the Town Common fountain base that had been recently rebuilt, and expressed his concern over the sharpness of the stone around the rim. Following brief discussion about refurbishing the cast iron fountain, Charles made a motion: **To approve the offer of I.C.S. Auto to sandblast, treat, prime and repaint the fountain for \$2350.00**, seconded by Ovenden, and carried by those present. .

10. **New Business:** Charles discussed a letter, dated April 13, 2009, that the Board had received from Stephen A. Brown, CFO of Grace Cottage Hospital, in which Mr. Brown requested correspondence from the Board on the status of two tax bills that the Hospital had been sent. According to documentation included in the letter, citing a conversation with the Listers on July 17, 2008, about the Heins Home, and a letter dated January 23, 2008, from the Selectboard about the Wolff Building, Mr. Brown believed the properties to be tax-exempt. Charles offered to follow-up on these matters with the Treasurer and the Listers, and report back to the Board.

Charles then briefly discussed information received by the Board regarding an Application for Preliminary Permit from Blue Heron Hydro, LLC., to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, to install a 45KW generating facility below Townshend Dam. Charles made a motion: **To have the Townshend Planning Commission establish party status for the Town of Townshend in all future proceedings**, seconded by Harris, and carried by those present.

Briefly discussed was correspondence from Elizabeth Jones of the Townshend Business Association, requesting that the Town of Townshend website include a referral link to the website of the Townshend Business Association. Charles made a motion: **To have the Town of Townshend website include a link to the Townshend Business Association website**, seconded by Harris, and carried by those present.

11. **Executive Session:** At 8:50 p.m., Harris made a motion: **To enter into Executive Session to discuss personnel matters**, seconded by Ovenden, and carried by those present. At 9:07 p.m., the Board came out of Executive Session, and as a result, Harris made a motion: **To hire Craig K. Hunt as a temporary contract employee to serve as the secretarial assistant to the Select Board for the sum of \$250.00 per week for 26 weeks, beginning May 1, 2009**, seconded by Charles and carried by those present. Hunt accepted, and was instructed to contact those who had expressed interest in the position with letters of appreciation.
12. The next meeting was scheduled for 6:00 p.m. on May 4, 2009.
13. **Adjournment:** Charles made a motion, **To adjourn at 9:09 p.m.**, seconded by Ovenden, and carried by those present.

Respectfully submitted,

Craig K. Hunt, secretary