

# **Townshend Select Board Meeting Minutes**

## **MAY 18, 2009**

### **Present:**

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

**Members of the Public** Kurt Bostrom; Irvin Stowell; Elizabeth Agostini; Kevin Cole; Robert Wright; Susanna Palmer; Craig Hunt (Select Board secretary)

- 1. Call To Order:** At 6:12 p.m. Evans called the meeting to order.
- 2. Additions and Deletions:** None at this time.
- 3. Approval of Minutes:** Charles made a motion: **To approve the Minutes of May 4, 2009**, seconded by Ovenden. After brief discussion, Charles amended the motion to add the words: **as amended**, and the motion was carried by those present.

**4. Town Clerk's Report:** Evans reported upon the receipt by the Board of an Order from the Probate Court requiring that funds within the Mary Taft Fund be used to benefit the residents of West Townshend by donation of the Fund to the Townshend Food Shelf. The sum in that account as of June 30, 2008 was \$1,867.77.

**5. Treasurer's Report:** None at this time.

**6. Bookkeeper's Report:** Evans reported on the Bookkeeper having attended a seminar in Rutland. Discussion ensued as to the number of hours the bookkeeper was working, and possible ways to consolidate and share with the Treasurer some of her tasks. Consideration was given to paying all Town employees once every two weeks, and Evans made a motion: To have all Town employees paid bi-weekly beginning with the start of the new fiscal year,, seconded by Charles and carried by those present. Hunt was asked to draft a memo to be included with the next paychecks announcing the change, and post a schedule of the bi-weekly pay dates.

**7. Town Barn Committee Report:** Charles reported that the Town Barn Committee had received and reviewed a number of bids for construction of the Town Barn complex, that many of those bidders had attended a meeting at the construction site, and that almost all had attended a closed door, individual interview session with members of the Committee. The Committee expected that questions asked of the contractors during those interviews would be answered in the coming days, and that the Committee hoped to select and make a recommendation to the Select Board at the Board's next meeting.

**8. Highway Foreman's Report:** Following a brief discussion of the difference between the actual highway budget and what was reported on the T60 form, Evans made a motion: **To sign the annual highway plan and submit it to John Alexander of V-Trans**, seconded by Ovenden, and carried by those present. Bostrom then reported that he anticipated having gravel crushed at the pit sometime in June, and that the compactor was out of inspection and needed repairs before it would pass. Evans reminded the Foreman that his experience with making repairs was one of the principal reasons he was

chosen for the position. Bostrom explained that he and Ed Smith had been quite busy, but that replacing the windshield and the rear seal in the Compactor, was a task better done by Osgood, from whom he'd presented the Board with an estimate earlier in the year, and that the rear fenders would be far-more quickly and simply replaced by Osgood, than fabricated by him. Bostrom went on to report that the streets had been swept and that all information had been submitted with applications for Stimulus project funding prior to the May 15th deadline.

**Sidewalks:** Ovenden then reported that the design of Town sidewalks requested from Stevens and Associates had been completed and that the application for funding had been submitted, also before the deadline. In conversation with Ovenden, Brud Sanderson had recommended that all abutters of the Town's sidewalks, including Leland and Gray, be notified in writing prior to construction. It was noted that John Alexander of V-Trans wanted an increase in the shoulder width along Route 30. Members of the Board expressed concern that any widening of the roadway would encourage motorists to travel faster than they already did, making pedestrian safety a greater concern.

**9. Warrants:** Hunt was asked to draft a letter to vendors explaining the schedule by which Town Warrants are approved and municipal bills paid, that vendors might recalculate assessing late fees and penalties against the Town. After brief discussion about the Warrants, Charles made a motion: **To approve the Warrants**, seconded by Bills and carried by those present.

**M1809 PR                      \$ 7,660.69**

**M1809 AP                      \$ 14,967.00**

**10. Members of the Public:** The Board recognized Irvin Stowell at 6:55 p.m., and Mr. Stowell expressed his concern on two matters in particular: First, that water runoff from the new Highway Garage facility was going to have to utilize the ditch on the former Janos Technology property, inappropriately, and that with rain gardens designed to run the entire span of the property along the brook, for storm water collection, the road crew was going to have limited space to plow and pile snow. Second, Mr. Stowell, wished to voice his objection to donating the Mary Taft Fund money to the Townshend Food Shelf, since the Mary Taft Fund was to be used specifically for the relief of the poor in West Townshend. Mr. Stowell argued the point that the Townshend Food Shelf serves people from many Towns other than Townshend, and that there are poor people in West Townshend who might deserve assistance from the Mary Taft Fund, but who do not go to the Townshend Food Shelf.

Evans explained that the Fund was being diminished more by bank charges and required advertising than gaining in accumulated interest, and that the Select Board had sought and received an Order from the Probate Court to donate the money, but that no action had yet been taken to do so. Charles then offered that the money might be donated to the Townshend Food Shelf with the stipulation that it be used or allocated in some way to specifically aide folk from West Townshend, thereby fulfilling its purpose.

At 7:10 the Board recognized Attorney Agostini, who informed the Board that Favreau's Corner Road, which the Board had at a previous meeting decided it would discontinue, was not a right-of-way granted to the Town by adjacent property owners, but property owned by the Town through deed. Property of the Town, as this road might be, Charles suggested, was the Select Board's right to sell, and Mr. Stowell reminded Board members that if they decided to sell any Town property, it would have to be sold to the

highest bidder. Charles then made a motion: **To engage the Town Attorney in matters regarding the disposition of Favreau's Corner Road**, seconded by Evans and carried by those present. Hunt was asked to draft a Proposal of Discontinuance for Favreau's Corner Road based upon the one done by the Select Board for Knapp Road.

At 7:25 p.m. Evans recognized Kevin Cole, Robert Wright and Susanna Palmer, and summarized a letter written by Dr. Shafer to Cynthia and Robert Hoard about cleaning up their property subsequent to the fire which burned their house last February. Copies of the letter were handed out, and discussion ensued as to the Town's authority to effectively enforce Waste Disposal and Health Ordinances, and lowering property taxes. Evans made a motion: **To seek the Town Attorney's opinion of the options before the Board in address of this matter**, seconded by Ovenden, and carried by those present.. Kevin Kline, Robert Wright and Susanna Palmer left at 7:45 p.m.

**11. Other Business:** After brief discussion, Evans made a motion: **To permit the Leland and Gray Alumni Association use the Town Hall on the night of June 20, 2009**, seconded by Bills, and carried by those present.

Charles reported upon discussions regarding proposed parking behind the Town Hall, and construction estimates ranging from \$20,000 to \$100,000. Forthcoming, Charles informed the Board, was an estimate of the cost from Stevens and Associates for conducting a feasibility.

At 8:05 p.m., Evans made a motion: **For the Board to enter into Executive Session**. At 8:20 p.m. the Board returned from Executive session, and as a result, the Board took no action.

Following brief discussion, Evans made a motion: **To contact Two Wired Guys for an estimate on linking, through wireless service, the Treasurer's computer terminal and the Auditors' computer terminal to that of the Bookkeeper's**, seconded by Ovenden, and carried by those present.

Following brief discussion, Evans made a motion: **To discuss with the Treasurer and Chittenden Bank the potential advantages to the Town of having a lockbox for the direct deposits of payments to the Town**, seconded by Charles, and carried by those present.

Evans then relayed to the Board the desire of the Town Clerk to spruce up the Town Hall by ridding it of unnecessary clutter, which received general consent of the Board, informally.

**11. Next Meeting:** June 1, 2009

**12. Adjournment:** Ovenden made a motion, **To adjourn at 8:45 p.m.**, seconded by Charles, and carried by those present.

Respectfully submitted,

Craig K. Hunt, secretary