

Townshend Select Board Minutes

June 7, 2010

Present:

Select Board: Hedy Harris; Bruce Bills; Steve Ovenden; Michael Charles; Jeff Russ;
In attendance: Kim Ellison; Joe Daigneault; Kurt Bostrom; Lloyd Church; Gaila Gulak; Becky Nystrom; Craig Hunt, administrative assistant

- 1. Call to Order:** Harris called the meeting to Order at 6:05 p.m.
- 2. Approval of Minutes:** Harris made a motion: **To approve the Minutes of June 17th, as corrected**, carried by those present.
- 3. Additions and Deletions:** Under Old Business, updates on the Town Barn bond application and Town Barn security were added.
- 4. Warrants:** Russ made a motion: **To approve the Warrants of June 7, 2010**, carried by those present.

General Fund	\$
Highway Department	\$
Payroll	\$

- 5. Reports: Town Clerk's Report:** The Board reviewed the Town Clerk's cash-journal reports from the prior weeks.

Highway Foreman's Report: Bostrom reported that he had ordered and signed a contract for a new International six-wheel dump truck from DeLurrey's for \$151,000.00, with delivery of the vehicle to be expected in October or November. The price includes a seven-year Warranty.

Paving projects were being scheduled for sections of Peaked Mountain Road and around the Town Common.

Bostrom updated the Board on the extent of damages occurring during the storm of the previous week, and discussion ensued as to the Town's responsibility for trees on private land that potentially threatened Town roadways. Two trees, both on Route 35, Bostrom had agreed to fell, although not cut up and remove for their owners. By general consent, the Board authorized the Highway Foreman to use his own discretion with regard to circumstances requiring labor not specifically within the Town right-of-way.

Bostrom presented an article previously published in the Brattleboro Reformer, and the Board asked that it be accepted and recorded in the Minutes:

“MONTPELIER (AP) – The Vermont League of Cities and Towns is voicing satisfaction with a state Supreme Court decision saying property owners don’t have much recourse when their properties are damaged by snowplows.

The case involved a Shelburne property owner who sued the state Agency of Transportation, saying snow its crews cleared from U.S. Route 7 ended up damaging a building.

The high court ruled recently that the property owner would not be able to recover damages, and that occasional damage from snowplows is just a fact of life in Vermont.

The League of Cities and Towns says that's good news for the state's municipalities, where similar issues sometimes arise."

Brief discussion then ensued about work necessary on the Dam Road Culvert, for which no decision had yet been made: T-4, which still isn't running right, and the Sale of miscellaneous Highway Department property, which has been listed and Warned for Auction by sealed bid on June 21st.

6. Members of the Public: At 7:00, the Board welcomed Lloyd Church who spoke of his concerns for traffic control in West Townshend and advocated that the Select Board contract with the Windham County Sheriff's Department for continued control. According to Church, even though Route 30 through West Townshend is widely known as the, "speed-trap capital of Windham County," violations regularly occur. Church relayed to the Board that he recently had taken the opportunity to visit with a Sheriff's Deputy who was running radar and was very impressed with the Deputy's dedicated professionalism. Knowing that the Select Board was deliberating upon law enforcement contracts for the coming year, Church wished to voice that he was a proponent of increasing the role that the Sheriff's Department would play.

Russ expressed his gratitude for Church's unsolicited endorsement, as did other Board members. Charles and Ovenden then explained that while the Select Board had the responsibility to ensure that the interests of the Town were served through contracts with law enforcement organizations, including, but not limited to traffic control, and while the Windham County Sheriff's Department should play a major role, they were still uncomfortable with the ultimatum issued by the Sheriff requiring contract exclusivity, essentially barring the Town from signing any contract with the State Police.

7. Correspondence: Two separate work authorization contracts from Fairpoint to replace poles in Townshend were presented and signed by Board members.

8. Old Business:

a. Town Officer Appointments: Hunt was requested to post the opening for the RESCUE liaison position at Grace Cottage Hospital.

b. Sidewalks: Ovenden reported that DMI Construction intended to be setting curbstones, paving the new parking areas and beginning to pour the concrete sidewalks later this week.

c. Purchasing Policy: Nothing to report at this time.

d. EEEBCG Grant: Harris reported that the Federal part of the application had been completed, signed and submitted. Discussion ensued as to need for the Planning Commission to oversee the bid process and contract preparation for the work to be done. Harris agreed to contact the Planning Commission on this.

e. Delinquent Tax Policy: At 7:25, the Board welcomed Becky Nystrom, Delinquent Tax Collector, and reviewed a delinquent tax policy proposal that Nystrom had prepared. Discussion followed, with Harris recommending minor changes to the wording and correction of the interest to be charged, as stated incorrectly in the draft. Nystrom said that the corrected policy would be mailed to all those who were currently delinquent, and that all taxpayers would receive a copy with their tax first bills when

mailed. The Board thanked Nystrom for her efforts to establish a clear and uniform policy.

Members of the Public: At 7:50, by general consent, the Board suspended the rules in order to recognize Gaila Gulak, who introduced herself as a candidate running for the Windham 6th District seat against incumbent Richard Marek. Gulak requested that the Board provide, throughout the campaign, input as to what the Town might need of its Representative to Montpelier.

Charles suggested that distributions of promised State aid to Highways, and better access to regulatory information would be among his priorities, along with more local control of roads, and asked, rhetorically, “Why should Towns have to budget and pay separately for law enforcement services?”

Gulak promised to attend Board meetings regularly for discussion of these and other matters, and, if elected, strive to address Townshend’s concerns in the State House.

f. Law Enforcement Contracts: Following lengthy discussion, Charles made a motion: **To award a contract, under duress of the ultimatum issued, to the Windham County Sheriff’s Department in the amount of \$20,000 for law enforcement services during the 2010-2011 fiscal year, pending Select Board acceptance of a contract prepared by the Windham County Sheriff’s Department**, seconded by Harris, and carried by those present.

g. Streetlights: Following discussion, Harris made a motion: **To notify residents and businesses proximate to, and publicly post a map indicating the locations of, the six streetlights the Select Board has identified for removal by CVPS on or around August 1, 2010, and contact CVPS to replace the older mercury vapor bulbs with more efficient sodium halide**, seconded by Ovenden, and carried by those present.

Bookkeeper’s Report: At 8:30, the Board again suspended the rules in order to hear from Kim Ellison, who reported that there was approximately \$262,000 remaining in the checking account prior to the paying of the current Warrants. As this amount would have to carry the Town through the summer until receipt of the next tax payment, she requested, and by general consent the Board authorized the Treasurer to begin the application process for up to a \$150,000 line of credit from Chittenden Bank, if needed.

Regarding reimbursement from the Town of Jamaica for Townshend plowing, sanding and salting a portion of Jamaica’s roads, Ellison reported that the agreement in place was for \$17.50 per trip. Following discussion, Ellison agreed to talk with Bostrom to see if this was an accurate reflection of the real cost to Townshend for the labor and materials provided.

h. Town Garage Security: Charles reported on his continuing research to provide an enhanced security system at the Town Garage.

i. Fire Alarm System: The Board took no action at this time upon a proposal by the Town Hall Renovation Committee to seek the installation of a fire alarm system for the Town Hall.

j. Hand-held GPS Unit: Charles reported having examined a GPS Map 60CSx offered to the Town for purchase by Mike Bills, and, following discussion, Harris made a motion: **To offer to purchase the GPS unit for the Town to use from Mike Bills for \$300.00**, carried by those present.

k. Personnel Policy: Board members discussed problems still within the Town’s personnel Policy and Harris requested taking these up at the next meeting.

9. New Business:

Town Hall Parking Ordinance: Bills agreed to discuss with Bostrom the need for signage for the new parking areas, and the Board will begin to draft an ordinance for parking regulations at the Town Hall.

Complaint: Russ reported having heard a complaint from a citizen that taxes were being improperly collected by Town personnel other than the Tax Collector, and that Select Board meetings were not being properly Warned. The Board took these complaints under advisement.

10. Executive Session: None at this time.

11. Next Meeting: Regular Meeting: June 21, 2010 at 6:00 p.m.

12. Adjournment: Charles made a motion: **To adjourn at 9:10 p.m.**, carried by those present.

Respectfully submitted

Craig K. Hunt, administrative assistant