

TOWN OF PITTSFORD SELECT BOARD MINUTES - November 17, 2021

Members Present - W. Joseph Gagnon, David Mills, Alicia Malay, Tom Hooker, Thomas "Hank" Pelkey. Others Present: Betsey Morgan, Baird Morgan, Charles "Butch" Shaw, Steve Belcher, Lisa Wright, Julie Wilson, Vanessa Mills, John Haverstock - Town Manager, Kelly Giard Recording Secretary.

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM by Chair Malay.

J. Haverstock stated that there was a need to enter into Executive Session Personnel (Town Report honorees). D. Mills stated the need to discuss Personnel (Town Manager and Police) Motion by T. Hooker and seconded by D. Mills to enter into Executive Session for Personnel. Motion passed unanimously 5 - 0.

J. Haverstock stated that there was a need to amend the agenda to add the discussion of a Municipal Mask Mandate. Motion by T. Hooker and seconded by D. Mills to adopt the agenda as amended. Motion passed unanimously 5 - 0.

Minutes:

The minutes of the November 3, 2021 meeting were signed with no corrections.

Orders:

The orders in the amount of \$2,160,254.34 and Payroll in the amount of \$11,799.61 were signed with the following discussion:

J. Gagnon inquired the expense for the trees that were purchased for the Municipal Office. J. Haverstock explained that there were 3 Flowering Crab Trees purchased. D. Mills stated that there was \$2 million submitted to the school system.

Town Manager's Report:

J. Haverstock reported the following:

- The Sidewalk Scoping Study was reviewed at the Sidewalk Committee meeting on October 26, 2021 and the notes that were gathered will also be discussed at the November 30, 2021 and December, 21, 2021 meetings. There will be a required Public Hearing scheduled for some time in January or February 2022.
- The Veteran's Day Ceremony was held at the Municipal Offices on November 11, 2021 at 11:00 AM. Thank you to all who attended and or participated.
- There will be an OMYA Community Issues Team meeting on November 18, 2021. Anyone with concerns should contact the Town Manager.
- Donna Wilson has reported that the Pittsford Village Farm grant application has had some requests for information, which have been answered and they are waiting for a decision.

- There will be a tree lighting at the Pittsford Village Farm on November 28, 2021 from 5:00 - 6:30 PM.
- The Town of Chittenden will be testing their 4 sirens on November 22, 2021 at 11:00 AM.
- The Municipal Office and related services will be closed on November 25 and November 26, 2021 in observance of Thanksgiving.

Select Board Member Remarks:

T. Hooker stated that he has heard complaints that the lighting at the intersection of Route 7 and Plains Road is an issue due to the brightness with Dollar General being open for business.

D. Mills stated that he has also heard complaints regarding the lighting at the intersection of Route 7 and Plains Road; has had contact with Susan Elliot regarding the Adams Road solar project and is concerned with the impact on the bird habitat in the area; The Rutland Regional Planning Commission had a presentation from the Grandpas Knob Wind Project. The net height including the blades will be the same as the current cell tower that is in place with an application for the CPG (Center for Public Good) to be prepared in November 2022. There was a statement made that the wind tower would not be visible from Pittsford. J. Haverstock stated that there was a letter written by the Town of Hubbardton in the packets for review.

Public Comment:

Rep Shaw explained that there may be a possibility that the State may be collecting the School taxes and not the towns. There was discussion whether there would be an impact on the delinquent taxes. Rep Shaw stated that this is a possibility that is in the works and nothing has been identified.

Vanessa Mills presented a letter to the members of the Select Board and read the letter aloud. The letter was in objection of the proposed Grandpa's Knob Wind Project.

Lisa Wright asked that the Select Board review and respond to the letter that was received from the Town of Hubbardton.

Vanessa Mills expressed concerns regarding the area of the Woodland Drive and Route 7 and the accidents that have occurred in that area. T. Hooker explained that this is a State highway and concerns are relayed all the time.

Old Business:

Update on VLCT Retention and Efforts on Recruitment/Hiring of New Town Manager:

J. Haverstock stated that there was an update from the consultant in the packets for review and the advertising has begun.

New Business

Presentation of Second FY 2023 Budget Draft:

J. Haverstock explained that there are expenses that are uncertain, which include the Town

Manager pay, health insurance and car allowance; Town Clerk, Assistant Town Clerk and Bookkeeper salary changes; addition of the Zoning Administrator health insurance; the increase of the Police Cruiser fund to add \$20,000; a 1.5% wage increase as stated in the union contract; increasing the Recreation Director health insurance; doubling of the Recreation Department Capitol fund (from \$4,000 to \$8,000); increase in vehicle and heating fuel; increase in the assessor's budget. There were some typographical errors in the original budget proposal, which included requiring an additional \$13,500 (originally submitted as \$1,500 and not \$15,000) in the Water Fund budget. This proposal includes removing \$12,000 from the highway paving budget and including the Highway fuel budget of \$32,000.

J. Haverstock explained that the younger workforce has resulted in a reduction of \$5,000 in each of the Water and Sewer department budgets; there is a 2% increase in the water and sewer bills that has helped with the income as well.

J. Haverstock stated that the current proposed budget is showing a General Fund deficit of \$15,288; Highway Fund deficit of \$49,000; Water Department Fund deficit of \$44,000; Sewer Department budget is nearly even. The insurance information is expected soon. T. Hooker inquired the status of the First Response Vehicle Fund. J. Haverstock stated that there was \$37,000 to start with \$5,000 being allocated annually.

Discussion of Assessor's Office Budget and Staffing:

Lisa Wright was present to discuss the upcoming budget process and is proposing the creation of an Assessor Clerk position. Ms. Wright explained the success that she is seeing in other towns that have adopted this position and it is bringing younger people into the profession. J. Haverstock will be creating a job description and hourly rate.

Discussion of Digital Mapping (GIS) Proposal:

Lisa Wright was present to discuss the GIS Mapping that was proposed in the past. The program is in use currently in West Rutland, which includes tax mapping online, map overlays, zoning maps, with the possibility of adding water and sewer lines or Listers' cards. J. Haverstock inquired if this would possibly be eligible for ARPA funding as this move is a result of COVID 19 restricting the accessibility of records in the Municipal Offices. J. Haverstock continued by saying that there has been anxiety of this in the past, however, there have been so many changes due to the pandemic that it is necessary to make the change. Ms. Wright explained that the information is currently online in different formats. There was discussion regarding the pricing and annual fees. J. Gagnon inquired if there were any disadvantages. Ms. Wright stated that the disadvantages are minimal. The Select Board was supportive of moving forward.

Discussion of Proposal for Personal Property Tax Re-Appraisal:

Lisa Wright was present to discuss the Personal Property Tax Re-Appraisal and stated that she is not an appraiser of personal property and this is clearly stated in her contract. The inventory forms that are being returned by the businesses that are required to submit the information is widely varied and she is not comfortable with the current process and believes there are

misappraisals resulting in lost and incorrect collections. The Select Board members were given a proposal from an independent appraiser, which was reviewed and discussed. D. Mills inquired if there was any training available from the State, which Ms. Wright stated that she was not aware of any.

Review and Act on BLSG Mosquito District's Proposed By-Law Changes:

Steve Belcher, the Pittsford representative to the BLSG Mosquito District was present to explain that the BLSG resolution to amend the original 1978 bylaws was passed at their recent meeting. D. Mills inquired if there were any additional changes. Mr. Belcher stated that there were no additional changes following the original that the Select Board showed support. Motion by D. Mills and seconded by T. Hooker to instruct the Town Manager to write a letter in support of the proposed changes. Motion passed unanimously 5 - 0.

Discussion of Municipal Mask Mandate:

Rep Shaw was present to discuss a letter that was received from the Governor regarding a possibility of a mandatory mask mandate. Governor Scott is hesitant as this was done 20 months ago and there are currently no additional funds available as there were in the past. The buildings/events that are within the town jurisdiction would be affected and the Town would be required to enforce, if the mandate was adopted by the individual town. This mandate would be effective November 29, 2021 and would require review and vote every 30 days. T. Hooker explained that the enforcement is the concern.

Betsey Morgan, Baird Morgan, Lisa Wright, Vanessa Mills and Charles "Butch" Shaw exited at 7:37 PM.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Motion by T. Hooker and seconded by D. Mills to go into Executive Session for Personnel , where premature knowledge would be damaging to the Town and may be jeopardized by public disclosure.

In accordance with 1 VSA 312 (b), where premature general public knowledge would clearly place the Municipality or person involved at a substantial disadvantage, the Board unanimously agreed to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of Personnel at 7:51 PM. Town Manager Haverstock was invited to remain for Executive Session.

The Select Board exited Executive Session at 8:20 PM with no action taken.

The Select Board adjourned at 8:20 PM.

The next regular meeting of the Select Board will be held on December 1, 2021.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kelly Giard

Recording Secretary

— Alicia Malay, Chair

— David Mills, Vice Chair

— Thomas Hooker, Selectman

— W. Joseph Gagnon, Selectman

Thomas "Hank" Pelkey, Selectman