

1 **SELECTBOARD MEETING**

2 May 5, 2021

3 Attending the meeting; Phil Pouech, Merrily Lovell, Mike Loner, Maggie Gordon, Dennis Place, Joy Dubin
4 Grossman, Todd Odit, Linda Patterson, Scooter MacMillan, Chuck Reiss, Alex Weinhausen, Cynthia Hendy,
5 Erik Bailey, Amy, Chief Anthony Cambridge.

6 Meeting called to order at 7:00 p.m. via zoom.

7 Additions / Deletions / Public Comment and Selectboard Correspondence

8 There were no agenda changes or public comment.

9 Phil noted the Board has received a lot of correspondence about Al Barber and the issue of his Facebook
10 post.

11 Merrily said she likes the new Town website and kudos to Joy and others who made this new website
12 happen. Joy said a lot of thanks go to Ann Janda who did most of the work.

13 Phil said Green Up was a success and thanked the Highway Department for their help.

14 Town Manager Report

15 Todd said he was invited to the Fire Department officers meeting. Will Moran, who is the EMS services
16 chief of the Department of Health, reviewed with the FD additional information needed on their
17 application. Todd suggested to have the Fire Department attend a Selectboard meeting so they can
18 speak about this.

19 Consider Approval of "Raise the Blade" Campaign

20 Linda Patterson spoke about the "Raise the Blade" campaign. This is sponsored by several watershed
21 organizations to promote lawn care practices that help to filter and absorb stormwater, reduce run-off
22 and increase soil health.

23 Merrily asked about ticks being present in the longer grass. Linda said length of grass was looked at in
24 regards to tick population and the conclusion was 2 or 3 inches in height made no difference. Areas
25 along the edges of the lawn make more of a difference.

26 Maggie said she supports the campaign. She noted the flyer that shows pictures of the difference in the
27 look of the grass when mowed to 3 inches vs 2 inches showing a healthier lawn when mowed at 3
28 inches. She suggests doing that experiment in Town.

29 Mike moved to adopt the "Raise the Blade" program for Hinesburg. Second by Merrily and approved
30 with 5 yes votes.

31 Receipt of Town Plan Revisions – Energy Chapter

32 Alex said this is a comprehensive update of the Energy Chapter. He noted the Energy Committee, with
33 help from the Regional Planning Commission, had been working on re-writing this chapter for three
34 years. The PC is asking the Board to work with the Energy Committee to prioritize the action items.

Phil clarified the process to be that the Board can make minor changes prior to presenting for the two public hearings. Alex confirmed that and added if the Board has significant changes to make it would be best to send back to the PC to work on it in collaboration with the Energy Committee. Phil also noted the request by the PC for the Board to pick three action items to be a priority. Phil asked if changes can be made by the Board after the first public hearing. Alex said minor changes can be made between the two hearings but need to keep in mind the 15-day notice requirement for the final public hearing.

Chuck Reiss, of the Energy Committee, said the committee chose 8.1.1 and 8.4.1 and 2 as their priorities. This will identify how we can develop renewable energy in the Town and to improve energy efficiency in our homes and businesses.

Phil suggested the Selectboard go over the wording of the document and then schedule the two Public Hearings.

Merrily said she has read that wind is not a good energy source in Vermont. She asked Chuck for his thoughts for the viability of wind vs solar in Hinesburg. Chuck said the RPC has maps that show areas in Town with wind potential. Merrily asked Chuck if he feels there will be push back by the people in Town if wind turbines are put on the ridgelines in Town. Chuck said if we present a portrait of how we can achieve our goals and minimize environmental destruction due to wind it would be helpful. Chuck believes wind has to be a part of this.

Alex pointed out they have identified areas that are appropriate and inappropriate for future energy facilities.

Phil said solar alone will not get net zero energy so wind will need to be a piece of this. The State is against large turbines and you will not achieve wind energy with small turbines. He feels for Hinesburg the only option for 20 or so years is solar.

Merrily asked about hydro and Phil said that brings in the Federal Government for permitting.

Mike asked Alex if the reference to solar ready roof on all new construction includes residential. Alex said that is what they are aiming for. Mike said we will need to justify what the cost difference will be if this is a requirement. Alex said there is almost no additional cost.

Maggie recalled a discussion about the added cost to build a house to net zero energy noting that Rolf Kielman did some calculations to show what the increased cost would be and how that would be recovered over time.

Phil asked if after we complete this in the Town Plan, will we need to change zoning requirements to match the Town Plan. Alex said we will need to look at land use regulations

Phil said while some towns use the Town Plan to help prevent solar from coming in, he does not foresee this problem in Hinesburg.

Chuck wanted to recognize Bill Scott, past committee member, who did a large amount of the work on this.

Review and Approval of FY 22 Water and Sewer Budget and Rates

Phil asked Erik if anything has changed or if he is still confident in the numbers proposed. Erik said there was a slight change with the figures for the wastewater bond but will not affect the proposed rates.

Merrily moved to adopt the following rates for water and wastewater for FY 22. Water - \$99.57 per unit per quarter (both metered and unmetered); \$0.044 per cubic foot per quarter usage fee (metered) and \$76.53 per quarter usage fee (unmetered). This rate is unchanged since FY 19. Wastewater - \$102.78 per unit per quarter (both metered and unmetered); \$0.037 per cubic foot per quarter usage fee (metered); and \$66.63 per quarter usage (unmetered). This is the first increase since FY 17. Second by Mike.

Merrily amended the motion to include the budget as presented in the Selectboard packet. Mike accepted the amendment.

Motion voted as amended and approved with 5 yes votes.

Approve Purchase of Police Cruisers and Approve Loan

Chief Cambridge said as Phil noted the purchase has been approved by the voters and is in the budget. He reviewed the scheduled rotation of vehicles.

Todd said the revenue we will get for the used vehicles is not reflected and the Board can decide where to apply that later. Regarding the loan there will be an additional \$700 interest fee for the three annual payments vs monthly which is an option but most municipalities do not want the paperwork involved in monthly payments.

Merrily moved to approve the purchase of the two police vehicles including related equipment for a total estimated cost of \$90,000. Second by Maggie and approved with 5 yes votes.

Phil said they will have Todd make the decision of payments.

Merrily move to approve financing the vehicles over a three-year period at an interest rate not to exceed 2%. Second by Maggie and approved with 5 yes votes.

Discussion of Diversity and Inclusion Next Steps

Phil asked Board members to speak about the issue.

Mike reminded us of the value statement of June 2020 by reading it at the meeting. He said he feels Al's Facebook post violates the spirit of the value statement. The Board spoke with Al who has apologized and done what was asked of him. Mike feels it is important to be clear what is expected of Al and all Town employees, volunteers, board members and such moving forward. He does not feel it is needed to call for Al's dismissal but can understand why some members of the community are looking for that to happen.

Merrily agrees with Mike and feels this is an opportunity for education and unity within Town.

Phil said having to hold his tongue in public has been a challenge. It is unacceptable that a leader would do this. Al did not intend to put the Town in this position. It is good to admit there is a problem and to work on it.

108 Maggie has had conversations with individuals who did not feel comfortable stepping forward but have
109 been hurt by this. It is important to acknowledge community members who felt demeaned and
110 ridiculed. Maggie asked about the social media policy. Will Todd write this with the help of the
111 committee, how will this work? Todd said he has a draft regarding personal use of social media as a
112 Town employee. He will share it with Joy and then get it to the Board. There is also the draft of the
113 entire personnel policy which will come to the Board.

114 Phil is in favor of moving this along and noted whatever policy they put together can be changed if
115 needed.

116 Mike would like a strong statement in the policy regarding intimidation and bullying over social media as
117 well. Todd said that is included in his draft.

118 Phil said a possible action is to appoint a Town Committee to advise the Board and Town Manager on
119 issues and initiatives related to diversity, inclusion, racism, intolerance and hate. Then we need to have
120 an assessment of all Town Departments and leaders in the Town including the Selectboard, and look at
121 this through an equity lens to see where there may be problems. Based on what is found then decide
122 what actions could be taken to be sure everyone follows the desire to welcome all people and having
123 them feel comfortable.

124 Mike said regarding forming a committee, Hinesburg has a group of residents (the racial, equity
125 workgroup) that came together after the June 2020 conversation. Mike said he understands that
126 workgroup would like to remain a grass roots organization and continue to work on education and
127 addressing issues as they arise. He recommends to start advertising for residents who would like to be
128 part of a committee of this type and would be Selectboard appointed.

129 Merrily said she is nervous about appointing a committee from volunteers. This takes a lot of empathy
130 and understanding and skill to work on this. She does not think asking for volunteers is the answer.

131 Dennis also disagrees with the idea of a committee. He would like to hire someone independent. He is
132 glad we have gotten to this place acknowledging the need for training and addressing these issues.

133 Mike said a committee could bring in training.

134 Todd said he and Joy can research the charge similar committees in other town's work under so the
135 Board can see what they do. It is important, if a committee is appointed, for them to know what
136 parameters they will be working within and what authority they have. They can also see what
137 individuals might be able to help.

138 Merrily said her ideal mix on a committee would be a person to represent each group that feels not
139 included as well as someone from the Police Department.

140 Phil summarized that the Board stands behind the value statement from June 2020. They would like to
141 take more action by working on a social media policy and look at how else we might move forward by
142 reviewing Town policies and investigate what other options there are to work on this.

143 Discussion of Operating Guidelines for Orderly Conduct of Business and Possible Approval

144 The Board did a final review of the latest copy of Operating Guidelines.

145 Phil moved to adopt the Operating Guidelines for Orderly Conduct of Business as presented with some
146 slight changes as noted tonight. Second by Merrily and approved with 5 yes votes.

147 Regional Planning Commission Appointments

148 Phil moved to appoint the following for a 2 year term ending 2024.

- 149 • CCRPC Board of Directors – Mike Bissonette and Andrea Morgante as alternate.
- 150 • CCRPC Transportation Advisory Committee – Andrea Morgante / alternate vacant
- 151 • CCRPC Clean Water Advisory Committee – Merrily Lovell / alternate vacant

152 Second by Maggie and approved with 5 yes votes.

153 Consider Approving the Minutes from 4/28/21

154 Merrily moved to approve the minutes from 4/28/21 as amended, second by Mike and approved with 5
155 yes votes.

156 Consider Approving Warrants

157 Phil moved to approve the warrants signed by Merrily and himself, including payroll, as submitted by the
158 Town Treasurer.

159 Mike moved to adjourn at 9:05 p.m., second by Merrily and approved with 5 yes votes.

160 Respectfully submitted,

161 Valerie Spadaccini, clerk of the Board

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