

1 **SELECTBOARD MEETING Approved**

2 February 21, 2024

3 Attending the meeting; Merrily Lovell, Maggie Gordon, Mike Loner, Dennis Place, Paul Lamberson, Joy
4 Dubin Grossman, Jon Slason, Paul Stanilonis, Shawn Bissonette, James Donegan, Andrew Lepple, Keith
5 Roberts, Tony St.Hilaire.

6 Attending remotely; Todd Odit, Carl Bohlen, Anne Sullivan, Alex Weinhagen, Nicholas Baker, Alix
7 St.Hilaire

8 Meeting called or order at 6:00 p.m.

9 Agenda Additions or Deletions

10 Paul asked for time at the meeting to discuss the process of the informational Town Meeting

11 Public Comment

12 none

13 Approve Minutes of 2/7

14 Maggie moved to approve the minutes of 2/7 as amended. Seconded by Mike and approved with 5 yes
15 votes.

16 Selectboard Forum

17 Paul thanked voters who are reaching out for clarification on the budget.

18 Presentation of Revised Fire Impact Fee

19 Alex said he worked with Jonathan on the update and explained how impact fees are collected.

20 Jonathan said there are three options for replacing the fire impact fees. They are proposing looking at
21 fire impact fees based on how today the fire department services the population or jobs. The
22 presentation addresses added growth to the Town. How do we add capacity and what is the appropriate
23 amount of capacity and how is it paid for.

24 Jonathan explained for options B and C there are possible credits and explained the reason for the credit.

25 Alex said we can't continue with the current fee process as it is based on a plan the Town is not going to
26 do. It needs to be updated or we need to stop charging fees.

27 Consider Approval of Fire Department Software Purchase

28 Nick Baker explained the current software will be discontinued. Nick said our mutual aid departments
29 are using this new product. Nick said while the expense was not anticipated this year, they can make it
30 work and have budgetary lines next year that they can use to pay for it in the coming years. First year
31 annual subscription is \$9,700 and a \$1,200 start-up cost.

32 Merrily asked what the net increase would be. Nick said in the first year it is \$4,700. Merrily asked
33 about future years. Nick said expects as with other increases in costs he would expect minor increases
34 to be in range of \$9,700.

35 Maggie asked if the old system was paid from the dues and subscriptions line in the budget of \$4,500.
36 Nick said that did pay for the old system. Line items using subscription is one they will use to pay this as
37 well as an IT line item.

38 Mike said Nick mentioned continuing education with \$4,000 to offset it. Nick said they are currently
39 doing training in-house and not looking for a third party to do the training.

40 Nick said he can make this work in this year's budget. The approval is needed for next year's budget
41 which has been accepted by the Board.

42 Paul moved the Board approve the Hinesburg Fire Department's purchase of First Due software.
43 Seconded by Maggie and approved with 5 yes votes.

44 Consider Request from James and Sara Armstrong Donegan

45 James said there are 4 deeds related to land using the well that he would like to get cleaned up. Todd
46 said this would be the easements and other property rights that the Town would be giving up.

47 Paul moved that the Town of Hinesburg reconvey the easements outlined in the letter dated 10/25/2023
48 by the attorney working with James and Sara Donegan. Seconded by Maggie and approved with 5 yes
49 votes.

50 CVSD School Budget Presentation

51 Keith Roberts, CVSD Board member for Hinesburg, noted this has been the most unusual budget year for
52 the school district. He said they went through the budget process and proposed a budget based on what
53 they thought the law would be at that time regarding funding. Keith explained in rescinding the part of
54 Act 127 that puts a 5% cap on the base tax rate. It was replaced with a discount on the baseline tax rate
55 which for Hinesburg is \$0.17. Another factor is the low Common Level of Appraisal in Hinesburg.

56 Keith said there are some additional articles on the ballot. One is for bus replacement, one for the
57 reserving the fund balance and the last is a 3 ½ million-dollar facilities bond.

58 Magge said other school districts around the State will take a second look at their budgets and bring
59 them down. Is CVSD going to take a second look at their budget with the possibility of bringing it down.
60 Keith said they are not and referred to the superintendent's letter.

61 Paul asked Keith if he has any knowledge about the ability of Hinesburg's schools accommodating the
62 future housing growth in Town. Keith said the State feels there is a lot of capacity in the school for more
63 kids. Paul added that the fact that we are waiting to find out what other towns do will have an effect on
64 our property taxes, puts a nail in the coffin of the local control myth and we need to acknowledge that.

65 Receipt of RR1 Zoning District Regulation Amendments

66 Alex explained the action of looking at the RR1 zoning district is in the Town Plan. RR1 is a large area and
67 includes areas that do not have the same land use pattern. Alex reviewed the map with the proposed
68 zoning changes.

69 Maggie said the memo to the Board noted some changes were made from the feedback received. She
70 asked what those changes were. Alex said there was a lot of feedback about the development potential
71 on both sides. The PC discussed the concerns and set both the district lines and the density allowances
72 in as much accordance to the existing zoning as possible.

73 Tony St.Hilaire said he attended the PC meetings and spoke about the proposed changes which he
74 opposes. He owns property in the area of Mt. Pritchard and read a statement noting subdivisions done
75 under the current zoning. He acquired more land and planned for future development on that too. The
76 proposed changes limit him from his planned development when the property was purchased. He asks
77 the Board to consider use of a grandfather clause for the landowners while they still own the property or
78 time to plan and make a decision as has been done before.

79 Paul asked Alex if there is a precedent around "grandfathering" or making exceptions to those who
80 already own. Alex said generally that is not a practice that is common. He noted when the rural area
81 zoning was passed in 2013 an exception was made for any parcel of 12 acres or larger to ensure it would
82 still have subdivision potential even if the density formula did not allow for that. It also said that parcels
83 of 10 acres would have a limited time option to pursue subdivision. We have done a phased in approach
84 in the past.

85 Shawn Bissonette said he owns two properties; one is falling out of the zone and will be cut in half. He
86 and his family have lived on Dynamite Hill for some time and purchased a second property that adjoins
87 their other piece hoping to at some point subdivide and provide his children with lots for their homes.
88 The proposed changes will negatively affect his long-term plans and family goals. He said he has been
89 attending the meetings letting the PC know he is adamantly against this but does not feel he is being
90 heard.

91 Jim Carroll, who has been advising Shawn, said this is a unique situation as there is a major push at the
92 State and Federal level to try to reverse the economics and that is what this is dealing with. That there is
93 a need for thousands of dwelling units, he feels we have been overly pressured from a natural resource
94 protection when Vermont is not natural. He referred to the limitations of the overlay districts, the
95 Agency of Natural Resources telling you what you can do with the land.

96 Mike asked if we have a sense of how many parcels are in two different zones as this is laid out? Alex said
97 the Bissonette property is one of maybe 10 particularly between the rural district and residential 4.

98 Dennis said as a member of the DRB he sees a lot of this come through the DRB. He said Jim is totally
99 correct. We already have regulations and stipulations on where you can build. Paul thanked Dennis for
100 his input as a DRB member and asked if he would be an affected landowner. Dennis said his property is
101 in the area but the zoning remains at 3 acres as it currently is. Paul added he heard the Town has a
102 recent model to roll out a zoning change similar to this where people had a deadline to get their stuff
103 together. This is a precedent that has been set and he appreciates it as a compromise and hopes that
104 will be considered. Dennis replied that as soon as you subdivide the lot you are paying 4 or 5 grand in
105 taxes. So, if this is for your kids when they grow up the cost is not doable for most.

106 Andrew Lepple said he is in RR1 now just above Lake Iroquois. He said the perspective from his side as a
107 large landowner under current use, his father-in-law Paul Stanilonis for a long time managed the
108 property for timber harvest and recreation. This comes not as a thank you for taking care of the land

109 and was not presented to them when the land was walked as something to prevent development. When
110 they realized there was flat land that could support houses it could be terrifying that possibly 300 houses
111 could be built on Mt. Pritchard. So now the Town makes this 12-acre zoning. They would like to keep the
112 property as it is but there are other family members so maybe there is potential for houses in the future.
113 It is sad the way this was pushed on them to decide if they want to develop the land right now if they
114 ever want to have a chance to develop it.

115 Paul Stanilonis asked Alex if he consulted with the County Forester when they wrote this. Alex said not
116 on these zoning changes but have worked with the Forester to help inform create green districts. Paul
117 owns 175 acres of woodlot on the St. George border and this zoning document has very little attention
118 to the practice of forestry. Paul feels before approving this he feels the County Forester should be
119 consulted. He feels 10,15-acre single family lots are a waste of land use.

120 Request for Support for Purchase of Land for Affordable Housing Project

121 Carl said there is a property in Hinesburg that Green Mountain Habitat has looked at and is interested in
122 purchasing. Todd and Alex looked at it and feel a quadplex could be built and the existing home
123 removed. Green Mtn Habitat expects an up-front purchase price of \$50,000 per unit which means they
124 would want to buy it for \$200,000 but the sale price is \$250,000. Todd suggested to the Affordable
125 Housing Committee that ARPA funds could make up the difference. The Affordable Housing Committee
126 agreed to ask the Board to use \$50,000 ARPA funds to help with the purchase. If they are able to reduce
127 the purchase price the ARPA funds would be the part of the funding to be reduced.

128 Todd said he met with a representative of Green Mtn Habitat, they are hoping to get 6 units on the
129 property that will be owner occupied. If the Board is in agreement to funding the details will be worked
130 out at a later date.

131 Mike said he been aware of this project for a little while. We do have to expend the ARPA dollars and we
132 have been suggesting for a while to put money toward affordable housing. Green Mtn Habitat will sell
133 the houses as cost to the new owners.

134 Dennis said the only way he would agree is if EMS employees or something like that or longtime
135 Hinesburg residents. We just heard our taxes are going through the roof. That ARPA money is for the
136 whole town of Hinesburg. Merrily said when Dennis has talked about affordable housing before his
137 concern was ownership and these will be owned.

138 Paul said he is a fan of Green Mtn Habitat and making these opportunities happen but he agrees with
139 Dennis about funding. The Board struggles with using ARPA money for the WW treatment facility
140 because the whole Town does not use it. A lot more people use the WW treatment facility than 6
141 households. He struggles with the idea of wanting to support affordable housing and if it matters where
142 the money comes from. The Board has struggled in the past year with use of ARPA funds not having a
143 broad enough target audience. Dennis added there are other ways to come up with the \$50,000.
144 Merrily noted regarding the WW treatment the decision not to use ARPA funds was it would hardly make
145 a dent in the millions of dollars it was going to cost.

146 Mike said he worries the ARPA funds will just be spent and we will have nothing to show for it, maybe
147 100 feet of paved roads, where here we can house 6 families

148 Carl said the people who would buy the house have to pass an income eligibility test and the family has
149 to donate 400 hours of labor building the home.

150 Merrily asked Carl if Champlain Housing Trust is involved. Carl said not with this project but Green Mtn
151 Habitat is working with Champlain Trust on the Windy Ridge project.

152 Maggie said when discussions on ARPA funds started, she felt it had to benefit everybody and be
153 community stuff. In looking at the list; the sidewalk, not everyone walks on the sidewalks / the Town
154 Common, not everyone will go there / the Town Hall roof / the mini-pumper. She feels there is no single
155 project that is going to benefit everyone. For the small amount of \$50,000 to get 6 perpetually
156 affordable units in the Town of Hinesburg. She feels it benefits all of us when we can open our doors a
157 bit and is in favor of this.

158 Paul noted the sidewalk, Town Hall roof and Town Common ownership remains with the town's people.
159 We are talking about a gift for something that will be privately owned. Paul asked Carl what does the
160 affordable housing committee have on hand without ARPA money? Carl said there is \$4,500 in this
161 year's budget through June, and \$5,000 in next year's budget if approved plus revolving loan fund
162 dollars. Carl explained the revolving loan fund from VT Smoke and Cure. \$50,000 was used for Kelley's
163 Field, there is another \$50,000 in the fund which the Affordable Housing Committee is thinking of using
164 for Windy Ridge both are grants.

165 There was further discussion on funding of each project with no conclusion. This will come back to the
166 Board at a future meeting.

167 Consider Approval of AARP Grant Application

168 The Town Common Committee is working on an application for the AARP Grant for funds for benches
169 and picnic tables.

170 Merrily moved to approve the Town Common Committee 2024 AARP grant application. Seconded by
171 Paul and approved with 5 yes votes.

172 Presentation of FY 23 Audit Report

173 Paul moved the Selectboard acknowledge receipt of the FY 23 Financial Statements Audit Report and
174 accompanying communications. Seconded by Maggie and approved with 5 yes votes.

175 Approve Warrants and Payroll

176 Merrily moved to approve the warrants signed by herself and Mike, including payroll, as submitted by
177 the Town Treasurer. Seconded by Mike and approved with 5 yes votes.

178 Town Manager Update

- 179
- 180 • Todd reported that the dog Charger has been moved out of Town. The owners have moved to
181 Monkton, the dog has been moved to NH and there is a signed agreement that Charger will
182 never be allowed back in Hinesburg.
 - 182 • Bid opening for the WW Treatment Plant is next week.
 - 183 • A side agreement has been reached with the union regarding overtime hours for call-in.

184 • Todd noted the Town received a letter from Dennis Fekert of the State regarding the fall water
185 testing that had some suggestions for a little bit of expanded testing from what Stone
186 Environmental said we should do. We are still waiting on the Waite-Heindel report. Paul asked if
187 the State is requesting an additional site do they pay for it? Joy said it sounds like they will.

188 Merrily addressed the informational Town Meeting, Monday night March 4, at CVU at 7:00 p.m. is also a
189 Selectboard Meeting so the Selectboard needs to adjourn the meeting.

190 Adjourn

191 Mike moved to adjourn at 9:05 p.m. Seconded by Maggie and approved with 5 es votes.

192 Respectfully submitted,

193 Valerie Spadaccini, Clerk of the Board