

1 **Selectboard**
2 **October 21, 2019**
3 **MONTHLY MEETING**

4 *All minutes are draft until approved by the Selectboard; please check future minutes for approval of these minutes.*
5 *Meetings may be videotaped; recordings are held by Green Mountain Access Television. GMATV info: PO Box 581, Hyde*
6 *Park, 05655; info@greenmountainaccess.tv or 802-851-1592*

7 **Members Present:** Susan Bartlett, Chair; David Gagnier (6:56 p.m.), Vice-Chair; Roger Barry; Roger
8 Audet and Roland Boivin

9 **Members Absent:** None

10 **Others Present:** Ron Rodjenski, Town Administrator; Town Fire Chief Ed Webster and Ryan
11 Nolan, Hyde Park Town Fire; Carol Robertson, Village General Manager; John
12 Bornemann; Tom Sheppard; Melissa Sheppard; Bob Falker; North Hyde
13 Park/Eden Fire Chief John Savage; GMATV did videotape this meeting.

14 Susan opened the meeting at 6:00 p.m.

15 1. **Welcome, Changes to the Agenda and Public Comment** – Added PO# 2019-07 & Non-Employee Contract
16 for Grange performer.

17 2. **CONTINUATION of public hearing** on road laying out and reclassifications. Motion by Roger A to open the
18 road hearing recessed on 10-17-2019. Seconded by Roland. Voting: 4 in favor, 0 against, motion passed.
19 Ron reported that two letters were received as part of the hearing testimony; one from Vermont FPR and
20 one from Sterling View Co-Op, Paul Nesky. VT FPR recommends that Class 4 roads that access ponds be
21 reclassified to public trails. The Board felt that since the TH74 length is only 225 feet, and there is not any
22 public access to the nearby pond which is over 300 feet from the end of the Class 4, that discontinuance
23 would not create any new access issue and Garfield Road is nearby for parking should access be granted
24 by the landowner. Bob Falker, Orchard Terrace, asked if the 130 feet was near the hedges and Susan
25 reported that the public road, Orchard Terrace, will end on the Andrews' parcel if the rest of the
26 unclassified road on the Flaker parcel is discontinued and town plows will no longer travel on Falker's
27 parcel. Motion by Roger A to close the road reclassification public hearing on the nine roads and move into
28 deliberations. Seconded by Roland. Voting: 4 in favor, 0 against, motion passed.

29 3. **Fire Department – Stipends for Officers and Hourly Pay Schedule** – Roger Audet suggested that the
30 officers should divide up a lump sum rather than having a fixed amount by rank. Roger A noted that the
31 loyalty to volunteer for the Town is fading but he recognized that some compensation is good, maybe a
32 lump sum of \$1,000. Roger noted that the Selectboard volunteers a lot without much compensation. Chief
33 Webster suggested that \$750 annual stipend is recommended for the Chief and then reduced by officer
34 rank, to recognize officers for additional time at the fire station and doing paperwork for required reports.
35 Susan explained that towns are moving to paid employees gradually that are supported by volunteers.
36 Roger A stated that all equipment is new and somewhere there could be a breaking point. Chief Webster
37 agreed society is headed that way toward paid firefighters. Roger A said that he sees people are having
38 trouble paying taxes. Roland suggested that the proposal could go to town meeting. Chief Savage stated
39 that his officers are against this, but they estimate a 25 hour per week job on top of their personnel
40 business, and he sees the required hours going up each year. Ryan Nolan noted that the responsibility for
41 safety on the scene are also increasing for the fire officers. Chief Savage stated he sees paid firefighters in
42 the future for many small-town fire departments. Susan asked what the best path for communities is to
43 follow with increasing costs, such as joining departments with a full-time Chief, is that realistic to start
44 working on now. Chief Webster noted Cambridge and Johnson had discussed it but did not pursue it. The
45 Board agreed to continue to discuss the topic and Chief noted he is coming to the Board for his full budget
46 presentation in December.

47 4. **NHP/Eden Fire Department** – Draft Disposition of Assets MOU, 10/03 Meeting & Vehicle Insurance. Chief
48 Savage reported that his insurance would pay the resale value not full replacement cost. Chief Savage will
49 be getting more information on insurance. The MOU did not have many changes from the October 3rd joint

1 meeting with Eden, it was mostly insurance clarification that is needed and adding space for all Selectboard
2 members to sign the MOU. Chief Savage will check in with Eden to see if they have notes from the meeting.
3 Chief Savage reported that the \$14,000 for air bottles is a best price for 16 bottles with Hyde Park's half
4 being \$7,000 for FY2020 and there is a possibly a need for \$8,000 in FY2021 for additional air park
5 equipment.

- 6 **5. Hyde Park Electric Rates** – Selectboard discussion on community impact of electric rate increase. Susan
7 explained that she has gotten calls about the electric rates and agreed to put on the agenda. Carol
8 Robertson reported that the proposed rates are going through the Public Utility Commission noting that
9 no rate increase has occurred over 9 years, and the electric department is operating very efficiently with
10 an excellent staff. Carol noted it was hard to compare rates because different providers have different rate
11 structures. Rates are based on need to meet safety requirements, low staff numbers but platinum level
12 employees like Karen and John take on the extra burden, and she predicted that the rates will move to the
13 middle of the pack as other companies are yet to increase their rates. Carol stated that she hopes the new
14 rates will remain stable, if possible, and the current rate increase is being reviewed by the PUC for 10-29
15 at 6:30 p.m. in the municipal office's meeting room. Carol was confident with current solar expenses but is
16 concerned that the State will double the Tier 2 requirements for utilities to use renewable energy which
17 could force a second major solar field for Hyde Park Electric. Susan asked about the viability of small
18 municipal companies and whether a coop is likely in the future. Carol agreed that reliability is key for small
19 municipals, like Hyde Park, and having a good staff with the right equipment could result in more efficiency
20 and continued high reliability. Carol noted that leaving VESPPA this November relieves Hyde Park electric
21 of debt risk but still allows Hyde Park to access services for a per-use fee. A letter from Tom Sheppard was
22 received noting that a high percentage of residents are retired, and the impact of electric rate increases is
23 harder. Carol stated that the increases are often mandated on the department, noting that most of Hyde
24 Park customers use 400 kW per month. Tom Sheppard confirmed that his letter was now on the record
25 which Susan confirmed it was, noting that the Board would review it. Dave Gaqnier appeared at this point.
- 26 **6. Highway Projects** – Contracting work vs. adding more “construction” to highway department. The Board
27 agreed programming general tasks would be good to look at as an option to budgeting for individual line
28 items. The change may not happen this year, but more use of “small road projects” seemed to be a good
29 option so a project cost could be more easily tracked with the town accounting system. Ron will review
30 with Finance Director Alyson Cusson.
- 31 **7. Highway Winter Plow Operators** – Ron noted three individuals are on the list for on-call consideration.
32 Dave noted that the seasonal on-call people should be working to plow snow and not working in the garage
33 just to get to 40 hours or more. The Board discussed when to release the 5th person during a work week
34 and the need to manage the budget for the 5th person. The Board discussed having a 5th person year-round
35 and Dave noted that the additional hours for the budget would come from existing labor hours for roadside
36 mowing that still needed to be done, so no gain in work hours unless a large increase in the budget to
37 retain the seasonal road mowing labor as is. Ron will prepare a cost estimate for having a 5th highway crew
38 member year-round for the November board meeting, with and without using existing labor funds. Motion
39 by Dave to approve \$17.00/hr for the three winter on-call labor rates. Seconded by Roger A. Voting: 5 in
40 favor, 0 against, motion passed.
- 41 **8. Personnel Policy** – The Board will discuss amendments at a future work meeting.
- 42 **9. Town Listers** – Motion by Dave to accept the 2019 Grandlist Errors and Omissions Certificate for the
43 Whitmore parcel. Seconded by Roland. Voting: 5 in favor, 0 against, motion passed.
- 44 **10. Review minutes** – Motion by Roland to approve the 9/16/2019 minutes, as written. Seconded by Roger A.
45 Voting: 5 in favor, 0 against, motion passed.
- 46 **11. Review Town Orders** – Motion by Roger A to approve the town orders. Seconded by Dave. Voting: 5 in
47 favor, 0 against, motion passed.
- 48

1 **12. Other Business & Notices**

- 2 a) Purchase Order #2019-07 – Motion by Roland to approve the town server replacement for
3 \$9,000 with funding from three budget line items. Seconded by Dave. Discussion: Ron noted
4 that a purchase order is required as this is an unplanned expense. Voting: 5 in favor, 0 against,
5 motion passed.
- 6 b) Non-Employee Work Contract – Abby Sherman. Motion by Roland to approve the non-
7 employee work contract which is related to Abby Sherman not maintaining workers’
8 compensation insurance. Seconded by Roland. Voting: 5 in favor, 0 against, motion passed.
- 9 c) Dubois-King to extend the work contract under the Better Connections project to November
10 22, 2019. Motion by Roland to approve the second amendment to the Dubois-King contract
11 by extending the completion date to 11/22/2019. Seconded by Roger A. Voting: 5 in favor, 0
12 against, motion passed.
- 13 d) Executive Session: Motion by Roger A. to move into executive discussion to discuss town
14 personal matters under 1 VSA 313, a. Seconded by Roland. Voting: 5 in favor, 0 against,
15 motion passed.

- 16 **13. Adjourn** – Motion by Dave to adjourn at 8:30 p.m. Seconded by Roland. Voting: 5 in favor, 0 against, motion
17 passed.