

# Selectboard

## November 16, 2020

### Virtual Meeting

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

**Members Present:** None  
**Members Virtual:** Susan Bartlett, Chair; Roland Boivin; Dave Gagnier; Roger Audet; Brian Shackett  
**Members Absent:** None  
**Virtual Attendees:** Town Finance Director Alyson Cusson; Peggy Marcoux; Jim Noyes; Sigh Searles; Dale Porter; Town Fire Chief Ed Webster; Asst Chief Brad Carriere; Madeline Motta; Andres Torizzo; Tony Stout; Liz Courtney; one "Taxpayer"; Jerry Smith; Scott Griswold; 3 unknown callers; John Hoadley; Town Administrator Ron Rodjenski; Michael at GMATV

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Susan opened the meeting at 6:01 p.m.

- 1) **Welcome & changes to agenda (no changes)**
  - 2) **NEMS Ambulance Service** – Scott Griswold presented the FY2022 budget request for ambulance services increasing 3% with many of the current COVID-19 costs being covered with grants, thus no negative impact on costs for future budget requests are anticipated. The Board thanked Scott for his presentation.
  - 3) **Lanpher Memorial Library FY2022** – Jim Noyes presented the proposed library budget which had no increases except for salaries (\$2,000) and the new water charge of \$3,000. The increase over FY2021 is about 5%. Susan expressed appreciation for the Trustees holding the line as best they could while continuing to provide an excellent facility and valuable service to Hyde Park.
  - 4) **Town Fire Department FY2022** – Chief Ed Webster presented the fire department budget which increased about 2% before adding in the new water charge of about \$20,000, resulting in a 26% increase over FY2021. Discussion of drilling a well and appreciation for excellent service to the Town and holding expenses down as best they could.
  - 5) **Highway Department FY2022 and Projects** – Brian reported on the site visit to Beam Road on October 24<sup>th</sup> with some of the neighbors at the end of Beam Road. The group observed a block culvert, ditching needed to the plow turnaround, possible use of an existing catch basin for road drainage, and a goal to Spring 2021 to complete the road work. A road survey would be needed to formally extend the Class 3 from the top of the hill near the Clark residence driveway to a plow turnaround area. This section of road serves 5 homes. Ron will check into what maintenance can be done before it snows and if a land surveyor is able to begin the survey work. John Hoadley asked if the Selectboard could help him with a driveway grade issue at Gingras Road and Susan said someone would check into it and help him resolve the issue.
  - 6) **Net Zero Presentation** – Andres Torizzo and Tony Stout presented concept plans for Main Street and Church St stormwater improvements. The planning work is funded by a \$50,000 grant through the Lake Champlain Basin Program. Public comments included removal of the perpendicular parking on Church St at the library in favor of parallel parking and Andres stated the next step is more detailed calculation on the sizing of subsurface basins. Tony pointed out that pedestrian crossings with planted curbs areas will reduce speed in the village increasing pedestrian safety. Streetscape improvements for pedestrians were based on the recent Better Connections project, Summit Engineering drawings for a 4-way stop at Eden Street, stormwater and intersection improvements at West Main St under the Municipal Mitigation state grant (or Sink Hole Project) and preliminary plans for reconstruction of Prospect St. A green strip on the south side of Main St between the curb and sidewalk is proposed. The next step is continuing to update the concept plans to the project objective of 30% design completion which can be used for future grant application for final design and construction. Ron noted that these are long term project ideas for the Village Center and would take 5 or 10 years to see all the elements move to construction. Watershed will bring back revised plans when they are closer to

1       30% complete. Ron noted that future investment in the Village Center will be supported by these  
2 stormwater systems because they are being designed to accept new flows from both private and  
3 public properties, which should help with the state permit process. Susan agreed that it was a long  
4 term plan and more work is needed on funding to take help facilitate new projects like the MSI/former  
5 furniture store project or redevelopment of the gas station for public parking/public park area.

- 6      7) **Village 1111 Permits** – Ron reported that there has been recent work by the Village in highway right-  
7 of-ways without the prior approval under the 1111 town permit. The Town has written letters to the  
8 Board of Trustees in 2018 and 2019 reminding them of the permit review process and it appears time  
9 for a 2020 letter. Ron reported that the town attorney sees three options at this point; 1) send the  
10 2020 letter with a town attorney cost to of under \$500, 2) send the letter with a draft complaint which  
11 would not be filed with Superior Court at town attorney cost of about \$1,000, and 3) to file the  
12 Complaint without a reminder letter which would require Court time and cost in the range of \$5,000  
13 or more. The Board advised moving forward with option 2, a letter and draft Complaint to hopefully  
14 bring about compliance. Motion by Roland to ask the town attorney to send a 2020 1111 compliance  
15 letter with a draft Complaint. Seconded by Brian. Voting: 5 in favor, 0 against, motion passed.

- 16     8) **Gihon Valley Hall Committee** – Liz Courtney and Dale Porter presented a proposed FY2022 budget  
17 for continued repairs and Wi-Fi service at the hall of \$5,000. The Board agreed to present the \$1,500  
18 budget increase as an article and the committee will review their needs and plans for the property.  
19 Liz reported on a new grant opportunity with the Preservation Trust of Vermont's (PTV) Bruhn Grant  
20 which requires partnering with the National Parks Service and agreeing to a 15-yr historic  
21 preservation easement on the building. Liz will continue to research pros and cons on accepting an  
22 award and the Committee will move forward with the application. The typical grant awards are in the  
23 \$50,000 to \$100,000 range with no local match required. Brian asked for a long-term improvement  
24 plan and Liz stated that a recent grant was PTV awarded for that purpose. Liz stated that the  
25 committee has looked at pros and cons to accepting the grant and feels it is a good opportunity to  
26 move the project forward. Dave suggested meeting with other groups that have accepted the grant  
27 to see what they saw as pros and cons before Hyde Park accepts an award. Liz noted that GVH is  
28 planning a virtual wreath lighting ceremony on December 5<sup>th</sup> for Hyde Park.

- 29     9) **Service Agency Requests** – Susan noted that with restrictions in place to limit person-to-person  
30 contacts, the Town should consider waiving the petition requirement for new service agency funding.  
31 Dave agreed it was a good idea for this year. Ron noted that a waiver is coupled with the Selectboard  
32 agreeing to add the article to Town Meeting Day's warning which will be done in late January. Motion  
33 by Dave to waive the policy requirement for a petition for this coming Town Meeting. Seconded by  
34 Roger. Voting: 5 in favor, 0 against, motion passed. Ron noted that the agency seeking funds will still  
35 provide a letter with the agency services to Hyde Park and the amount being requested.

- 36     10) **Village Water Charge Increase** – Susan reported on the Village Trustees meeting last Wednesday  
37 where the County and towns heard from the Trustees on the new rate charges. Susan stated that the  
38 attorney, Dan Richardson, is working with the County and he explained to the Trustees that they need  
39 to treat everyone the same when setting rates and they cannot develop classes of users to assess  
40 charges. Susan stated that the County has asked the Village Trustees to reconsider the rates to be  
41 more equitable as it appears the charges were not finalized until just before the new billing went out.  
42 Susan suggested that having one attorney represent the County, school and other interested parties  
43 would be more efficient than each hiring their own attorney. Brian asked what the attorney will do.  
44 Side Judge Madeline Motta stated that the County is meeting with their attorney on Nov. 18 with the  
45 attorney to look at options, which might include drilling a well. Motta stated that the new Village  
46 charges are \$42,000/year compared to \$28/mo. per building prior to the newest billing. Madeline  
47 noted that the County will continue to pay the new rates under protest. Discussion on whether the  
48 Village could sue a customer for non-payment of water charges after the customer had approved the  
49 water bond. Susan asked that the side judges keep the town informed and let us know if the users  
50 should pay the charge or pay under protest. Madeline stated that they will be asking for documents  
51 to shed some light on how the charges were developed and Susan stated it was an expensive project  
52 that they needed to find out how to pay for. Madeline stated she will clarify the issue of standing for

1 the parties impacted by the charges and communicate the information back to others after this  
2 Wednesday's meeting.

3 11) **Virtual Town Meeting 2021** – Susan suggested that it is a good time to start thinking about how to  
4 best hold Town Meeting during the COVID-19 emergency which appears to be getting worse and not  
5 better, and likely would not improve much before the Town Meeting warning needs to be prepared in  
6 late January. Kim noted that voting is usually done in small room at the high school so that would  
7 need be reviewed to ensure proper protocols without creating long lines. Brian was concerned about  
8 ventilation at the high school if a hybrid meeting is held instead of 100% virtual. Susan noted that  
9 towns and VLCT are coming up with options so there is a little time to look at options before deciding.

10 12) **Town Office Closure** – Susan suggested that with the short Thanksgiving week next week and staff  
11 needing a break from COVID, she is seeking the Selectboard's support for the closure, noting that  
12 the Town Clerk makes the final decision on her office hours. Kim has decided to close the office for  
13 Christmas week and Susan advised that leave benefits needed to be discussed with Ron. The Board  
14 expressed support for the two holiday week closures.

15 13) **Bi-Weekly Payroll** – Susan reported that she has heard from employees that would like more time  
16 to prepare for the change. Ron explained that the proposed transition month over January could be  
17 extended for employees needing more time. Kim stated that she is supportive of bi-weekly but would  
18 like six months to prepare, suggesting a firm date of January 1, 2022 with lots of notice and no  
19 transition period is better than January 1, 2021 with a 6 month transition period. Ron stated that he  
20 and Alyson could make the transition work for employees and the challenge of that was not a direct  
21 concern for Kim. Kim stated she was concerned about pay changes as the town treasurer. Brian  
22 suggested more discussion outside of the meeting. Motion by Dave to table the bi-weekly change.  
23 Seconded by Roland. Voting: 5 in favor, 0 against, motion passed.

24 14) **Annual Employee Appreciation Awards** – Motion by Dave to maintain the past award levels issued  
25 in December of \$140.00 for full-time employees and \$40.00 for part-time employees. Seconded by  
26 Roger. Voting: 5 in favor, 0 against, motion passed.

27 15) **Town Orders** – Alli reviewed the town orders which were delivered via email this afternoon, noting  
28 that \$150.00 is proposed to come from the fire equipment reserve fund. Chief Webster noted that  
29 additional invoices are coming soon, also proposed to be paid from reserves, totaling over \$900.  
30 Motion by Roger to approve the use of fire equipment reserve fund, up to \$1,000, for air bottles for  
31 air packs. Seconded by Brian. So Voted. Motion by Roger to approve the town orders. Seconded  
32 by Brian. Voting: 5 in favor, 0 against, motion passed.

33 16) **Minutes** – Motion by Brian to approve the 10/19/2020, 10/20/2020 and 11/09/2020 minutes as  
34 written, seconded by Roger. Voting: 5 in favor, 0 against, motion passed.

35 17) **Tax Sale 2020** – Kim reported that delinquency account is low right now and the process for holding  
36 a tax sale requires a DTC attorney but the normal schedule is already behind and she needs to know  
37 if the town is changing tax sale attorneys. Ron reported that Angela Ross has prepared the Michael  
38 Bartlett deed so a closing can be scheduled to return that property to him. Susan asked that the DTC  
39 attorney decision be added to the Selectboard's December monthly meeting. Motion by Roger to  
40 forego a 2020 Tax Sale and any tax sale agreements would need to be reviewed by the DTC attorney  
41 after that decision is made. Seconded by Roland. Voting: 5 in favor, 0 against, motion passed.

42 18) **Union Negotiations** – The Board heard from the Union and there are no changes to the draft  
43 Collective Bargaining Agreement, so it is now ready to be voted on by the Board. Motion by Brian to  
44 approve the 2020-2021 CBA which includes a \$900 per operator winter season bonus. Seconded by  
45 Roger. Voting: 5 in favor, 0 against, motion passed.

46 19) **Adjourn** – Motion by Roland to adjourn at 6:57 p.m. Seconded by Brian. So, voted.