

Selectboard

December 21, 2020
Virtual Monthly 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 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: Ron Rodjenski, Town Administrator; Sue Trainor, Mary Walz, Alli Cusson – Town Finance Director, Town Clerk Kim Moulton, Elisabeth Fenn, Ryan Nolan, Road Foreman Mark French, Seth Jensen from LCPC, GMATV recorded this meeting for YouTube – search “Hyde Park Selectboard”.

Susan opened the meeting at 6:02 p.m.

- 1) **Welcome** & changes to agenda (no change)
- 2) **Public Comment – Sue Trainor** stated that the new water charges being assessed by Hyde Park Village Water Department were done professionally and were not done as a snap decision. She supports the Trustees in the new rate charges and would like to see the small-town feud end for the best interests of Hyde Park. **Ryan Nolan** asked why one of the Selectboard members was going to “get back” at the highway crew. Susan suggested sitting down as a group to discuss the situation. Roger stated a grievance would need to go through the union process.
- 3) **Water charges** – Discussion on new water rates and how few people understood new rates before the vote and through today. Brian stated that merging the town and village and making one entity would solve the problem. Dave objected to merging due to new debt being acquired by the Village of Hyde Park. Susan explained that working with the County is in the best interests of all HP taxpayers to ensure that not all of the new debt costs come back to Hyde Park to pay. Elisabeth Fenn is hopeful there is a resolution and that everyone can work together. Sue Trainor hoped that all issues could be resolved. Mark French asked why town taxpayers did not vote since they are being asked to pay for the new debt. Susan said no information was provided on the new rate classes before the vote. Brian noted that it all comes down to the bond vote which was not approved by all town taxpayers even though they were going to pay majority of the costs with the county taxpayers. Susan Bartlett will come back to the Board with updates on water charge discussions with the County officials.
- 4) **Village Water Project** - Ron reviewed the proposal to amend the project’s 1111 permit to adjust the formula for the cost share on paving. The new formula would require the water project to pay 92% of the Fitch Hill Road base and overlay paving cost compared sharing costs on all roads disturbed by the water work.
- 5) **Winter Plowing** – Road Foreman Mark French is proposing that Jim Paradee be hired for on-call plowing help this winter, considering the one current vacancy and the risk of COVID vacancies. Mark is also contacting local contractors to see if they would be willing to be called for plowing support during winter storm events, noting that some truck repair shops may lose technicians to COVID delaying town plow truck repairs. Motion by Dave to approve the hiring of Jim Paradee as on-call plow operator at \$18.00/hour. Seconded by Roger. Voting: 5 in favor, 0 against, motion passed.
- 6) **Beam Road** – Ron reviewed a cost estimate from Matt Reed for a road survey work which would first produce a site map of existing features so the Selectboard can discuss options with the neighbors for a new turnaround at the end of the existing Class 3 town highway. Jerry Smith commented that the town plow turnaround might be better located closer to the Heckler home and to create more space to the Heckler house, it might be possible to shift the road to the east by 20-feet. Jerry asked about related costs such as moving electrical boxes if those are too close to the plow zone. Ron confirmed that a right-of-way for the extension of the Class 3 would not create a zoning density concern because acreage under ROW’s still counts toward minimum density requirements for the zoning district, noting a fee simple transfer of a strip of land could create a non-conformity with the loss of acreage to Town

1 ownership. Mark French noted that the minimum travel lane width for a Class 3 is 18-feet so that is
2 something to consider when laying out the new road right-of-way, including the impact on existing
3 trees and vegetation. Ron noted that this is a similar process to Crabapple Lane where a surveyor
4 started with preliminary work to help determine options for laying out the public highway. The Board
5 agreed to keep moving forward. Jerry asked that the Town continue to keep the neighbors informed.
6 Motion by Brian to approve the road survey work with Matt Reed for up to \$4,000. Seconded by
7 Roger. Voting: 5 in favor, 0 against, motion passed.

8 7) **Seth Jensen, LCPC Reports** – Seth presented a summary of the findings from the **MPG19**
9 Community Rating System final report which highlighted minimal cost savings to about 20 Hyde Park
10 flood insurance rate payers but with increased priority for the awarding of grants under some
11 programs. The administrative cost to complete the CRS tasks are a significant offset to very minor
12 potential premium savings. The report is available on the town planning commission web page. Seth
13 reported on the progress for studying the impacts of VT100 traffic on North Hyde Park Village Center.
14 The **MPG20 Main Street Study** will identify immediate needs for pedestrian safety that don't require
15 major capital outlays. Seth noted that VTrans has recognized the need to provide avenues for towns
16 to explore low-cost options for improving pedestrian safety and supporting revitalization of Village
17 Centers, and this final report will identify those opportunities for North Hyde Park. Seth will come back
18 to the Selectboard to present preliminary findings and seek additional public comment. Seth
19 summarized a FEMA grant program that funds preliminary site assessments for infrastructure
20 improvements – BRIC or **Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities**. Two possible sites
21 are being proposed for Selectboard approval to move forward under BRIC: the Whitcomb Island
22 Bridge and the Green River culvert under Garfield Road. Seth stated that the application is due in
23 January as it requires a local commitment document for the town share of 25%. The study will produce
24 historic sites information, benefit/cost analysis, and other reports needed to move a project to “shovel-
25 ready” status if other grant funds become available in the future. Both potential sites are undersized
26 and have a history of flood and erosion damage. Whitcomb Island’s preliminary study is estimated at
27 \$50,000 with a \$12,500 match and Garfield Road is estimated at \$40,000 with a \$10,000 match, both
28 match amounts would come from highway and stormwater reserves funds and the annual operating
29 budget. Dave asked about LCPC fees paid by the Town and Ron reported \$1,829 per year in fees
30 and additional payments are made for planning and technical assistance if grant funds are not
31 available. Motion by Brian to approve the two commitment letters for 25% of project costs. Seconded
32 by Roger. Voting: 5 in favor, 0 against, motion passed.

33 8) **Town Meeting Day 2021** – The Board discussed March town meeting, noting that area towns appear
34 headed to using Australian ballot instead of floor votes or virtual town meeting. Roger asked if the
35 high school was larger enough to provide spacing required under COVID guidance. Brian agreed that
36 AB was a good option if public meetings were held prior to voting. Dave asked if the public access
37 channel could livestream the meetings and Ron stated that they could provide that service and the
38 Annual Town Report would be available online 10 days prior to Town Meeting Day. Kim
39 recommended not changing the day from the first Tuesday, as this has other impacts on other
40 deadlines, noting that towns in the same school district work together on voting schedules. The Board
41 agreed that no change to the date would occur and Australian ballot would be used with no meeting
42 on Town Meeting Day, but one or more prior budget meetings would be done virtually.

43 9) **Village Water Charges** – Susan stated that the Town is not joining a lawsuit with the County but
44 working with the County to better understand the new rate structure and what options there are to
45 make the sharing of new debt more equitable across all users. Susan is participating so that the Town
46 is aware of any movement toward changing the rate structure in a way that Hyde Park taxpayers pay
47 most of the new debt. All Hyde Park taxpayers pay some of the new debt through water assessments
48 on the town fire and library buildings and the County, State and School properties. Susan noted that
49 there are no town plans to start drilling wells or disconnecting from the village water and sewer
50 services. Sue Trainor stated that water line maintenance and repair was not done over many years
51 and now it is time to work together to make the improvements and everyone needs to pay something
52 to get it done. Susan stated that the Village discussions prior to the bond vote and new rate chargers
53 being released used 10% to 12% cost increases which is well below the rate increased being charged
54 to town and county facilities. Elisabeth Fenn asked if there were any other options to the new rate
55 structure and Susan responded that it what is being looked into now with the County. Susan B. stated

- 1 that the village water system only serves village residents and businesses, not the Town outside of
2 the Village. Susan B. will report back to the Board as the research continues with the County.
- 3 10) **LHMP** – Ron reported that the State’s FEMA officer has reviewed and approved the 2020-2025 Hyde
4 Park Hazard Mitigation Plan after review and minor edits by the planning commission. Motion by Brian
5 to approve the resolution adopting the 2020-2025 LHMP. Seconded by Roger. Voting: 5 in favor, 0
6 against, motion passed.
- 7 11) **Delinquent Tax Collector** – The Board and Kim discussed the Bartlett matter and changing the
8 delinquent tax attorney. Roger suggested that Kim talk to both the current Delinquent Tax Attorney
9 Angela Ross and the Town Attorney David Rugh and make a recommendation back to the
10 Selectboard as to who she feels will serve her best in her role as Delinquent Tax Collector. Kim will
11 meet with both and come back to the Board with one recommendation.
- 12 12) **Bi-Weekly Payroll** – Susan said employees were good with a one-year delay. Ron advised that
13 reminders would go out in mid-2021 to help employees best prepare for the change. Motion by Dave
14 to move to bi-weekly in January 2022. Seconded by Brian. Voting: 5 in favor, 0 against, motion
15 passed.
- 16 13) **Listers Errors and Omissions** – The listers presented Grandlist amendments, each related to
17 Current Use Program changes so there is no impact on tax revenues as revenue amounts previously
18 paid by the State will now be paid by landowners. Motion by Brian to approve the E&O Report
19 adjusting Grandlist information for four parcels. Seconded by Roland. Voting: 5 in favor, 0 against,
20 motion passed.
- 21 14) **Personnel** – Motion by Brian to move into executive session to discuss personnel matters with
22 Mark French and Ron Rodjenski. Seconded by Dave. Voting: 5 in favor, 0 against, motion passed.
- 23 15) **FY2022** – Municipal Budget – meeting night to discuss budget only set for Dec 28th at 6:00 pm
- 24 16) **Town Orders** – Motion by Roland to approve the town orders. Seconded by Roger. Voting: 5 in
25 favor, 0 against, motion passed.
- 26 17) **Minutes** – Motion by Roger to approve the 11/09/2020 and 11/16/2020 minutes as written.
27 Seconded by Brian. Voting: 5 in favor, 0 against, motion passed.
- 28 18) **Adjourn** – Motion by Roger to adjourn. Seconded by Brian. So, voted.9:04 pm