

Selectboard
January 18, 2021
Remote Monthly Meeting Minutes

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 and posted on YouTube; GMATV info: PO Box 581, Hyde Park info@greenmountainaccess.tv or 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; Mary Walz, Matt Reed, Alison Link, Theresa Snow, Road Foreman Mark French, GMATV recording this meeting.

Susan opened the meeting at 6:00 p.m. Welcome & changes to agenda (no changes)

1. **Alison Link – Healthy Lamoille Valley** – Alison stated that the community planning toolkit was prepared for Lamoille Valley and Hyde Park is one of a few towns currently moving forward with planning & policies to reduce tobacco use and increase substance use prevention. Alison explained that towns have their own priorities & a healthy community leads to economic vitality. Towns can use the Toolkit to help implement measures based on the community's need. The work ahead could include town plan amendments and policies to build on past town actions, i.e., the 2019 Hyde Park Healthy Community Policy (posted at www.hydeparkvt.com) & the 3-4-50 initiative partner commitment. The Toolkit can be found at <https://Healthylamoillevalley.org/community-policy-toolkit/> and copies are available at the Town Office (paper copies available by contacting Alison). Local municipal action items could be, but are not limited to, the forming a healthy community committee, installing signage on trails, establishing a committee on substance prevention and recovery, discussing local policy options regarding cannabis sales, including municipal regulations if the community votes to opt-in to local retail sales, neutral substance advertising in public spaces, and buffers zones to parks and schools for certain businesses. Susan mentioned the movement toward an expanded town recreation committee, with soccer and basketball, and some of these ideas can be shared with town committees and coaches. Alison noted that coaches can fill a critical support role for youth. Matt Reed asked if the expansion of cell coverage has a negative impact as drug dealers are more able to connect with residents. Alison stated she was unaware of the data related to Matt's comment but would look into it. Alison advised that increased access and availability to substances, especially for youth, does have detrimental impacts on the community so having substance prevention is key to reduce a community experiencing negative outcomes. Matt Reed suggested having speakers come to the schools to relay their personal hardships with opioid and other drug use. Alison offered support in any way and Brian thanked Alison for sending the attorney letter on Act 164 (new cannabis law) to the Governor. Alison recommended that the community obtain more information on Act 164 and she will keep sending resources.
 2. **Theresa Snow – Salvation Farms** – <https://www.salvationfarms.org/> - New service agency funding request seeking \$750.00. Theresa stated that the organization's Lamoille Valley Gleaning program serves the county, and they make use of gleaning to provide county grown surplus produce to other non-profits totaling roughly 70,000 pounds in 2020. Salvation Farms supports the "Bounty Share" program with local partner health services to provide those in need with boxes of produce. Lamoille Valley Gleaning serves upwards of 4,000 people annually through its non-profit partners (food shelves, senior meal programs, etc.), at no cost to beneficiaries. Salvation Farms Lamoille Valley Gleaning program operates with just over \$100,000 in annual costs, the organization has five employees and a total organizational operating budget of \$550,000. Dave asked if the operation takes revenue away from farmers. Theresa explained that studies have shown no adverse impact on famers with program beneficiaries finding out by using the program that they like fresh locally grown food and then begin buying it themselves from farmers. Susan explained that the food goes to those in need and many do not have resources for or access to fresh food. Gleaning is the process of harvesting surplus, quality food that is not sold at stores or Farmers' Markets or retail markets and providing to those in need. This produce is often uneconomical for farmers to harvest or is harvested but not meeting market specifications (e.g., too big or small). Brian stated that Salvation Farms works with non-profits so not competing with retail sales. Theresa thanked the Board for their time.

3. Town Highway Update

- **Hiring of Equipment Operator - Grader.** Wells, Atherton, and Wood were interviewed, and skills were a priority in the selection process. Motion by Brian to move into executive session to discuss the three candidates with Mark French. Seconded by Roger. Voting: 5 in favor, 0 against, motion passed. The Board came out of executive session. Motion by Roland to offer the Equipment Operator position to the preferred candidate at \$20.75/hr. with a six-month probation period and Brian authorized to sign the letter of hire after town attorney's review. Seconded by Brian Voting: 5 in favor, 0 against, motion passed.
 - **Operations Update** – Mark stated that this winter was not too bad until the last storm this past weekend which put a big dent in salt and fuel supplies with heavy wet snow. David felt it was still early in the year so we should expect more dents. Mark noted the crew is doing OK with vacancy and everyone is making it work.
 - **Plowing Emergency Roster** - Mark reported that Brock Carriere is available for winter plowing services at \$50/hour with his own equipment and Dave asked to make sure his contractor insurance met the town's policy minimum. A public advertisement will be taken out to verify who could help in worst case scenarios with multiple town crew members being out due to COVID or multiple truck failures at one time, and after finding out that neighboring towns were not able to help Hyde Park,
 - **Annual Mileage Certificate** for 2020 – due Feb 10th – Ron will prepare a “no changes” annual report to the State and provide to Selectboard if they need to sign it.
 - **Bridge and Culvert Inventory** – Agreement for Services \$10,800 from town reserves. Ron explained that the update of the inventory will help the town comply with MRGP reporting requirements and allow the town crew to collect digital field data while at the work site, versus the current paper system. Motion by Brian to approve the LCPC agreement for \$10,800. Seconded by Roger. Voting: 5 in favor, 0 against, motion passed.

4. **Change to Town Assessor** from current elected Board of Listers. A draft article for Town Meeting was prepared for this discussion. Matt Reed, an elected town lister, stated that we are not likely to get two new listers elected this year to fill the 3-person board, but noted that Julie Rohleider could work with the Town in the transition to a Town Assessor. Susan stated that two years ago we were in the same position with two listers and Julie potentially moving. Ron stated that it is likely only one member will be on the 3-person Board of Listers after town meeting, which would require the Selectboard to hire a professional trained assessor due to lack of quorum. Matt recommended that Julie could do the work as town assessor. Matt noted Johnson has moved to a town assessor and Ron noted that Westford is considering same along with other towns due to the complexity of the position and need for on-going training. Roger asked about the 8 hours in the town office staff budget and Ron noted he thought it was in the 3-5 hours per week range in the budget, and all agreed to confirm the amount as the hours could be used for lister duties when needed. Matt stated that training for new listers is difficult with only online courses and one to two days of full-day training with the State. Matt estimated that a good training program would take 4 hours per week for six months to see all steps of the assessment process. Matt stated that the State updates or changes the software program regularly and listers need to constantly work with the software to stay current. Matt noted that Julie has a lot of institutional knowledge which will be hard to replace. Dave felt that waiting to see if two new listers come forward would be good. The Board agreed to not add the article to this year's Warning but see what happens at Town Meeting.

5. **Increase to zoning fees** effective July 1, 2021 – Ron reviewed the proposed rates which have not been updated for several years and reflect the amount of work required to review applications while not being excessive. Motion by David to approve the proposed permit fees for zoning and highway access permit application and for the new fees to become effective on July 1, 2021. Seconded by Brian. So voted. See approved fees attached to these minutes.

- 1 6. **FY2022 Final Documents** – Susan stated that she will work with Ron to share information with voters
2 in various ways due to no floor discussion in 2020. Front Porch Forum, town website and maybe a
3 radio chat with Roland Lajoie will help, along with a News and Citizen ad/article. The Annual Warning
4 is being reviewed by the town attorney and will be available soon for the Selectboard to approve. The
5 budget is final from the Jan 11th work meeting, and the Board was waiting for recreation information
6 and final review. Ron will let the Board know when the final set of documents, including the
7 Selectboard annual report are ready to be approved and sent to the printer.
- 8 7. **Tech Group** – Ron noted that current contracts ended 12/31/2020 so an extension is required to
9 June 30 when an expanded service agreement begins, should the roughly \$4,000/yr. in new IT
10 funding be approved at Town Meeting. Motion by Roger to approve the extension of Tech Group's
11 internet and software security agreements through 06/30/2021. Seconded by Brian. Voting: 5 in favor,
12 0 against, motion passed.
- 13 8. **Town Orders** – Motion by Brian to approve the town orders. Seconded by Roland. Voting: 5 in favor,
14 0 against, motion passed. Susan asked that future town orders be available by the Friday before the
15 monthly meeting.
- 16 9. **Review of Minutes** – Motion by David to approve the 12/21/2020, 12/28/2020 and 01/11/2021
17 minutes, as written. Seconded by Roger. Voting: 5 in favor, 0 against, motion passed
- 18 10. **Other business** – Update on Village Water & Sewer Charges – Susan reported that she talked with
19 County Side Judge Joel Page and a contract for a person or firm familiar with water rates and charges
20 should be developed this week. Dave asked who should be mentioned in the town report inside cover
21 and Ron suggested Melvin Harvey for his long-time service on the Development Review Board. The
22 Board agreed and Dave will contact Ken Harvey for information.
- 23 11. **Adjourn** – Motion by Roger to adjourn, seconded by Dave. So voted at 8:17 PM