

Selectboard
April 19, 2021
Virtual Meeting Minutes

All minutes are draft until approved by the Selectboard; please check future minutes for approval of these minutes. Meetings may be videotaped and posted on YouTube; GMATV info: PO Box 581, Hyde Park info@greenmountainaccess.tv or 851-1592

Members Virtual: Susan Bartlett, Chair; Dave Gagnier; Chasity Fagnant, Roland Boivin; Brian Shackett

Members Absent: None

Virtual Attendees: Ron Rodjenski, Town Administrator; Liz Courtney; Denise Greene; Linda Patterson, Lawn Alternatives; Chief Brad Carriere; Meg Taylor; Town Clerk Kim Moulton; Elisa Clancy; Danielle Owczarski, Lamoille Watershed Planner; Dan Gottsegen; Amy Olsen, Melissa Jordan; Brent Lanpher; Roger Audet; Unidentified "rohlederj"; GMATV did record this meeting.

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

1. **Welcome**, changes to agenda and public comment – Dan Gottsegen introduced himself as the selected artist for the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail trailhead project. The work is to design an art installation by this coming summer for future installation. Dan’s prior work includes a 2007 project at Healthy Living and a 2021 State Public Safety Forensic Lab project, both using transparent artwork between glass panels. The concept being considered is a curved and linear train track design to be fully developed from meetings with the elementary school, library, and broader community. Dan noted that the Town will be responsible for fundraising for installation and Susan noted that the initial funding goal is \$40,000. Dan’s design work is being funded by a \$5,000 grant from the Vermont Arts Council.
2. **Minutes**– Motion by Brian to approve the 03/15/2021 and 04/05/2021 minutes, as written. Seconded by Roland. Voting: 5 in favor, 0 against, motion passed.
3. **Fire Department Bylaws** – Ron stated that recent town attorney edits need additional review by the fire department before approving. Ron spoke to Chief Carriere about deferring action until the May 3rd special Selectboard meeting. In response to a question at the prior board meeting, Susan stated that the town attorney has advised that non-resident members may vote on fire department matters. Roland advised that the Selectboard should be responsible for hearing appeals from the fire chief’s decisions and Ron confirmed that process is in the draft bylaws.
4. **Annual Update of Local Emergency Management Plan (LEMP)** – Ron reviewed the annual process to update town emergency contact information after Town Meeting Day elections and appointment and then submit to the State by May 1st. Motion by Brian to appoint Roland as EMD and adopt the 2021 LEMP, seconded by Chasity. Voting: 5 in favor, 0 against, motion passed.
5. **“Lawn Alternatives”** discussion with Hyde Park Energy Committee (Elisa Clancy, Denise Greene, and Meg Taylor) on three programs they are working on with other municipalities and regional agencies: “Raise the Blade”, “Lawns to Meadows” (pollinators) and “Mow Electric”. Mow Electric is starting in Charlotte as a consumer awareness campaign with rebates for new equipment purchases. Denise noted that public outreach will be done through newspaper and Front Porch Forum. Linda Patterson is from the Lake Champlain Sea Grant Program working on the goal of reducing stormwater runoff via programs like “Raise the Blade”. Linda noted that having towns onboard is appreciated and combining with local business support increases community support. Meg asked for Selectboard support for these programs in Hyde Park. Roland asked about grass filling in new roadside ditches, which he felt was better for water quality, but the State is asking towns to install rock ditches along roads. Linda will check on grass growing in stone-lined road and report back. Ron suggested Jim Ryan at ANR is the best contact on roadside ditch maintenance. Denise stated that with less runoff and cleaner water from programs like Raise the Blade, the impact on roadside ditches is less. The Committee would like Selectboard approval to move forward with this three-pronged approach and an OK for committee members to speak with town maintenance crews to get to the 3” cut goal in “Raise the Blade” campaign, including encouraging the move to electric equipment. The Board stated it was Ok to talk to town maintenance crews and share information. Brian Shackett stated that he manages the lawn maintenance crew for the Vt Department of

1 Corrections and the practice for blade height is that each spring, early grass cutting blade height is
2 2" so you can stay ahead of the growth and as warmer weather comes, you raise the blade to 3" for
3 the remainder of the year. Brian felt that the 2" in high growth springtime works to control runoff.
4 Brian noted that a battery's electric charge is up to 7 hours, but field work is sometimes 14 hours
5 long, noting that he would like VT DOC to investigate the switch over from gas mowers. Brian noted
6 that battery drawdown is higher on hills and wet lawns, shortening the 7-hour life over usage in a
7 controlled environment. Linda Patterson stated that 3" is recommended and the program is open to
8 flexible practices as towns work toward the 3" goal. Dave asked if the campaign was about education
9 only, and not telling taxpayers they can't mow less than 3" and Linda confirmed that it is an
10 educational approach. Dave expressed skepticism that the programs will help improve water quality,
11 but the Board appreciated the group's efforts in bringing options to the public. Motion by Brian to
12 approve the three programs being pursued by the Hyde Park Energy Committee. Seconded by
13 Roland. Voting: 5 in favor, 0 against, motion passed.

14 6. **Sterling View Mobile Home Park Loan** – The park transferred from Ken and Martha Harvey to the
15 new Sterling View Cooperative Community, Inc. in early April resulting in a loan payoff to the Town
16 of Hyde Park of approximately \$42,000 plus \$8,000 in annual monthly payments, totaling \$50,000.
17 Susan suggested taking some time to figure out how this funding, when added to with the
18 forthcoming American Rescue Plan funds, can best be utilized. Town departments have COVID
19 related projects to be considered, like ventilation improvements at the town office and town garage.
20 Susan suggested economic development reserve can be included as it has been in the past along
21 with fire and library reserve needs. Brian noted that he probably could come up with a list of projects
22 for the next meeting, including ventilation. Susan noted that the federal funds are to be used over
23 three years.

24 7. **2021 Liquor Licenses** – Ron reviewed the pending applications which are the same businesses
25 as last year. Motion by Dave to approve the following license applications:

- 26 • Ten Bends Beer – Outside Consumption Only
- 27 • Fork & Gavel – First Class for restaurant/bar beer and wine
- 28 • VFW Post 7779 – First Class for club beer, wine, Third Class for club for liquor &
29 Outside Consumption

30 Seconded by Roland. Voting: 5 in favor, 0 against, motion passed.

31 8. **C-19 Emergency Order** – The Governor has published mandated Universal Guidance through July
32 4th, after which, the mandated guidance moves to "encouraged". Susan suggested that if the
33 members were comfortable, then Susan stated that she is comfortable restarting in-person meetings
34 of just board members with masks and spacing, and the public staying remote. The Board agreed
35 that if members are comfortable, the Board will try in-person on May 3rd.

36 9. **Michael Bartlett** – The closing on 5659 VT100 did not occur as Mr. Bartlett has not paid the agreed
37 upon price in the Purchase and Sale Agreement (PSA). Susan reported that something needs to be
38 done to conclude this matter. Dave suggested having the constable serve papers which is less
39 expensive than the Sheriff. Ron asked whether the town attorney should start to prepare court
40 documents to enforce the purchase and sale agreement. Roger Audet, Treasurer, Hyde Park Fire
41 District #1, stated that since the town owns the property, the Town owes the overdue water fees for
42 this property. Roger Audet stated he would wait until May 15 for payment and then he will start the
43 shut off process due to non-payment. David advised that an eviction notice can go on the door and
44 Ron agreed that with the proper paperwork and a court order, an eviction could occur. Roger Audet
45 stated that the water bill should be paid by the Town and Roland suggested not shutting the water
46 off if children are residing at the home. Ron noted that per the PSA, Mr. Bartlett is responsible for
47 water payments. Town Attorney David Rugh will be asked to prepare paperwork and whether the
48 town should pay the Bartlett outstanding water bill to Fire District #1.

49 10. **LVRT trailhead parking area** – The art project update report was done with Dan Gottsegen under
50 Public Comment at the beginning of the meeting.

51

1 11. **Law Enforcement Study Group Update** – Ron reported that the study group had some members
2 resign following a disagreement on the form and content of a final report and the remaining
3 committee members would like direction from the three LCSD patrol towns about next steps. Susan
4 explained that this is a complex topic, and it is possible that regional planning can assist on studying
5 the options for community patrol services. Susan summarized that the goal was to provide the three
6 Selectboards with options. Roger Audet stated that the research was done by the group and an
7 interview was done with Sheriff Marcoux so there was good information collected. Roger Audet
8 stated that in his opinion, if taxpayers want 24/7 then they must pay the costs. Roger Audet felt that
9 moving to State Police contracts is not an answer to the current needs of the three towns. Roger
10 Audet stated that maybe there are some ideas to consider, but the costs are the costs. Susan
11 suggested that completing the study could show those options to the towns. Susan stated that a
12 municipal police option would correct one of the biggest reasons that deputies move to other
13 agencies, which is the lack of the Sheriff having a 20-year retirement option. Dave Gagnier stated
14 that there is no money wasted now by LCSD, and deputies are feeling the strain of mental health
15 and drug abuse impact in the community. Ron noted that the current roster is 6 plus a 7th in July
16 being hired under a federal grant to focus on mental health and opioid use in the community. Ron
17 will check in with Lamoille County Planning Commission about how they might assist with
18 reactivating the law enforcement study for the three towns. Roger Audet resigned tonight from future
19 police committee work.

20 12. **American Rescue Plan - Municipal Funds** – The most recent town estimate is \$290,000 which
21 is based on \$99/capita. Additional funds may come from the county allocation being shared by
22 towns. More discussion at a future meeting is needed with 50% of the town allocation to be expected
23 in June, and then the second half in December, with three years to spend the funds.

24 13. **Other Business** –

- 25 • Status report on the Preservation Trust of Vermont's Paul Bruhn \$50,000 grant for new
26 windows at the Gihon Valley Hall – Chastity stated she met a great contact person at PTV on
27 the grant who will assist the town in understanding the program. Dave asked about a grant
28 condition requiring work on the building to follow Historic Preservation guidelines. Chasity
29 stated that work would be proposed and approved by the Preservation Trust of Vermont.
30 Chasity and Dave will connect with PTV to discuss some scenarios on building improvements
31 and what the approval process looks like once an historic preservation easement is signed.
- 32 • Gravel Pit – Second pit on McFarlane Rd – David stated that the Town has been offered a
33 second option to buy the 25-acre parcel if the first person declines their purchase option.
- 34 • Planning Commission move to 7 members – Dave stated that the full commission should have
35 been asked before changing from 5 to 7, not just the PC Chairperson, and the Board may have
36 to consider rescinding the prior vote. Ron noted that good people applied and the Selectboard
37 made room for them, noting if the Board changes back to 5 it would require disappointing the
38 new members. Dave stated he did not want to disappoint anyone, but the full commission
39 should have voted on moving to 7 to show that the Commission was supportive of the increase.
40 Susan said she would follow up on it.
- 41 • Special Selectboard Worksession on town policy set for May 3rd 6:00 p.m.; topics new funding
42 coming to Hyde Park and paving bids, and continued town policy work on fire bylaws.
- 43 • Class 2 Paving Grant – Ron noted that there is a possible increase in grant program maximum
44 award from the current \$175,000 to \$200,000. VLCT reported that the \$175,000 has not
45 changed for 10 years, so it is time for change. Paving bids are due April 26th at 1:00 p.m. and
46 Brian will be available to open the bids.
- 47 • Town Lister – Ron reported that no new interest, and the town still needs two positions; an
48 elected lister to complete the Board of Listers with a quorum and someone to replace Julie
49 Rohleder who may be leaving her Assistant to Board of Listers position next month.

50 14. **Green Up Day** – Sat. May 1st – bags available the week prior at the town clerk's office and then at
51 Fork & Gavel and Gihon Valley Hall on Green Up Day morning.

52 15. **Town Orders** – Motion by Dave to approve the town orders as written in the amount of
53 \$131,530.78. Seconded by Brian, Voting: 5 in favor, 0 against, motion passed.

54 16. **Adjourn** – Motion by Brian to adjourn, seconded by Roland. So, voted at 8:17 p.m.