

**MINUTES**  
**SELECT BOARD MEETING**  
**TOWN OF COVENTRY**  
**MONDAY JANUARY 7<sup>TH</sup>, 2019 at 4:30 p.m.**

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**Board Members Present:**

Mike Marcotte / Chairman; Brad Maxwell; Scott Briere

**Town Officials Present:**

Amanda Carlson / Town Administrator

Deb Tanguay / Town Clerk

David Barlow / Assistant Clerk

David Gallup / Road Commissioner

Kate Fletcher / Lister

Moe Jacobs / Planning Commission

Skip Gosselin / Planning Commission

Joshua Griffes / Fence Viewer

Martha Sylvester / Recreation Committee Chair

**Guests:**

John Miller

**Press:**

Elizabeth Trail / The Barton Chronicle

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**1. Chairman Mike Marcotte called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.**

***Scott Briere was not in attendance at the start of the meeting.***

**2. Approve the minutes of the December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2018 Meeting.**

- Brad Maxwell made the motion to approve the minutes of the December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2018 meeting as written. Seconded by Mike Marcotte.
- The Board quorum approved and signed the minutes of the December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2018 meeting as written.

### **3. Allow for Public Comment**

- Resident Martha Sylvester read a letter she received from Senator Patrick Leahy in response to information he received from her outlining her concerns for clean drinking water and actions by the Coventry Fire District. Martha submitted a copy of the letter as public record.
- In reference to the December 3, 2018 Select Board letter to the ACT 250 Commission stating support of the Coventry Landfill expansion; Martha Sylvester referenced the last sentence of the following paragraph:

*“The Town of Coventry has participated in permit proceedings for this proposed project and most recently held a warned public information meeting regarding the application on November 19, 2018. The meeting was lightly attended and included six landfill activists who spoke, of which one resides in Coventry”.*
- Martha stated that she wanted it on record that she was not “a landfill activist” and is not in opposition of the Coventry Landfill expansion. Martha stated that she is in favor of change to regulations and procedure; and advocates for clean water.
- Three pages pulled from reports issued by Casella to Martha Sylvester were provided to the Board; as well as a list of testing violations issued on the Coventry Fire District. Martha expressed her concerns on how the environmental testing reports suggest the impact on the environment and subsequently the drinking water sources.
- On Monday February 11, 2019 at 6:00 p.m. Martha Sylvester reserved the Coventry Community Center to hold a public viewing of the documentary “The Devil we Know”. The film examines the hazards of PFOA’s and other emerging drinking water contaminants. The screening was coordinated in conjunction with the Lt Governor’s Office.
- Martha Sylvester requested the Board waive the Community Center rental fee for this event that will be open to the public.
- Mike Marcotte made the motion to waive the Community Center Rental fee for Martha Sylvester for the evening of Monday February 11, 2019. Seconded by Brad Maxwell.

### **4. Discussion with Jim Cobb Regarding Village Post Office**

- Resident Jim Cobb stated that the Coventry Village Post Office is anticipated to close in March 2019.
- Jim recently purchased the house where the Coventry Post Office space is leased, and stated his concern for the impact of the closure on the community.
- Jim explained that the USPS would not renew the lease without considerable upgrades to the space to bring it to an acceptable condition such as; a bathroom on site, meet accessibility requirements with larger space inside as well as an approved ramp at the

entrance and wider door; a handicap parking spot on the property and façade improvements.

- Jim Cobb stated that he feels the Post Office is vital to keep in the community and is willing to invest the money to renovate the inside to compliance as well as complete the needed exterior painting, however, he would need the Town's help and contribution to the project.
- Jim requested the Town cover costs to construct the approved ramp, new exterior door, the designated parking spot and the exterior sign. He estimates this cost at approximately \$5,000.
- Jim stated that there are available grants as the Town proceeds with Village Designation, however, the USPS requires a commitment no later than January 10<sup>th</sup> that the renovations will be completed or they will proceed with closing the premises.
- Brad Maxwell stated it was not the Town's responsibility to incur expenses for improvements to a privately-owned building.
- Mike Marcotte stated that the Board could not commit in such an extremely tight deadline. The Town could not legally expend public money to upgrade a privately-owned building without the voter's approval.
- Jim Cobb agreed to ask the USPS Office to extend the deadline; and the Board quorum agreed to consider an article in the Annual Town Meeting Warning to propose the cost to the voters.

##### **5. Review Applications for Upcoming Vacancy for the Office of Town Treasurer**

- The Board received two applications for the upcoming vacancy in the Town Treasurer's office from residents David Barlow and Gary Kuron.
- Mike Marcotte stated that both were very qualified applicants and expressed his appreciation to both for stepping up and wanting to become involved.
- David Barlow temporarily filled the Treasurers office when previously vacated to assist the Town through the transition; Mike stated that since then David has also been actively working in the Town office in the roles of Assistant Clerk, member of the Investment Committee and as the Elected Trustee of Cemetery Funds; and stated he felt it would benefit the Town to appoint the person with more direct experience.
- Mike Marcotte made the motion to appoint David Barlow as Town Treasurer at the time the office is vacated by the current Treasurer on January 31, 2019; as stated in the letter of resignation provided to the Board at the December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2018 meeting. Seconded by Brad Maxwell.
- David Barlow will serve as Town Treasurer until the next election to be held at the Annual Town Meeting on March 5<sup>th</sup>, 2019.

## **6. Town Clerk's Update and Report**

- Town Clerk, Deb Tanguay, provided the Board with a written report summarizing her progress in the office over the last several months including the ongoing projects to reorganize and update the permanent records in the vault; election proceedings; license applications; and revenue collected.
- Deb stated that 2019 dog licenses were available and that the annual rabies vaccination clinic has been booked for Saturday March 30, 2019 from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the Coventry Community Center. The Board quorum agreed that dogs licensed on March 31, 2019 during the vaccination clinic would receive a \$2.00 discount.
- Deb Tanguay spoke with Animal Control Officer, Renee Falconer, who asked Deb to relay to the Board that there were no updates or concerns at this time. Renee is also planning to attend the vaccination clinic on March 30, 2019 as an opportunity to meet some of the residents.
- Deb Tanguay requested a total of \$3,500 be budgeted for Clerk's education in the 2020 Fiscal year budget. A week long course held during the summer would be the largest portion of this expense and requires participants to register in February.
- The Board requested additional information on the costs to be reviewed at the next meeting.
- Deb reviewed a quote received for new fixtures to upgrade the record capacity in the vault.
- The Board agreed that the upgraded fixtures were needed and approved the project to be explored further. They stated that in accordance with the Town's adopted Purchasing Policy, projects with costs exceeding \$5,000 required multiple quotes. Deb was asked to proceed with the quotes for the Board to approve prior to proceeding.

## **7. Animal Control Officer Update**

- Item addressed by Town Clerk in agenda item #6.
- No further discussion by the Board.

## **8. 911 Coordinator's Update**

- David Barlow reported on his progress with resolving the street addressing issues identified by the State E911 Board report.
- Many addresses in Town have been incorrectly posted or are unmarked which could result in emergency services not arriving at the correct location. Further research will be done on how the Town can help ensure number markers are in place.
- David Barlow stated that the road leading into the Northeast Kingdom International Airport needs to be named. The privately owned hangars along this road need to be assigned numbers so emergency services can identify the location if needed. This will also assist the Town in achieving more accurate records to identify each of the taxable structures.

- The Board asked David Barlow to reach out to airport officials for suggestions on a name before the Board makes the final determination.

#### **9. Recreation Committee Director Update and Discussion**

- Recreation Committee Chairwoman, Martha Sylvester, stated that the 2019 Voter Informational is scheduled for Saturday February 16, 2019 between 9 am to 11am. This event was held last year and provides an informal setting for voters to meet with Town Officials prior to the Annual Town Meeting. The 2018 event was also attended by several State Officials and invitations have been extended again this year.
- After discussing Green Up Day, the Board agreed that Martha Sylvester could proceed with contacting the Green Up Coordinators for information on behalf of the Town of Coventry, and the Recreation Committee could proceed with coordinating the days events.
- Martha Sylvester asked about the status of implementing a background check policy for volunteers supervising possible open recreation in the Community Center gymnasium.
- The policy was previously discussed but not approved. The Board will review the previous drafts and consider for discussion at the next meeting.
- Martha Sylvester asked the Board for a job description for the Recreation Committee Chairwoman. The Town Administrator will provide the Board with the previous draft for review and further discussion.
- Martha requested that the Recreation Committee budget be kept at the same amount (\$21,000) for the 2019-2020 year; stating that as the Committee is exploring new possibilities for the community it is necessary to have the funds available to facilitate.

#### **10. Discussion on Articles to be included in the 2019 Warning for Annual Town and School Meeting**

*Scott Briere arrive at the meeting at 5:50 p.m.*

- Planning Commission Member Skip Gosselin requested that the proposed solar project brought to the Board last year be presented to the voters at the 2019 Annual Town Meeting.
- Skip provided copies of the initial budget showing the project would cost approximately \$500,000 and with the monthly municipal electric bill savings the project would pay for itself in approximately the first 16 years of its 25 year lifespan. The project is proposed to be constructed at the Town gravel pit.
- Mike Marcotte stated that it was a considerable expense to propose to the voters without a thorough and comprehensive plan.
- Mike stated that Vermont Electric Cooperative should be consulted as he is concerned about the impacts of new generation projects; although it might be a benefit to the Town directly, it could result in increased cost to the ratepayers.
- Skip Gosselin stated that new generation projects were going to happen with or without the Town, so the Town should take advantage of the savings.

- The Board agreed that there was not enough information to commit to proposing the cost to the voters. Skip Gosselin stated that the Board could contact VEC for more information but he felt his report was more than sufficient to support the request.
- The Board agreed to continue discussions at the next meeting on January 21, 2019; however, explained to Skip Gosselin that the deadline for voters to submit petitions for Warned Articles is January 17, 2019. Therefore, if the decision at the next meeting is to decline inclusion of the article then there would not be enough time by law to submit a petition.
- The Board discussed the inclusion of an article asking the voters to eliminate the office of the Elected Listers and replace it with a Certified Assessor.
- Lister Kate Fletcher stated her support for this change. She explained that the duties of the Listers Office have become more demanding and require a level of expertise and experience that a trained Assessor would be able to provide.
- Kate stated that with the Town going into a full reappraisal it was essential to create a better functioning Listers department that could properly prepare for the project and ensure accurate records for the Town.
- Mike Marcotte stated that the Board discussed proposing this change to the voters last year; however after discussing with the three members of the Listers Office decided against it.
- Mike stated that after a year he has not seen the promised progress and there seems to be ongoing issues with only one person completing the work.
- The Board unanimously agreed to include an article in the 2019 Warning for the proposed change to the Listers Office.
- The Board reviewed the draft 2019 Annual Town Meeting Warning and discussed various articles for inclusion.
- Draft Warning was not approved by the Board who will continue discussions at the next meeting.

#### **11. Review Draft Budget for FY2020**

- The Board reviewed the draft Highway Department budget with Road Commissioner, David Gallup.
- The current fiscal year includes unbudgeted costs for an unanticipated flood mitigation project executed in September 2018.
- The Board discussed further mitigation projects and pursuing consultation from the Army Corps of Engineers on a permanent solution.
- The Board unanimously agreed to propose a savings account for costs associated with flood mitigation for all areas of Town to ensure funds were available for mitigation as well as emergencies.

- The Board reviewed a draft general fund proposed budget for fiscal year 2020.
- The Board discussed various line items and adjustments.
- Final totals were not approved by the Board who will continue discussions at the next meeting.

#### **12. Review Draft RFP for Economic Development Plan**

- The Board reviewed the draft Request for Proposals for Economic Development Plan.
- The Board agreed to set the deadline to receive proposals for February 15<sup>th</sup>, 2019 at 4:00 p.m. The Board stated this should ensure they have a consultant hired prior to Town Meeting so introductions to the Community could be made.
- The Board approved the RFP for the Economic Development Plan as written with the amended due date.

#### **13. Other Business**

- Town Administrator, Amanda Carlson, stated that she has received the first working draft of the 2018 fiscal year-end audit as prepared by Pace & Hawley LLC.
- Amanda requested a Board member be appointed to meet with herself and the Auditor, Nathan Hawley, to discuss the draft.
- The Board granted Scott Briere unanimous authority to meet with the Auditor and Town Administrator to review the draft 2018 audit.
- Scott Briere and Amanda Carson will report back to the full Board to determine if further meetings are required.

#### 14. Sign Orders

**General Fund Account:**

CHECK #	WARRANT #	WARRANT	CHECK DATE	AMOUNT
18129-18135	P1926	PAYROLL – PE 12-24-18	12-24-18	\$3,364.39
18136-18143	P1927	PAYROLL – PE 12-31-18	12-31-18	\$5,880.81
18144-18150	P1928	PAYROLL – PE 01-07-19	01-07-19	\$3,209.24
18151-18180	19-23	ACCOUNTS PAYABLE – GEN	01-07-19	\$79,734.92
18181-18182	19-23A	ACCOUNTS PAYABLE – GEN	01-07-19	\$1,603.32
ACH	CC-12	ACCOUNTS PAYABLE – CC	01-07-19	\$3.95
ACH	F12-18	AP – IRS DEC 2018	01-07-19	\$7,274.91
ACH	S12-18	AP – VT DEC 2018	01-07-19	\$954.74
ACH	F01-07	AP – IRS PE 01-07	01-07-19	\$1,046.83
ACH	S01-07	AP – VT PE 01-07	01-07-19	\$109.13
Signed by the Board for the Treasurer to draw checks totaling			\$ 103,182.24	

#### 15. Meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

The next Select Board meeting will be held on Monday January 21<sup>ST</sup>, 2019 at 4:30 p.m.

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Michael Marcotte / Chairman

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Bradley Maxwell



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**Scott Briere**

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**Amanda Carlson / Town Administrator**