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MINUTES
SPECIAL MEETING
JOINT SELECTBOARDS of
SWANTON, HIGHGATE, & FRANKLIN
Franklin Elementary School Library
15 School St, Franklin, VT 05457
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 12, 2013 @ 7:00 p.m.

Present: John Lavoie, Chair of Swanton Selectboard; Dick Thompson, Joel Clark, Kathy Lavoie, Swanton Selectmen; Henry Rainville, Chair of Highgate Selectboard; Luke Choiniere and Jeff Towle, Highgate Selectman; Peter Magnant, Chair of Franklin Selectboard; Yvon Dandurand, Vice Chair of Franklin Selectboard; Wayne Laroche, Kyle Lothian, and Andrew Godin, Franklin Selectmen; David Jescavage, Swanton Town Administrator; Heidi Britch-Valenta, Highgate Town Administrator; Paulette Tatro, Kim Gates, Naomi Maynard, Brian Spears, Stephen Bushey, John O'Hara, Diana O'Hara, Mandy Bouchard, Luc Choquette, Robert Irish, Andy King and Dean Fackler

Mr. Magnant called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. He welcomed everyone and the new board members to the boards; Jeff Towle from Highgate and Kathy Lavoie from Swanton. Mr. Magnant turned the meeting over to Joel Clark as the Tri-town board chair. John Lavoie would like to see a new chair and vice-chair elected as this is a new year. John Lavoie/Wayne Laroche made a motion to elect Peter Magnant or Henry Rainville as chair. Mr. Dandurand asked for discussion; would like to see the present chair to continue with this meeting to see where we are going first. Mr. Clark would like to step down as chair at this time. Mr. Rainville/Mr. Laroche made a motion to appoint Peter Magnant from Franklin to chair this meeting to see where it goes. All in favor, motion carried. Robert Irish advised that there are two motions on the floor at this time. Mr. Lavoie asked for a motion to rescind the first motion; Mr. Magnant/Mr. Laroche made a motion to rescind the first motion to reelect a new board chair. All in favor, motion carried.

A. Recap of events since January 2013:

Kim Gates - the three towns voted at town meeting on the individual bonds for each town for the combined efforts of the Tri-town facility. Franklin and Highgate voted yes, Swanton was turned down by a small margin. Residents of Swanton petitioned to revote the bond again. The second vote was also turned down.

B. Plans for the future of the arena:

Mr. Magnant states at this point the boards need to decide where to go with the project. He opened the meeting up to discussion of where we want to be.

Mr. Rainville wants to make this meeting as short as possible.

- Does Swanton want to be a part of this project; in the past they have said yes but letters to the editor seem to state differently. He is not disappointed with the Swanton voters and how they proceeded; the board relayed a different message.
- Swanton wanted 200' of ice
- Swanton agreed to the price of the project.
- They all discussed in good faith the options and that they were all in together.
- Swanton should state if they are not interested and stop wasting everyone's time.

Mr. Clark states he has worked in good faith.

- They owed their tax payers answers such as operating expenses and a clear picture of the future sustainability.
- Would like to see one or two members from each board attend the future tri-town board meetings to simplify decisions and discussion; they can take information back to their individual boards.

Mr. Laroche - prior to the first vote taking place is seemed like someone from Swanton was petitioning against the vote.

- A courtesy call to the other boards would have been appreciated if there were second thoughts about the article and vote on the project.

Mr. Thompson - the Swanton board remained neutral with articles and questions answered to their residents. Mr. Laroche states we must have trust of each other and be able to work together as one board.

Mr. Lavoie - at all meetings Swanton dug their feet in and asked the hard questions. Would not create a white elephant; need to make this right. Did not want to influence the voters and the voters spoke their wishes. Plans were laid out of what could happen. The voters came out and voted 2-1 "no". The board may have reached for the sky too high and maybe moved to fast. MAHA has been operating for three years and made money; Highgate is now running in the black with the facility. Mr. Magnant reminded everyone this is an emotional time and we need to keep it civil.

Mr. Lothian thanked the TTRC for all their work that's been done. Thanked MAHA for their hard work and the volunteers to get it where it is today. In his opinion there was a lack of respect to the three towns.

Mr. Bushey from Highgate states if moving forward with the three towns; the price tag of \$4.3 million was a lot of money; each town needs to determine what money they have available and decide what can be done for this amount. The facility needs to be fixed and not just abandoned, set the price and move forward to keep it going. MAHA volunteers will only be able to volunteer for so long, people burn out. Mr. Lavoie states they have thanked MAHA and understand their hard work.

Mr. Clark - the arena is alive-let's keep it going. Just because the vote was no, there can be other options to look at. The boards may have to rethink the 200 ft. of ice, not sure what we can do with this option since the warning was specific to the 200'. Mr. Magnant asked with the article warned to have 200' of ice we may not be able to change this? Mr. Magnant states Franklin would require another vote to change the article from the original language. Mr. Clark does not see any reason why the three boards cannot enter into the interlocal contract at this time.

Mr. Thompson - the towns can vote again at the request of the selectboard but not by petition of the voters. Mr. Dandurand asked can Swanton tell what the "no" vote was based on; was it the cost, location, not wanting the facility at all? Mr. Lavoie states it is hard to know what "no" meant. Mr. Laroche suggests that maybe a town survey may be ideal to get some idea. Mr. Towle states there were a lot of questions in the editorials about many issues. How does Swanton feel about the 55% cost as their share? Should other area towns be invited into the project? Mr. Thompson advises they are not sure. Mr. Clark says it is difficult to get voters to speak of their issues and why they do not support the facility. Mr. O'Hara from Highgate feels the article in the paper was a curve ball to all towns.

Mrs. Lavoie - there are advantages and disadvantages of being a new member to the Swanton board. She feels the members have been sincere. The community is very charged up about all current issues. Maybe the tri-town boards need to go back to the drawing board with new options before going to the public with further information. Mr. Rainville states the boards are on a high standard as elected members by the town voters.

Mr. Irish of the MVU Board states it is obvious that there are hard feelings and distrust amongst the boards.

- Can you all work together and do you want to?
- May not be able to move forward as a tri-town board
- Need clarity on all the questions before proceeding

Mr. Laroche - we need to do something good for the communities and the kids regardless of our feelings. Need to be effective and efficient leaders to determine what's best to get the job done and not have it be subsidized by the towns. Work without stress between the towns.

1 Mr. Magnant asks the TTRC where they are at with moving forward. Kim Gates informs
2 they have not had an official TTRC meeting. One member has left the board. MAHA is
3 working with the TTRC well and they came to find a solution for community gains; this
4 is not intended to be a business to make money just to sustain from year to year to
5 maintain the facility. Mr. Magnant hopes the boards can come back together and feel
6 that community togetherness and work toward other options.

7
8 Mr. Lavoie thanked Mr. Irish for his comments. He felt Mr. Rainville was loud and clear
9 with his message and the Swanton board will discuss amongst themselves how they wish
10 to proceed and will advise the other boards. The Swanton board got praise for digging
11 their feet into the ground to get answers.

12
13 C. Approval of minutes from November 29, 2012 – tabled

14
15 D. Other business: no other business

16
17 E. Adjournment: Mr. Magnant asked for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Lothian/Mr. Lavoie
18 made a motion to adjourn. All members voted in favor, motion carried. Meeting
19 adjourned at 8:04 p.m.

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22 Typed on June 14, 2013
23 Minutes by Lisa Larivee

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26 Peter Magnant
27 Franklin Board Chair

Approved July 9, 2013

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30 Highgate Board Chair

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33 Swanton Board Chair