

**MINUTES OF FRANKLIN SELECTBOARD
TUESDAY, MARCH 10, 2009, AT 7:00 P.M.
FRANKLIN CENTRAL SCHOOL MUSIC ROOM**

PRESENT: Scott Choiniere, Peter Kittell, Jamie Boudreau, Harvey Bushey, Lynn Paradis and Lisa Larivee, Franklin Town Clerk/Treasurer.

GUESTS: Heidi Britch-Valenta, Franklin Watershed
Anne Laurie, Franklin, Vermont
Justin Rainville, Franklin Fire Chief
Russ Clark, Clark's Truck Center
Howard Vansette, Highway Foreman
Ron Lontine, Franklin Highway Department

Scott called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

TOWN CLERK'S CONCERNS:

Paving Grant: Lisa informed the Board that she has the paving grant for the Morses Line Road which needs to be signed. She advised that the Selectboard also has to sign a certificate that we have adopted codes and standards for roads and bridges. She pointed out that it needs to be signed by all Selectboard members.

Town Services Officer: Lisa advised that the Selectboard also needs to sign the appointment form. She informed the Board that she completed the form with Polly Gadbois' information.

Mailbox: Lisa advised the Board that a resident of the Messier Road claims that the snowplow damaged her mailbox and came into the town offices with a receipt for \$27 for the replacement. Peter noted that Howard usually keeps a replacement on hand, but the resident did not even give us a chance to act. She went out and bought a replacement.

Lisa advised that she also had a complaint from a Dewing Shore resident who claims her mailbox was damaged by the plow and would like her mailbox replaced in the spring.

Town Meeting Minutes: Lisa advised that Tim Magnant read and approved the minutes for Town Meeting. She only received them back today and did not have time to e-mail them around to Board members. Selectboard members all stated they wanted a chance to review the minutes before signing the original. They requested copies which Lisa provided to them. She stated if they approve of the minutes, they could each come into her office to sign the original.

Appointment Letters: Lisa informed Scott there are appointment letters to new members of the Planning Commission and ZBA which need his signature.

Cleaning of Library: Lisa advised that the library indicated they wanted to clean their own space rather than having Sara do it. Sara considered it and decided if they want to clean their own area, they could do so. Lisa indicated it took Sara two to three hours a month and her rate of pay was \$12 per hr. The Board agreed that if the library prefers to clean their own area, they should do so.

Mileage: Lisa informed the Board that when they did their appointments, they put the mileage reimbursement rate at \$.42 when the approved rate was \$.40. All members of the Board agreed that because the price of gas has gone down, the rate should not increase, but remain at \$.40.

Administrative Assistant: Lisa advised the Board that discussion had been held in the past regarding an administrative assistant for the Selectboard and Sara is willing to take on some of that work. It was noted that we will need someone to work on the town's solid waste plan. Scott asked when the Board would know when Sara is available to begin and Lisa informed that Sara is very diligent in completing her duties and she felt that Sara could begin now. The Board asked that Lisa/Sara advise the Board if she experiences any problem or needs extra time.

Trash: Discussion was held on the vendor who will be at the Town Garage on Saturdays for trash collection. Lisa advised that she received 20 to 25 responses at Town Meeting from people who thought it was a good idea and indicating that they would probably use the service. She stated some people just right out said they would not be interested. Peter noted that the vendor had about nine people on Saturday and indicated to both Peter and Scott that he would probably "tough it out" until the campers come back. It was noted that campers have had trash problems in the past and might be interested in this service. Lynn suggested that Lisa let the Campers' Association know about this service. Lisa advised that she just notified them of the metal dumpster and would notify them about the Saturday trash pick-up at the Town Garage. It was also suggested that this information be posted on the website.

Over-weight Permits: Lisa advised that there are some permit applications for Peter to sign. Discussion was held on providing a list of people who have over-weight permits as requested at Town Meeting. It was suggested that it be put on the website. Harvey stated he feels each member of the Selectboard should also be provided with a copy of the list.

Tree: Lisa informed the Board that Sara checked with a couple of nurseries regarding the cost of a blue spruce tree in the matter which is on the agenda for tonight and they all agreed that such a tree would cost about \$1,000.

The Board thanked Lisa and she exited the meeting.

FRANKLIN WATERSHED:

Heidi Britch-Valenta addressed the Board. She provided members with an update of what has

been going on with the Watershed Committee.

Mulcher: She informed the Board that they have discussed with Highgate an agreement to share their mulcher. She advised that the former Selectboard Chairman of Highgate provided them with an outline of what they expect. Franklin would need to put it on their own trailer; any damage would be repaired; and, that the mulcher only be used on public property not on any private property. She stated they are not sure if it is insurance concerns or what, but they remain adamant that it not be used on private property. It was noted that a lot of the watershed work is done on privately owned property around the lake so it won't be much help there. She advised that when our Highway Department is ready to use it, they need to contact Steve Ploof from Highgate. She noted that Highgate obtained their mulcher through a grant and Scott noted that it certainly will be better than purchasing our own which would probably sit idle much of the time.

Projects: Ms. Britch-Valenta advised they will be doing their first tree planting on the Wagner Farm. On July 4th, they will have a septic demo available during the annual barbecue. She noted it will be on a trailer and there will be a presentation on what people can do to be gentler to their septic systems and also information on new systems. On July 18th, in conjunction with a Historical Society planned event, there will be a rain garden demonstration.

Their shoreline restoration project continues and she informed the Board that with the assistance of the non-profit group, Rural Community Assistance Program, they will complete a septic survey around the lake. They may also provide some assistance with water testing because the state lab may no longer be available.

Their next meeting will be on Thursday, March 12th, and she provided Board members with a copy of their agenda.

Scott asked if they wanted the town highway crew to communicate with them about any new projects and she responded that it would be good and there might be something that volunteers can help with on some projects.

She informed the Board that there is a letter from the Army Corp of Engineers regarding certain projects that will require a permit. She noted that there is one site above Lake Carmi, but it is on private property.

Scott informed her that Peter is now the Road Commissioner and the town will attempt to keep Watershed "in the loop".

The Board thanked Ms. Britch-Valenta and she exited the meeting.

TREE REPLACEMENT:

Anne Laurie (Day) appeared before the Board. She provided the Board with the background

of her complaint - that during the first phase of the TH#3 project, a blue spruce tree was removed from her front yard and moved to the backyard. It died and there was an agreement in place whereby the town would replace the tree. She explained that the original plan called for the road to be raised two feet when in fact when all was said and done, the road was lowered two feet with both her driveway and yard being effected. There is now a gulley down the side of her driveway. She pointed out that Polly Gadbois worked very hard trying to resolve this matter when she was on the Board, but her efforts were not successful. She feels that she was lied to by the State engineers. She also stated that some of the agreements reached with regard to her property were made by her ex-husband not her. She stated that she spoke with a nursery and was advised that the cost of a tree the age of hers would be between \$600 and \$1,000. She stated she split that amount and figures a fair price for the tree would be \$750. She noted that some of the problem was with the way the tree was dug up and transplanted. Harvey stated he feels the responsibility lies with Roger Wright, not with the town. Peter disagreed citing the original agreement which calls for the town to replace the tree. Ms. Laurie stated Lenny Gluck, the engineer, told her that the town would take care of any trees that died.

Scott asked about the removal of the stump of the dead tree and she stated she cut away the dead branches and stuff, but would have no objection if it can be removed without making a mess. Harvey stated it cannot be removed without a mess. Ms. Laurie stated she would have no problem with Wright's removing and filling in with dirt provided they did no damage/or repaired any damage done to the lawn. Ms. Laurie stated it appears she is the only one who was hurt as a result of this project and it seems like no one cares. Scott informed her that the Board would discuss the matter and she would receive a letter with their decision within the next two or three weeks. Ms. Laurie also provided him with her phone number.

The Board thanked Ms. Laurie and she exited the meeting.

FIRE DEPARTMENT:

Justin Rainville, Franklin Fire Chief, entered the meeting. He stated that Scott informed them that \$1,000 had been taken out of their budget. He stated that he understands the problem, but there are a couple of things he wanted to call to the Board's attention. He stated that the Fire Department has received \$16,000 from the town and there has been no change in that amount for over 15 years. He stated that out of the \$16,000 there is \$11,000 per year that they must pay out and over which they have no control - i.e. insurance, bills, etc. This year, the bare bottom needed for their budget is \$20,000, which doesn't include some radios that need to be replaced. He stated through fund raising events such as the pancake breakfast and barbecue, they hope to raise the remaining funds needed this year. Harvey stated that the Fire Department has been doing fund raising activities for many years and years ago when he was a member, they even cut fence posts.

Discussion was held on the paving needed in front of the station. The quote that they received was for a vendor to do the entire job. If the town assists with some of the work, the cost would

be less. Materials to be used were discussed. Harvey stated that he does not understand why they are digging up the entire area. The main problem seems to be around the waterline and that can be dug up and repaired, the pad shimmed where needed and the area re-paved. Scott noted that the telephone company has lines in that area and Burt has expressed some concern over digging in that area. Harvey feels the current pavement is a good base and to tear it up would be throwing away some good materials. Justin explained the repairs they expect to make to the cement pad inside the station. Harvey noted there are no other problems with the outside pad, but Justin and Scott both pointed out the three problem areas (drop between inside pad and pad outside the truck bay, problem in the waterline area and minor "L" shaped crater area on the pad). Peter also mentioned that it would be nice if the telephone pole at the corner could be moved. He stated that when coming off Homestead Drive the pole does obstruct the view of oncoming traffic. Justin stated he has no problem with Harvey's suggestion to repair the problem areas in the pad, shim it and re-pave it, but if that doesn't work, they will be back to square one. Harvey agreed to look over the area and get back to the Board with his recommendation. Scott noted that Boy obtained quotes for paving the park and ride and they may be able to tie both jobs in together as it is doubtful that Pikes would come here for such small jobs.

The Board thanked Justin and he exited the meeting.

TRUCK:

Russ Clark of Clark's Truck Center, Boy and Ron entered the meeting. Scott introduced himself and other Board members to Mr. Clark. Mr. Clark thanked the Board for allowing him to appear tonight and informed that he is a third generation family member to be involved in the truck center. The business was started in 1927 and in the early 1980's they began supplying municipal trucks with an annual truck sales of 30 to 40 per year. They also have the State of Vermont truck contract which accounts for another 20 to 30 units a year. He stated he hopes to convince the Board to purchase an International Truck through them. He explained their policy of providing delivery service of parts to Franklin twice a week, but have daily trips to Enosburg and could quickly provide parts to Franklin if needed. He also stated that the salesman would visit Franklin's road crew to help if needed and they have trained technicians available.

Mr. Clark explained that he called and had Lisa fax to him the specifications on the Mack truck so they compare "apples to apples" and not "apples to oranges". He explained to the Board about the LED light package that comes with their truck. He noted it is used on State trucks and affords a greater measure of protection to both the driver and others on the road. He went down the entire list of specifications and explained the difference between the International and the Mack Truck. He explained what he feels makes the International a better choice. Harvey questioned whether he was really comparing "apples to apples" and Mr. Clark responded he was and Ron replied that the differences come standard on the International - e.g. aluminum heavy duty wheels (International) v. steel heavy duty wheels (Mack), double frame (International) v. single frame (Mack), automatic transmission (International) vs. standard transmission (Mack), etc. Transmissions, engines, warranties and extended warranties were

discussed along with the length of time it would take to get a new vehicle. Discussion was also held on emission standards and how that affects the trucks. Peter questioned Boy regarding the Mack truck as he was always a fan of them until the town purchased one. Boy stated he used the Mack truck when he worked construction and liked it for that purpose, however, he does not feel they make a good plow truck. Both Boy and Ron explained problems they have experienced with the Mack truck and it was noted that we have already had to put money into the new truck. Both Boy and Ron agreed that they prefer the International truck for the needs of the town. Ron explained to the Board some problems he has experienced with the Mack truck and why he doesn't like it for plowing snow. Prices and trade-in allowance for the old truck were discussed. Discussion was held on the trade-in allowance should we decide to keep our plows. Ron pointed out that there is some deterioration of the current plow. Peter asked about delivery time and was told a new truck would be here by the end of April, first of May. Mr. Clark also compared turning radius of the short vs. longer wheel base truck. The town has always leased its trucks and Mr. Clark indicated the lease is available with the \$1 buy back at the end of the lease and with no penalty for early buy out. The Board thanked Mr. Clark and he exited the meeting.

Motion by Peter/Jamie that the town purchase the International truck from Clarks. Lynn asked the price quoted on the Mack from J&B and it was more expensive. Peter, Jamie and Lynn voted to purchase the International. Harvey abstained.

Discussion was held on the box and plow package. Discussion was held on the different vendors and packages available. Harvey noted that he really liked the Viking plows. Quotes will be obtained and discussed next meeting. Peter will notify Clarks of the town's decision and discussion on financing will be done after a decision is made on the box/plow package. Scott will write letters to other truck vendors thanking them for their quotes.

Scott asked that the Board discuss a couple of other issues prior to the highway crew exiting the meeting.

Tractor: It was noted that we have received an offer for \$1,000 on the old tractor, but it must be put out to bid to receive the best price. Jamie suggested we might want to put it into the auction. Discussion was held on the purchase of a tractor which we need both for highway roadside cutting and the weed harvester. The best price for comparable vehicles was from Fournier's on a Massey Ferguson, 4 w/d with no cab or loader.

Motion by Jamie/Peter to purchase the Massey Ferguson. Lynn, Peter and Jamie voted in favor. Harvey abstained. Jamie suggested that Peter ask them to throw in a roof.

Harvey requested that the minutes clearly show that he was not in favor of purchasing the International Truck nor the tractor.

Scott asked Peter to contact Fournier's and Scott will notify the other vendors of the Board's decision.

Personnel Policy: Ron questioned the new rules and regulations that Scott brought up to the garage. Scott replied they were not new, but there was a pay discrepancy and he was just bringing the written policy to their attention. Ron questioned it and pay for time worked on holidays. Scott advised that we do not have a copy of the town personnel policy available tonight and asked that Ron and Boy return to next month's meeting at which time the Board will be prepared to discuss this matter with them. They both agreed.

Joint Municipal Meetings: Scott asked how the highway crew and Board members felt about having a joint municipal meeting, perhaps quarterly, with surrounding towns in the hopes they can all get together to bid out such things as paving, salt, sand, etc. It is well know that when you guarantee a large purchase, vendors are able to give a better price and it is something we might want to investigate. Scott will try to work something out to see if other towns in Franklin County might be interested in a joint effort.

Bottle Return: Boy pointed out there is no bottle exchange facility in town. Problems have been experienced during the summer and campers/visitors do not want to take their bottles home. He suggested that we have a bottle drop off at the garage and donate them to scouts or other groups.

The Board thanked both men and they exited the meeting.

BILLS AND ORDERS:

Reviewed and signed. Lynn noted that the electric bill for the town hall is still high. Peter stated he went over there and checked the meter and it was not moving. He then went inside and turned on the lights and checked the meter and it was moving. Jamie suggested that we have Gerard Trombley check out the situation. Scott stated he will talk with Gerard and Burt and try to determine why so much electricity is being used.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Minutes of February 9, 2009: Motion by Lynn/Jamie to approve. Scott asked for any discussion/changes and there was none. All members voted in favor/minutes accepted as presented.

Minutes of March 5, 2009: Motion by Peter/Jamie to approve. Scott asked for any discussion/changes and there was none. All members voted in favor/minutes accepted as presented.

OLD BUSINESS:

Unlicensed Dogs: There are still three dogs that remain unlicensed. Since it is time for the 2009 tags to be purchased, Jamie will wait to see if the dogs remain unlicensed. If they do, we

will follow through with the issuance of the warrants and pickup of the dogs.

NEW BUSINESS:

Camp Violations: There are people who are occupying seasonal camps year round. We need to enforce zoning regulations. The Board noted it has not had communication with Bob Irish in some time. The Board will request his attendance at the next meeting at which time enforcement will be discussed.

Town Meeting Minutes: Because of the heavy agenda tonight, members were not able to review the Town Meeting Minutes. Motion by Peter/Lynn that each member review the minutes at their convenience and if they had no changes/concerns, they would individually go to the Town Clerk's Office to sign them. All members voted in favor/motion passed.

Haston Library: Letter received from a library trustee regarding the \$1,600 cut to the library budget and requesting that the funds used to pay Sara for cleaning of the library be reimbursed to them as they will clean the area themselves. Motion by Peter/Lynn that no change be made to the library budget. Harvey noted they asked to clean the area themselves, the Board did not ask them to do so. The Board will allow them to clean their own area, but will not make any change to their budget. All members voted in favor/motion passed. Scott will notify them of the Board's decision.

Tree: Scott advised that he spoke with Polly Gadbois regarding the agreement over the tree. One suggestion is that the town pay her back taxes plus the 8 percent penalty and reimburse her any remaining monies. Lynn questioned this, asking about the details of the original agreement. Peter stated to his recollection, the town agreed to replace the tree up to a cost of \$250. The Board decided to table the matter for tonight. Scott will speak with Wrights about removal of the stump and have Lisa research the original agreement. It was also noted that arrangements had been made for her to get a replacement tree and she was notified of that fact and dropped the ball so she has to accept some of the responsibility. Harvey stated he has been doing her driveway for years and it is much better now.

SELECTBOARD FOLDER:

Correspondence: From State of Vermont regarding Safe Roads to School Grant for the sidewalk. Letter dated March 4, 2009 indicating environmental review of project reveals it meets criteria. Members noted the attached documents still show the granite curbing. Discussion held on the need to scale back the project because of budget constraints. Lisa was to have notified them of the need for cut backs. Scott will speak with Lisa regarding the matter. Discussion held on project "clerk of the works" and it has been suggested that the highway crew oversee it. Harvey questioned their qualifications to do so. Peter noted that it is expected it will go out to bid in June. Discussion also held on re-paving the street following the installation of the sidewalks.

Correspondence: From Office of General Services regarding radiation portals to be installed at the Morses Line Border. It is noted that per the Board's request, additional pavement has been added to the north bound lane to facilitate plowing.

Correspondence: From State of Vermont regarding painting of lines on roads. Franklin is done on an even year schedule so will not be eligible this year.

Correspondence: From State of Vermont approving our solid waste plan.

Correspondence: From vendor who does roadside mowing.

Correspondence: From U.S. Army Corp of Engineers regarding situations which will require a permit from them prior to work being done.

MEMBER CONCERNS:

Highway Crew: Harvey questioned what the crew has been doing. He stated we have not had snow in a while and he is concerned about what they are doing. It was pointed out there is some brush on the Swamp Road that is getting close to the road. They will also be getting the weed harvester ready. Harvey requested that they make their work logs available to the Board.

Bottle Returns: Concern has been expressed by community members about the lack of a bottle return facility in Franklin. State law requires that businesses that sell bottles on which a return fee is charged accept those return bottles. The State will contact those businesses who are not following the law.

Motion by Peter/Lynn to adjourn. All members in favor/meeting adjourned at 10:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

March 11, 2009

Barbara M. Varin

NOTE: These minutes are not official until approved by the Selectboard at their next regular meeting. Note: These minutes were approved by the Selectboard at their April 13, 2009 meeting.

