

Approved as written: _____

Approved as corrected: _____

VERNON SELECTBOARD
MONDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2016
REGULAR MEETING
6:30pm
DRAFT

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Christiane Howe, Chair
Sandra Harris, Vice Chair
Stephen Skibniowsky, Clerk
Josh Unruh
Emily Vergobbe

OTHERS PRESENT:

Michelle Pong, Town Administrator
Michelle Millerick, Secretary
Carol Hammond, Lister
Bill Hammond
Alex Dunklee
Heath Renaud
Tim Arsenault, Town Clerk
Sandy Morrison
Jerry Morrison
Todd Capen, Fire Chief
Jeff Dunklee
Ian Kiehle (BCTV)
Joyce Goodnow
Tom Rappaport
Lynda Starorypinski
Seth Deyo, Recreation Department
Rita Mudd
John Wheelden Jr.
Tyffany Capen
Leighann Cwikowski
Matthew Cwikowski
Arthur J Miller
Faith Jobin
Mike Renaud

MEMBERS ABSENT:

None

CALL TO ORDER REGULAR MEETING:

Christiane Howe called the regular meeting to order at 6:30pm, welcomed those present and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA: Christiane Howe would like add the Junk Ordinance under Open Public Comments.

JOSH UNRUH MADE A MOTION TO ADD THE JUNK ORDINANCE TO THE AGENDA UNDER OPEN PUBLIC COMMENTS. STEPHEN SKIBNIOWSKY SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.

CHAIRS REMARKS:

Vernon lost two great community members, Don Damian and Rena Shippee. The Board sends condolences to their family and friends and notes that Vernon will surely miss them.

GUESTS:

None

OPEN PUBLIC COMMENTS (non-Agenda items):

Junk Ordinance – Several residents voiced their concerns:

- one man's treasure is another man's junk
- they pay taxes and should be able to have what they want on their property
- there will always be someone who doesn't like what you're doing and if they don't maybe they should put up a fence
- some people collect vehicles for parts
- the ordinance is invasive, intrusive and has the potential to pit neighbor against neighbor
- some vehicles are used for working purposes and are not registered, but still used

The Selectboard responded to these concerns, noting that working vehicles are an exception under the ordinance but encouraged citizen input. January 18, 2017 is the 44th day to turn in petitions to bring the ordinance to town vote at Annual Meeting. The Board noted that this ordinance came about because many citizens were concerned about health and environmental hazards from vehicles leaks and standing water. The Board does not want to keep people from having things in their yard but are trying to help people. The Selectboard discussed the Junk Ordinance at many public meetings and publicly posted the ordinance to solicit town input. There are 9 steps to adopting an ordinance and the process is underway.

DEPARTMENT/COMMITTEE REPORT:

a) Farmland Committee – Art Miller discussed planned activities and would like to recruit more board members.

SANDRA HARRIS MADE A MOTION TO APPOINT ARTHUR MILLER, JEFF HARDY, ELLEN HARDY, MADDIE ARMS AND SKIP BALDWIN TO THE RE-ESTABLISHED FARMLAND COMMITTEE. EMILY VERGOBBE SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.

b) Capital Plan Committee –

SANDRA HARRIS MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE AND ACCEPT THE CAPITAL PLAN AS PRESENTED. STEPHEN SKIBNIOWSKY SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.

c) Sheriff Department – Officer Norton presented the Sheriff's Department quarterly update. Vernon had an armed robbery, 4 DUI's, some illegal dumping (Indian Point being the most noteworthy), 14 animal problems, 4 domestic disturbances among other items. These activities are posted on Facebook weekly.

d) Windham Regional Commission – recruitment of new representative, Tim Arsenault is currently the alternate and willing to serve as primary.

SANDRA HARRIS MADE A MOTION TO APPOINT TIM ARSENAULT AS VERNON'S PRIMARY REPRESENTATIVE TO THE WINDHAM REGIONAL COMMISSION. JOSH UNRUH SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Sandra Harris began discussion of the December 5, 2016 minutes with a spelling correction to Christian Howe's name and mention that one of the warrants, TS, was high due in part to the payment to VLCT membership. The entire warrant included more than just the VLCT payment. Also page two last paragraph, Northstar should be Arclight – since Arclight is purchasing the dam. Christiane Howe called a vote. Carried 5-0.

JOSH UNRUH MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE BUDGET WORK SESSION ON DECEMBER 6, 2016 AS WRITTEN. STEPHEN SKIBNIOWSKY SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 4-1 ABSTENTION.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Bills and Warrants

STEPHEN SKIBNIOWSKY MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE AND AUTHORIZE PAYMENT FOR THE FOLLOWING BILLS AND WARRANTS FOR MONDAY DECEMBER 5, 2016.

12 – T Accounts Payable - \$67,665.48

49S Payroll - \$8,647.03

50S Payroll - \$8,722.89

SANDRA HARRIS SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.

NEW BUSINESS:

a) Radiological Emergency Response Plan – funding agreement for 2016-2017.

SANDRA HARRIS MADE A MOTION TO RADIFY CHRISTIANE HOWE, CHAIR SIGNATURE FOR THE EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN FUNDING AGREEMENT. EMILY VERGOBBE SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.

b) Participation in Town Energy Planning Pilot with WRC. As part of Act 174, the WRC is soliciting for volunteers to participate in custom technical assistance and would work with Vernon to enhance or create an energy element to Vernon's Town Plan and also help the town to go through their plan and check for internal consistency in policies. Christiane Howe, Chair will sign a letter of interest.

SANDRA HARRIS MADE A MOTION TO HAVE CHRISTIANE HOWE, CHAIR SIGN THE ENERGY PLANNING PILOT. EMILY VERGOBBE SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.

c) Treasurer – Personnel move to the end of the meeting.

OLD BUSINESS:

a) Black Gum Swamp – testimony taken on January 12, 2017. Seth Deyo, Recreation Department would like to keep the Class 2 designation of Black Gum Swamp noting that with a Class 1 you can't adjust trails or change anything. Local control would be limited. There are liability issues which the Selectboard was not made aware of. With a Class 2 we have more control.

EMILY VERGOBBE MADE A MOTION TO UNDUE THE VOTE TO APPROVE THE RECLASSIFICATION OF THE BLACK GUM SWAMP. SANDRA HARRIS SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 4-1 WITH STEPHEN SKIBNIOWSKY DISSENTING.

b) Fire Department – Personnel

SANDRA HARRIS MADE A MOTION TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION AT 8:00PM ON A PERSONNEL ISSUE WITH MICHELLE PONG, TOWN ADMINISTRATOR, LEIGHANN CWIKOWSKI, MATTHEW CWIKOWSKI, AND FAITH JOBIN, TO DISCUSS THE APPOINTMENT OR EMPLOYMENT OR EVALUATION OF A PUBLIC OFFICER OR EMPLOYEE 1 V.S.A. & 313(3)(a)(3) [NOTE: THE FINAL DECISION TO HIRE OR APPOINT AND THE REASONS FOR THE BODY'S FINAL DECISION MUST BE MADE IN OPEN MEETING.] BLANK SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.

EXECUTIVE SESSION ADJOURNED AT 10:15PM.

No action was taken.

c) Auditor Notes – Personnel postponed until January 3, 2016.

BUDGET:

a) Building and Grounds – Michelle Pong, Town Administrator gave the board updated figures for this budget.

SANDRA HARRIS MADE A MOTION TO ACCEPT BUILDING AND GROUNDS BUDGET WITH THE CHANGES AND THE ENTIRE FINAL BUDGET AS DISCUSSED OVER THE PREVIOUS MONTHS. EMILY VERGOBBE SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5-0.

b) Library – The Selectboard noted the comparisons between town libraries with populations similar in size to Vernon, with Vernon being far above the cost of other town libraries. The Board presumes it is because we haven't had to penny pinch in the past. Vernon's library salaries alone are \$68,151.00, higher than the highest comparison total budget. Guilford's entire budget is \$30,000.00, Dummerston's entire budget is \$12,000.00 and Westford's entire budget is \$69,000.00. These libraries are not open any less than ours and they use volunteers.

JOSH UNRUH MADE A MOTION TO BUDGET THE LIBRARY \$65,000.00 FOR THIS UPCOMING YEAR. STEPHEN SKIBNIOWSKY SECONDED.

Emily Vergobbe suggested changing the motion to \$70,000.

JOSH UNRUH WITHDREW HIS MOTION. STEPHEN SKIBNIOWSKY WITHDREW HIS SECOND.

JOSH UNRUH MADE A MOTION TO CHANGE THE LIBRARY'S BUDGET TO \$70,000.00. STEPHEN SKIBNIOWSKY SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 4-1 WITH SANDRA HARRIS ABSTAINING.

c) Solid Waste Issues – With the closing of the MRF will recycling be changed to a weekly basis? If Triple T Trucking puts in a recycling bin at the Garage what will the cost be? Will it need to be gated? Michelle Pong, Town Administrator is meeting with Bob Spencer to see what numbers he has worked out regarding what recycling might cost if Vernon decides to ship to another MRF and buy the bins.

Emily Vergobbe suggested getting rid of the bins. On June 30, 2017 WSW gets rid of the bins. The Board agreed to "wait and see what happens". The bins are being utilized a lot but by whom? This will be brought up at the Town Meeting, what the town would like either the bins 24/7 or weekly recycling.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (AGENDA ITEMS ONLY):

None

CORRESPONDENCE:

Firstlight the Northfield study went well.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR REPORT:

Treasurer – personnel is for our outgoing treasurer for 5 weeks' vacation

SANDRA HARRIS MADE A MOTION TO GIVE SALLY BRASSOR 5 WEEKS VACATION PAY OUTGOING. STEPHEN SKIBNIOWSKY SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 5-0..

UPCOMING MEETING SCHEDULE:

- a) **Regular Meeting** - Tuesday, January 03, 2016
- b) **Regular Meeting** – Tuesday, January 17, 2016

The Selectboard wishes everyone in Vernon and everywhere a very Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays.

ADJOURNMENT:

CHRISTIANE HOWE ADJOURNED THE MEETING AT 10:45PM

Respectfully Submitted by
Michelle Millerick
Michelle Millerick, Secretary