

**Townshend Select Board
Minutes
November 19, 2012**

Present: Select Board: Hedy Harris; Kit Martin; Jeff Russ; Chad Greenwood; David Dezendorf;

In Attendance: Kurt Bostrom; Kim Ellison; Joe Daigneault; Becky Nystrom; Janet Stowell; Cynthia Davis; Kathy Hege; Bob DeSiervo; Richard Melanson (BCTV); Craig Hunt

1. Call to Order: Harris called the Meeting to Order at 6:01 P.M. and requested that the Rules be suspended to recognize Town Clerk, Anita Bean, followed by other members of the public.

2. Approval of Minutes: Martin made a motion: **To approve the Special Meeting Minutes of October 23, 2012, and the Meeting Minutes of November 5, 2012,** seconded by Dezendorf and carried by those present.

3. Additions and Deletions: Fuel costs and Law Enforcement matters were added under Old Business and an Auditor's request was added under New Business. Discussions of the Conflict of Interest Policy and the Winter Maintenance Policy were deleted from the 11/19 Agenda.

4. Warrants: Martin made and Russ seconded all motions to approve the following Warrants:

WARRANT 1119-1 Payroll \$7,234.95, carried by those present.

WARRANT 1119-2 Payroll Tax \$2,636.55, carried by those present.

WARRANT 1119-4 Payroll Tax \$546.98, carried by those present.

WARRANT 1119-3 Payroll \$1,604.08, carried by those present.

WARRANT 1119-6 Highway \$374.25, carried by those present with one abstention.

WARRANT 1119-7 Equipment Fund \$9,347.02, carried by those present with one abstention.

WARRANT 1119-5 General Fund \$98,333.49, (of which \$86,742.00 is owed to the Department of Education), carried by those present.

5. Reports: Law Enforcement Report: Nothing at this time.

RESCUE Representative's Report: Kathy Hege reported that at RESCUE's Annual Meeting a proposed amendment to the Bylaws was tabled indefinitely. Though three new seats were added to the Board of Directors, Hege didn't feel that it would be of consequence to the internal decision-making process. Hege urged the Select Board not to appoint anyone as the Representative to RESCUE who was not willing to actively participate and suggested that in the future, the Select Board refrain from signing the annual contract until after RESCUE's Annual Meeting.

Hege was thanked by the Board for accepting the appointment in Ryan Hockertlotz's absence and for attending the Annual Meeting as Townshend's Representative.

Delinquent Tax Collector's Report: Becky Nystrom was welcomed and Martin asked about the accrual of delinquent taxes against a property owner who had declared bankruptcy. Nystrom explained that the Bankruptcy Court had established a tax payment schedule for the individual, but since payments to the Town had fallen into arrears, she was seeking legal advice. Nystrom then said that though most delinquencies were less than two years old, Notices were being sent out in the hope of averting further tax sales.

Martin expressed the Board's appreciation for Nystrom's diligent efforts at keeping tax payments as current as possible, but wanted noted, for the record, that a small government the size of Townshend's cannot simply carry what is more than \$100,000 in overdue payments.

Town Hall Renovation Committee Report: Bob DeSiervo reported having reviewed with Tiz Garfield and Craig Hunt a recent proposal to install the fire doors in Town Hall. Because it was felt that no real savings to the Town was to be realized, however, he advised the Board that he would be seeking additional proposals.

Highway Department Report: Bostrom reported that ditches were being cleaned in preparation for Winter and that guardrail posts had been replaced on Simpson Brook Road. A steel bridge plate to temporarily deck Bridge 41 on West Hill Road had been made available through AOT, and

he planned to go pick it up on Tuesday. Regarding new tires, Bostrom informed the Board that one new tire was needed on the compactor and four for the rear of T-9. Four front-end loader tires, he said, he had found for \$1,675.00 apiece.

Dezendorf reported that general maintenance was needed on the overhead doors at the Garage and he was seeking prices for their service.

Dezendorf then presented estimates from Brattleboro auto dealerships for new plow trucks: an F-350 at \$54,865.00; an F-450 at \$57,890.00; and a 3500 Silverado either with a gas engine for \$39,622.00 or a diesel engine for \$48,750.00.

Ellison reported that a decision should be received upon the Vermont Equipment Loan Fund application by the second week in December.

Bostrom argued that the F-550 he had priced out at about \$54,000 would still be the best truck, though it would take six weeks time and cost another \$30,000 to fully equip the vehicle.

Following lengthy discussion, Dezendorf made a motion: **To authorize the purchase of a new F-550 with custom equipment furnished by Osgood for a price not to exceed \$85,000.00, with the understanding that it was to be very-well maintained,** seconded by Russ and carried by those present.

Martin then presented to the Board an advertisement from Equipment Trader magazine in which he had found a rear-loading rubbish truck for sale in New Hampshire for \$3,000.00. Martin believed that such a truck might serve as a back-up for the ailing compactor currently in use and spare the Town expensive repairs to the compactor, should they become necessary.

Following discussion, Martin made a motion, **To authorize Joe Daigneault and Kurt Bostrom to inquire about the rubbish truck for sale, and, if deemed worthwhile, to travel to New Hampshire and purchase it for the Town,** seconded by Dezendorf and carried by those present.

Dezendorf then made a motion, **To enter into Executive Session with Bostrom to discuss personnel matters at 7:08 P.M.,** seconded by Russ and carried by those present.

At 7:35, Harris made a motion, **To return from Executive Session and, as a result, authorize Dezendorf to schedule interviews with applicants for the Highway Employee position,** seconded by Dezendorf and carried by those present.

Town Clerk's Report: The Board reviewed the Town Clerk's cash-journal reports from the prior two weeks.

Bookkeeper's / Treasurer's Report: Ellison had nothing new to report at this time.

Emergency Management Director's Report: Dezendorf had nothing new to report at this time.

6. Members of the Public: Janet Stowell was welcomed and expressed her belief that the Select Board should have acted months ago to appoint new Auditors, given the absence of Ryan Hockertlotz who is stationed overseas, and Ernie Ellingson, who had not been attending the meetings.

Stowell also noted that the front porch light at the Town Hall had been out for a long time and wondered when it might be fixed. Hunt offered to get a ladder and either replace the bulb or try to determine why it wasn't working.

Additionally, Stowell urged the Board to get repairs done on East Hill Road which was washed out during tropical storm Irene more than a year ago. For this, Dezendorf apologized, but suggested that given the complexity of interactions with FEMA and the State, and the potential expense, it was a slow process he's been laboring to accomplish.

7. Correspondence: Nothing at this time.

8. Old Business: Damn Road Culvert: Dezendorf reported that the State would be paying for an legal appeal against FEMA's decision to not reimburse the Town for upgraded replacement expenses mandated by ANR and agreed to by FEMA last Fall. The State, Dezendorf said, was using this matter involving Townshend as a test case and a status update should be presented to the Board early in December.

Ellison relayed that she had heard that FEMA might renew questions about property ownership: that the culvert is in a State waterway within the boundaries of Federally-owned land, and that Townshend, though it has a contractual obligation to maintain the road, has no real ownership claim to the culvert it has paid to replace.

East Hill Road: Dezendorf briefed the Board on having received specific quantities of gravel needed and timber to be cut. These figures are now before the State for verification prior to changes in the project's scope being presented to FEMA for approval. Dezendorf expressed hope

that by the end of December, the Town would be in a position to issue bid requests for the work to be done.

Fuel Metering: Dezendorf reported progress toward the gathering of all components and the scheduling their installation by contracted vendors.

Townshend Timber Harvesting: Nothing at this time.

Windham County Humane Society Contract: More information and discussion is necessary.

Ancient Roads: Select Board members signed an order to Discontinue a Portion of Old Brookline Road, dated November 19, 2012.

Cemetery Rights of Way: Nothing at this time.

Law Enforcement: Harris briefed the Board upon a potential opportunity to discuss combining contracts for law enforcement services with Grace Cottage Hospital, given the reduction in coverage to the Town by the expiration of the COPS grant and increasing concerns at the Hospital for outpatients seeking psychiatric and drug counseling. Discussion ensued, with Martin expressing his belief, philosophically, that the taxpayer should not bear the burdens when non-public institutions, by will or necessity, change their business practices. Dezendorf expressed his belief that Memorandums of Understanding would be useful between the Hospital and the Town on a variety of issues.

Fuel Costs: Martin conveyed his shock that recent fuel deliveries of heating oil and gasoline from Cota and Cota were invoiced at prices exceeding retail, and made a motion: **To have Hunt seek competitive pricing for automatic fuel deliveries for the Town accounts,** seconded by Dezendorf and carried by those present.

Town Hall Furnace: Russ said that he would provide an estimate for a boiler unit. Martin said that he had spoken with Tiz Garfield and wished to relay her belief that the Town should stay with a hot air furnace, as was determined best by Architect Wesner in his study of needed Town Hall renovations and repairs.

9. New Business: Auditor's Request: Harris relayed a request from Auditor Kris Kuch for the Select Board to appoint an additional auditor. Following discussion, Martin mde a motion, **To appoint Cynthia Davis and Janet**

Stowell as Auditors pending legal verification of the Board's authority to do so, seconded by Russ and carried by those present. Davis then accepted the appointment and Stowell declined, stating that she would gladly help with the Town Report.

10. Other Business: Nothing at this time.

11. Meeting Schedules:

Budget Workshop: November 27, 2012 at 5:30 P.M.

Regular Meeting: December 3, 2012 at 6:00 P.M.

12. Adjournment: Russ made a motion: **To adjourn at 8:41 P.M.**, carried by those present.

Respectfully submitted,

Craig K. Hunt, assistant