

Minutes of West Fairlee Selectboard Regular Meeting February 1, 2010

Present from the Selectboard: Bonnie Cray, Beverly Ash, and Doug Sonsalla
Visitors: Jim Brigham, John and Jonathan Blake, Delsie Hoyt, Jim McDade, John Benjamin, Charlie Davenport

The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm at the Community Building multi-purpose room.

Visitors:

Meet the Candidates

Sonsalla asked the candidates running for seats in the March 2010 election if they would be interested in holding a Meet the Candidates event for introductions to interested residents. Bailey also offered to publish submissions from candidates in the West Fairlee Newsletter. Hoyt suggested an informal meet and greet prior to the informational meeting for the proposed budget. The event is scheduled for 6:00 p.m. prior to the 7:00 informational meeting.

Wild Hill Utility Pole

Cray explained that the board has looked at the pole location following complaints that the pole is located too close to the road. The board has asked Topsham Communication to relocate the pole. Cray indicated that the pole does not meet the requirements of the agreement established with Topsham Communication for the work if the pole is not off set 4 feet from the road. Davenport indicated that the edge of the road is difficult to locate at that location and that if a vehicle were to hit the pole it may prevent the vehicle from continuing down the embankment. Cray asked that the pole be relocated in accordance with the permit to at least 4 feet from the edge of the road. Cray indicated that the relocation would be easier done prior to the addition of lines. Sonsalla suggested an agreement where potential future work for widening the road would include relocating the pole at the cost of Topsham Communication. Cray expressed concern that the future relocating may be outside the terms of the existing permit and could cause the Town to have to enter negotiations and establish cost responsibility. Ash asked Davenport if additional poles were going to be placed. Davenport indicated that one more pole will be installed. Sonsalla asked if the work could be completed concurrently. Davenport indicated that setting the pole back from the road further would require a different size pole due to the elevation drop off the road edge. Davenport also discussed the potential difficulty of installing the pole in another location if shallow bedrock is encountered. Cray read the language of the ordinance and indicated that the pole is in violation of the agreement. Benjamin asked if the ordinance has been formerly adopted. Sonsalla responded that the policy has been adopted but has not been published or posted as required. Ash suggested that the pole be moved especially if other work is also scheduled. Davenport will look into installing another pole back further but indicated that it may come at a high cost. Bailey looked at the pole today and indicated that it appears to be 2-3 feet from the edge of the road. Bailey also looked at the other poles on the edge of the same road that are all at least 4 feet from the edge of the road. Bailey

suggested moving the edge of the road back instead of moving the pole to save funds. Blake discussed the requirements for adjusting the road and recommended straightening that section of the road. Hoyt indicated that the permit for the right of way work references the right of way ordinance for incorporation into the agreement regardless of whether or not the ordinance had been independently adopted. Hoyt also suggested that the edge of the road can be delineated from the center of the road. McDade asked why Davenport is using 45 foot poles. Davenport responded that 45 foot poles are standard. Sonsalla stated that the Town's position is that the pole will need to be relocated or the road will need to be adjusted. Davenport indicated that the cost associated with relocating the pole cannot be estimated due to the unknown subsurface characteristics. Cray moved to request that Topsham move the pole to meet the requirements of the permit. Sonsalla seconded the motion and the vote passed unanimously. Benjamin expressed concern that the right-of-way ordinance has not been duly adopted to meet the requirements of enforcement. Sonsalla moved to verify the ordinance for right-of-ways with the Town lawyer. Cray seconded the motion and the vote passed unanimously.

Minutes: Motion by Sonsalla to approve the minutes of the January 25, 2010 regular meeting and January 26, 2010 emergency meeting. Ash seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor.

Roads:

Winter Road/Sand Use Maintenance Policy

Sonsalla has completed the policy and will distribute a copy for discussion at a future meeting. The sand use policy will be incorporated into the drafted winter road policy.

Mileage

The road crew has completed measurements of accurate mileage for Town highways and submitted the results to the board.

Jennings Road Ice

Ice was observed on a portion of Jennings Road due to drainage issues that will need to be addressed once the road has thawed.

Old Business:

Delinquent Animal License Ticket

The board has followed up on a delinquent animal license. The board has been contacted by the resident and has been given a week to meet all of the Town requirements.

Construction Manager for Town Hall Relocation

Tabled

Updated Tax Maps RFP

The proposed RFP will be reviewed by the board, Rhonda, and the Listers.

Part Time Building Manager

The board is drafting a listing for the open position. Cray announced that the multi-purpose room has been painted with just the wood work remaining by a volunteer. Sonsalla thanked Cray for coordinating with the volunteer and for all their hard work. A box has also been posted outside the Community Building for posting Town documents.

Town Employee Insurance Policy

Tabled.

Town Office Relocation Estimates from G.R. Porter and Sons

A copy of the final estimates from G.R. Porter and Sons has been provided to the board for three options. A copy of the estimates is attached.

These options will help the Town make a decision for the permanent location of the Town offices. Rural Development will aid the Town to make the decision. The Community Development Commission (CDC) provided a response to the estimates as read by Roger Bailey, Chair of the CDC:

“The West Fairlee Committee Development Commission appreciates receiving cost estimates for the three alternatives for restoration of town buildings. My understanding is that these costs are rough estimates and will not reflect the final costs of the three options. Final costs will be lowered by competitive bidding and perhaps by not including some of the work that is not needed or affordable at this time. Also possible grants will lower the costs for each of these projects. There is much work to be done by the CDC to prepare more realistic costs.

“The CDC is working with the Vermont Council on Rural Development in developing a plan to present to the residents of West Fairlee. The VCRD has worked with many towns in Vermont to help them decide which issues need to be addressed. West Fairlee is different. We have one overarching problem—where to concentrate the town’s resources without significantly increasing taxes.

“VCRD suggested a community conversation: a presentation of the three options in a town gathering. This would not be a Town Meeting or a warned meeting. Therefore the results would be non-binding. In this meeting, the Selectboard/CDC would take a leadership position and make the presentation of the options.

“Now that we have these costs, the CDC will start the process of preparing various plans to present to the residents of West Fairlee. The CDC’s next meeting is tomorrow night, Tuesday, February 2, when work will start on specifics of the project.”

Cray responded to encourage Town residents to participate in the discussion with the CDC. Bailey expressed that the meetings are open to everyone. Sonsalla indicated that the numbers are available to allow the board and CDC to discuss options and are not final costs. Ash asked Bailey how the CDC would communicate with Town residents. Hoyt responded that the CDC will work to get as much involvement as possible. The methods

for discussion with the public were discussed. Sonsalla explained that information on the Vermont Council on Rural Development's program is available on their website.

Tax Payment Plan to the School

The timeline for potential tax payments to the school district do not work with the Town calendar/budget and a one time payment will be made.

New Business: None

Sign Orders: Motion by Sonsalla to sign orders. Ash seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor.

Correspondence: Correspondence was reviewed by the board.

Ash moved to publish an RFP for handicap accessible work on the Community Building. Sonsalla seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Ash moved to enter executive session at 8:30 pm. The motion was seconded by Sonsalla and the vote passed unanimously. Ash moved to close executive session at 9:15 pm. Sonsalla seconded the motion and the vote passed unanimously.

Agenda Items for Next Meeting: Winter Road/Sand Use Policy, Updated Tax Maps RFP, Part Time Building Manager Position, Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan

Motion by Ash, at 9:15 pm, to adjourn the meeting. Sonsalla seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Holly Lewis-Poulin
Selectboard Clerk

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Town of West Fairlee
West Fairlee, VT

Re: Estimates for Town Offices Options

The following are our opinions of probable costs for three different construction scenarios involving the West Fairlee, VT public buildings known as Bean Hall and the Community Building. Our budget numbers are based on structural drawings provided by Tim Schaal and descriptions provided by the members of the town selectboard.

All numbers will need to be finalized once final plans and specifications are prepared. These figures are meant only to serve as a guide to help in the decision-making process. They are based on past projects and square footage formulas. The itemization is as follows:

Option 1 –

Estimate to leave the Community Building as it currently stands as of today. Complete all repairs as described by Tim Schaal to Bean Hall and create a Town Office on the 1st floor. The remaining floors of Bean Hall will remain unimproved.
Projected Costs - \$492,084

Option 2 –

Erect a new single story building on the existing foundation of Bean Hall. The new building will house the Town Clerk's Office. The Community Building will remain as is. Bean Hall will be torn down to the foundation.
Projected Costs - \$579,720

Option 3 –

Perform structural repairs to Bean Hall as per Tim Schaal's specifications & plans. Renovate the Multi-purpose Room in the Community Building for the town offices.
Projected Costs - \$227,584 (Bean Hall structural renovations)
 \$173,100 (Community Building work)
Total \$400,684

Note: The cost to demolish either building is approximately \$75,000 (as included in option 2).

Please feel free to call with any questions.
Please remember that these figures are just our opinion of probable cost!

Tim Porter
Owner