

**Town of Londonderry, Vermont
Selectboard**

Meeting Minutes

Monday, January 6, 2020

Twitchell Building - 100 Old School Street, South Londonderry, VT

Board Members Present: James Ameden, Georgianne Mora, Taylor Prouty, Thomas Cavanagh, and Robert Forbes.

Board Members Absent: None.

Others in Attendance: Town Officials – Town Administrator Shane O’Keefe, Town Treasurer Tina Labeau, and Town Clerk Kelly Pajala. Others – Bruce Frauman (GNAT).

1. Call meeting to order

Selectboard Chair Jim Ameden called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

2. Additions or deletions to the agenda

None.

3. Minutes Approval – Meeting of December 16, 2019

George Mora moved to approve the minutes of the Selectboard meeting of December 16, 2019, seconded by Taylor Prouty, passed unanimously.

4. Selectboard Pay Orders

Pay orders were reviewed and signed by the Board members. Shane O’Keefe inquired as to whether in the next pay order the Board would be willing to reimburse his \$440 cost of annual membership in the International City/County Managers Association (ICMA). He described the value that membership provides, such as the ability to do research on policies and ordinances from other communities across the country. There were questions from the Board as to the value to the Town of paying for this. O’Keefe will provide further information at the next meeting

5. Announcements/Correspondence

O’Keefe noted the following upcoming meetings:

- Jan 7 - 3:00 PM Water/Wastewater study kickoff meeting
- Jan 9 - 3:00 PM Town Office Planning Project working group
- Jan 9 - 6:30 PM Emerald Ash Borer public meeting (Town Hall)
- Jan 13 - 3:30 PM Planning Commission meeting with Bylaw consultant
- Jan 15 - 5:30 PM Development Review Board regular meeting

Tina Labeau added that there would be a public presentation given by SeVEDS at the Town Office on the evening of THU, Feb 13 about its services.

Correspondence included in the meeting package was as follows:

- Suit by Emanuel Contos regarding tax deeding of property at 104 Tallwood Circle, received 12/26/2019.
- 2019 Equalization Study Results issued by the Vermont Department of Taxes, dated 12/20/2019. It was noted that the results were excellent and credit is due to the efforts of Sandra Clark and the Board of Listers.
- An application for a special event permit, dated 12/19/2019, from Long Trail Brewing Company for a sapling event at magic Mountain on 3/8/2020.
- A notice from the Vermont Department of Health regarding a training series related to the Town Health Officer position, dated 12/17/2019.
- A letter from Catamount Solar, dated 12/20/2019, providing notice of intent to submit an application for a Certificate of Public Good to the Vermont Department of Public Service, Public Utility Commission to install a net-metered solar facility at property located at 904 Reilly Road.

Kelly Pajala noted that the 2020 Transfer Station permits were now available, and that dogs can also be licensed at any time.

George Mora mentioned that the recent community newsletter mentions absentee ballots and could be clarified to avoid confusion Pajala stated that applications can be filed at any time and that ballots would be available after January 17. She added that if one wants to vote early or absentee a special application is necessary, and that one must declare whether they want either a Democratic or Republican ballot. It does not mean that you are registering for a specific party.

6. Visitors and Concerned Citizens

None.

7. Town Officials Business

a. Town Treasurer – Discussion on local option tax

Following up from the discussion at the previous meeting, Labeau shared a proposed Town Meeting article that had been vetted by the Vermont League of Cities and Towns. O'Keefe noted that the VLCT had opined that the Board must vote on whether to recommend a Town Meeting article on the local option tax.

George Mora moved to recommend, pursuant to 24 VSA Section 138(b), that the Voters of the Town of Londonderry vote at the next Town Meeting to assess a local option tax for sales, rooms, meals, and alcoholic beverages, and to include in the Town Meeting warning an article providing for the same, seconded by Tom Cavanaugh, passed unanimously

b. Town Treasurer – 2021 Budget Review

Labeau presented to the Board the draft budget for review and discussion. In summary, she stated that the budget requires raising just over \$1.6 million in taxes, and a rough calculation would amount to a tax increase of 7 cents on the municipal rate. She mentioned that a \$100,000 home would see about an additional \$73 of taxes. She spoke about some highlighted budget items, and Ameden asked to review significant increases or changes.

The \$30,000 expense for delinquent taxes collection may become income depending on a potential vote on the collection process.

A new \$10,000 expense for a new assessment field inspector will be somewhat offset by reduced salaries elsewhere.

Software costs have increased for NEMRC as previously discussed with the Board. Audit expenses are down as we're going into a partial audit year.

Town Office repairs and maintenance is proposed at \$22,000, but after discussion this figure was agreed to be changed to \$5,000.

Regarding the Transfer Station, due to a change of hauler, hauling charges are estimated to increase by \$95,000, with some offsetting revenue from contributing communities. Ameden raised the matter of the Town being charged by the hauling contractor by weight while we accept trash at the facility by the bag, and that by having scales we could eliminate this disconnect by charging visitors by weight. He stated that there is certainly a loss taken to the facility, particularly with construction and demolition debris. It was noted that there are expenses for personnel, equipment and maintenance with use of scales. It was agreed that over the next year the Town should look into the cost of installing scales. There was discussion about the way that participating towns contribute to the cost of operations of the Transfer Station. Whether population is the best way to do that or by other metrics is not certain. The Board discussed whether to allocate to towns the administrative staff costs related to the Transfer Station. After discussion it was agreed to reduce the hauling fee cost from \$225,000 to \$175,000.

O'Keefe noted that there could be a cost for site mitigation at the septage fields but that is uncertain at this time.

Regarding Town Parks, Pajala discussed a \$10,000 expense for a new lawnmower for the parks, the revenue for which would be from the Riverside Park Fund and not property taxes. While grounds maintenance costs would increase to accommodate groundskeeping efforts by staff (weed-whacking, etc.), the Road Crew would be able to handle the mowing with a new/efficient machine and thereby eliminate the need to contract mowing the parks.

Regarding summer highways, Ameden mentioned that calcium chloride expenses are increased \$12,000 to provide for the proper application mix that will provide long-term maintenance benefits and reduced overall maintenance costs.

The highway equipment budget purchase of \$40,000 is for a new basic 4-door diesel 150-type pickup with plow to replace the 550 vehicle that is on its last legs. There was further discussion about highway trucks and their replacement schedule.

A \$321,000 Highway Department expense for the Derry Woods Road culvert project is offset to some degree by \$235,000 of VTrans grants, \$60,000 of which is not committed. There was discussion about reducing the cost of this project by providing an alternate means of access

to the road by way of Cobble Ridge Road. Past difficulties with this solution were also discussed.

The budget carries a new allocation of \$3,000 for addressing the emerald ash borer infestation. There was discussion about the establishment of a capital reserve fund for this effort.

Regarding the cost of policing, the proposed Town Meeting warning currently shows a \$15,000 expense for the Vermont State Police contract. Labeau noted that we have only received three bills from the VSP since July, but that we are receiving increased income from fines this year. There was discussion about reducing and even elimination this expense. It was decided to change the warning article to seek \$5,000 of funding from the Voters.

O’Keefe raised the idea of separating his position, with the Board hiring a Zoning Administrator who could also serve as Health officer. He provided to the Board a breakout of expenses related to this proposal. The difference in overall cost in the FY2021 budget would amount to \$26,800 for a 20 hour/week position earning \$25/hour. The existing assistant position is not addressed in this proposal, which amounts to \$17,000 to \$18,000 cost per year. There was discussion about past Zoning Administrators and both hours and pay. The ability to get someone to work only 20 hours per week was questioned. O’Keefe will return with different iterations of scenarios on this proposal.

8. Transfer Station

a. Updates

Tom Cavanagh mentioned that the new part-time Sunday employee was working out well.

9. Roads and Bridges

a. Updates

Ameden noted the following usage for the month of December 2019:

Salt – 439 tons Sand – 1,382 yards Vehicle Fuel – Not available
Heating fuel (gallons): Town Garage 190, Town office 200, Transfer Station 95

Use of salt and sand was discussed. Ameden mentioned that he and Labeau had discussed tracking usage, and Labeau will begin to establish a spreadsheet of salt and sand use, and add information on weather to help with assessment going forward.

Ameden mentioned that the staff was getting along well even with the wear and tear from the recent unpredictable, inconsistent storms. And the equipment is holding up well, and there have been few complaints from the community.

10. Old Business

a. Use of the Town Offices as a FEMA operations center during an emergency

The Board reviewed a letter from the Emergency Management Director of the Vermont Department of Health regarding communities throughout the state willing to accommodate

FEMA in times of emergency. It was noted that the Board had acted on this same matter on 1/7/2019.

George Mora moved to offer the use of the Town Office to FEMA for emergency response purposes in emergency situations, seconded by Bob Forbes, passed unanimously

b. Water/Wastewater study – Planning Advance Agreement with Vermont ANR-DEC

O’Keefe recalled that this project is being funded at \$32,000 entirely by the State of Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation and that the Town would only have to pay it back if it decides to move forward with a construction project recommended by the study. The project steering committee is holding a kickoff meeting the following day with the consultant.

Bob Forbes moved to authorize the Town Administrator to sign the Engineering Planning Advance Agreement with the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation for the Community Water/Wastewater study on behalf of the Town, seconded by George Mora, passed unanimously

11. New Business

a. Review draft Town Meeting Warning

Labeau presented and the Board reviewed the first draft of the Town meeting Warning. Of significance were articles on the cost of policing, which has been dropped to \$5,000 earlier in the meeting, the appropriations to community organizations, and the establishment of 1% local option taxes.

Pajala mentioned that the deadline for petitions is January 16. The proposed final Town Meeting Warning will be presented to the for approval on the January 20 regular meeting.

b. Discuss candidates night

The Board discussed when to hold the yearly candidates night. Labeau suggested doing t on the evening of a Selectboard meeting. It was agreed to hold the candidates night for 6:00 PM on February 17, before the Selectboard.

Pajala is offering to conduct some training for elections officials, particularly for the presidential primary.

c. Discuss Delinquent Tax Collector position [17 VSA 2646(9) & 2651d(a)]

Labeau mentioned that Joan Dayton will not be running for the Collector of Delinquent Taxes and that it may be a good opportunity to bring this responsibility into the Town Office by Selectboard appointment. This would allow for all collection proceeds to be considered revenue and not paid out to the elected collector.

It was explained that on the Town Meeting Warning, an article to have the position of Collector of Delinquent Taxes become an appointed position would come before the article

on election of officers, and the article that would normally be for the election of a Collector of Delinquent Taxes would be passed over if the prior article passed.

Bob Forbes moved to include on the Town Meeting Warning an article to establish the Collector of Delinquent Taxes as an appointed position, seconded by George Mora, passed unanimously.

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9. **Adjourn**

Bob Forbes moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by George Mora, passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 PM.

The next regular meeting of the Selectboard is scheduled for January 20, 2020.

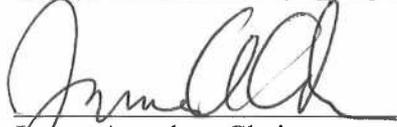
Respectfully Submitted,



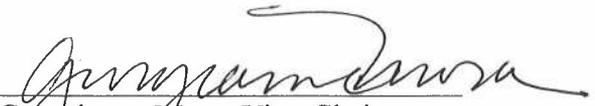
Shane P. O'Keefe
Town Administrator

Approved January 20, 2020.

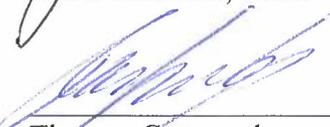
LONDONDERRY SELECTBOARD



James Ameden, Chair



Georgianne Mora, Vice-Chair



Thomas Cavanagh



Robert Forbes



Taylor Prouty

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