



**Town of Fairfax**  
**Select Board Meeting**  
**August 17, 2020, - 7:00pm**

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The drafted minutes presented below are unapproved subject to corrections and/or additions at the next Selectboard meeting. Those corrections and/or additions will be written to an amended version of the minutes, which will also be made available to the public.

**Selectboard Members Present:** Steve Cormier; Chair, Sheri Rainville; Vice-Chair, Stephen Bessette, Duane Leach & Randy DeVine

**Public Present:** Christopher Cota, Carol Stanley, Owen Senesac

**Employees Present:** Brad Docheff (Town Manager), Debbie Woodward, Brian LaClair

**Call to Order:** S. Cormier called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

**Announcements/Additions & Deletions:** None

**Minutes:**

8-3-2020 S. Rainville made the motion to accept the minutes as written, seconded by Duane Leach, all in favor.

**Accounts Payable & Payroll Warrants:**

8-10-2020 The Town and Utility warrants were reviewed by S. Rainville.

8-17-2020 The Town and Utility warrants were reviewed by S. Cormier.

**Public Forum:** Deb Woodward wanted to give her thanks to all poll workers and support staff who helped put on the Primary Election at the Town Garage. She also thanked the Highway Department for their support and assistance with the event.

**Correspondence:** None

**Facility Rental Agreement Amendment**

The Recreation Department has made some minor changes to the existing Facility Rental Application, including a provision to allow for the licensed furnishing of alcohol at special events, and an updated fee schedule.

Brian LaClair presented on the motivation for the changes and the new parameters, noting that any application that included service of alcohol would also have to be granted a Special Event permit.

Some minor grammatical edits will be made to the application, but the Selectboard had no objections to its usage going forward. R. DeVine noted that the work and improvements Brian is doing with regard to this are important and positive.

### **Town Manager Updates:**

- The Northwestern Vermont Communications Union District is now having regular meetings, and has grown to include Enosburg, Fairfax, Montgomery, Georgia, Fairfield, and Alburgh, with more communities slotted to vote on it soon. Chris Cota (Fairfax representative) presented on some of the discussions and work that the CUD is undertaking. He noted that the NWCUD has already been awarded a \$60,000 grant to conduct a feasibility study and create a business plan, and that more funding opportunities are being applied for.
- Projects—
  - Shepardson Hollow Bridge construction continues and should be finished soon. Tim and Brad will be visiting the site tomorrow (8/18) to review the work with the contractor and engineer.
  - Community Corner lot improvements continue. A new message board has been installed and Brian is considering the addition of steps at the entrance to make it safer.
  - An advisory Pedestrian/Bike lane has been added to Maple Street to increase the safety of residents traveling to the Rec fields, bike path, school, and community library. Thanks to the Highway Department for that addition.
- Brad continues to work toward other pedestrian improvements. He took part in a webinar on pedestrian safety and is submitting paperwork to VTrans to be approved as MPM for the Sidewalk Project. He will be speaking with VTrans reps to determine the most appropriate funding options for further improvements in the village.
- We are exploring putting in a small parking lot on Maple Street to accommodate folks visiting the Recreation fields and bike path. There are currently only two spaces that are usable. Brad is doing environmental due diligence before any construction starts.
- Brad commended Deb Woodward, Lynn Parah, the Highway Department, David Raymond, the Selectboard, and all the JPs on the efforts for the drive-through election. There was a lot of positive feedback.
- There are plans to build an extension to the Fire Department training building. This will serve both as extra training space and will also house our sidewalk maintenance equipment. The cost is estimated at about \$3000, and Brad and David have discussed how the costs for the improvement will be shared. Brad suggests that the non-FD share be paid from the Settlement Fund, as this is where sidewalk maintenance funding has been coming from.
- The Town is looking into running internet to the Community Center building. Brad feels that the challenges presented by COVID-19, especially with the introduction of remote learning for students, have exacerbated the existing need for connectivity. This is a possible short-term solution. Brad is hoping to partner with the school to address the challenges faced by students with poor or nonexistent internet connections.
- There is a need to be flexible and creative with how staff continues to work through COVID challenges and the added responsibilities for

parents with remote learning. Brad plans to get a new laptop for Amber (ZA) so that she can work more effectively from home. Both Amber and Brad will need to work remotely with students at home for a portion of their work week.

S. Cormier asked if the rest of the staff had the equipment they needed if remote work became the norm. This appears to be the case, but the Town will be responsive should more needs arise.

S. Bessette asked how the Town will address challenges for non-office employees, namely the Highway Department, should anyone become ill during the Fall. Tim has a part-time backup already, and has been proactive with planning. Should a health crisis affect Town staff, we will rely on regional and state partners for support.

- There will be a public hearing on the Working Dog Septic Application on Thursday, 8/20, at 6pm. Brad will share a link to the meeting by request.
- Brad is working on a volunteer/intern agreement based on outreach from Owen Senesac. This will be shared when finalized.
- The Planning Commission is looking for new members. We are posting on social media and our website.
- An Eagle Scout project to do some light landscaping around the town office sign was long-delayed, but Brad received a call about having it done very soon. The Board had no objections and thinks this is a good idea for an improvement.

#### **Other Business:**

Duane asked about some trees along Huntville Road that had caused damage to a vehicle during last week's storm. Brad and Tim have both been out to meet with the property owner and assess responsibility. The property owner reportedly has a plan to remove the trees, and Brad advised the owner of the vehicle to consult his insurance company on filing any claim.

#### **Adjournment:**

At 7:46 D. Leach made the motion to adjourn, seconded by Sheri, all in favor.

The minutes were respectfully submitted by Brad Docheff; Town Manager.

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Steven Cormier  
Selectboard Chair

\*\* This meeting was held virtual through Zoom. Randy participated via phone.