

Minutes of the June 9, 2008 Regular Meeting of the Board of Selectmen.

Present: Neal Fox, Bill Richards, Joe De Freitas, Delbert Cloud, Kevin Geiger, Eric Benson, Geneva Gaiko, Mary Floyd, Janet Burnham, Victoria Weber, Davis Dimock, Amy Bergamo, Jason Lewis, John Duddie, Kristen Judkins, Winslow Ayer, Thomas Burgos, and Mary Anderson of the "Herald of Randolph."

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM, the Board first reviewing and approving the weekly payroll and payables. The Constable's report of June 1, 2008 was reviewed and placed on file. By motion of Bill Richards, seconded by Joe De Freitas and unanimously carried, the Board approved renewal of Line of Credit #64020119 with Mascoma Savings Bank per provisions of V.S.A. Title 24 Section 1786. The minutes of the May 10, 2008 meeting of the Board of Selectmen were approved by motion of Neal Fox, seconded by Bill Richards and unanimously carried. With respect to prior business, Delbert Cloud noted that the Town's application for Water Department planning funds has been included on the State's "Priority List," this being for assistance in relocating the water main suspended from River Street Bridge.

The Town Hall Finance Committee minutes of May 29, 2008, the Health Officer's report of February – April 2008, and the regional planning commission minutes of April 23, 2008 and April 9, 2008 were all reviewed and placed on file.

Delbert Cloud then reported on the status of flood repair work stemming from the July 11, 2007 flood event. This included a status report on the Emergency Watershed Protection program for which three Bethel landowners have been deemed eligible to receive assistance. Cloud explained the remaining repair work, and it was agreed that hydraulic solutions should be installed per quotation from Concrete Systems, Inc. for three sites. Cloud also emphasized that the storm was not anticipated and resulted in significant budget overruns to cover the prescribed local share of costs; he suggested that these costs should be included in any future bonding issue in which the Town might participate.

A projection of the grand list, received from the Board of Listers, was examined. It was noted that the grand list is expected to be nearly at the value projected at the time of Town Meeting.

At 7:05 PM, Chairman Fox welcomed Kevin Geiger of the Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee Regional Planning Commission. Per appointment, Mr. Geiger explained the purpose and content of a draft "Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan" which his commission has prepared for the Town's consideration. The Board acknowledged the draft to be appropriate. Chairman Fox asked Mr. Geiger for any recommendations he might have, Mr. Geiger's response being: (1) to continue maintaining a culvert/short span bridge inventory, (2) incorporate a railroad "Derailment Annex" within the subject PDM Plan (which he would provide), and (3) continue to send a representative to the Local Emergency Planning Committee meetings, Assistant Fire Chief David Aldrighetti presently being the Town's representative. Chairman Fox thanked Mr. Geiger for his presentation, and Mr. Geiger departed at 7:35 PM.

Chairman Fox then welcomed Eric Benson, who advised that he would like to speak with the Board per appointment as the Town's representative to the regional "Transportation Advisory Committee," and also as the current president of the Bethel Business Association. Regarding the former, Mr. Benson spoke of the three bridge projects now scheduled on State Highways within the Town, foremost among them being the replacement of the River Street Bridge. He informed the Board that the Vermont Agency of Transportation is expected to ask the regional Transportation Advisory Commissions to recommend new projects rather than only reviewing the AOT list for prioritizing. With respect to the Bethel Business Association matters, he asked for permission to schedule a hike within the Branliere Town Forest on July 17, 2008, to be followed by a barbeque at Fort Fortitude; the intent in part being to explore more full-use potentials for both locations. The Board members concurred that these activities would be okay. Mr. Benson also suggested the BBA would like to assist in repairing or removing dilapidated benches in the downtown, assist however possible in eliminating overhead utility cables, and coordinate with the Bethel Council on the Arts with respect to that committee's programming.

Chairman Fox noted that members of the Bethel Council on the Arts were present and suggested that some dialogue would be helpful, to facilitate better understanding of the needs and interests of all parties. Thomas Burgos replied that he has been a long-time member of the Council. He said the Council is always seeking input from the public on desirable programming, has conducted surveys to garner suggestions, and would welcome new membership at any time. He expressed satisfaction over an Arts program coordinated within the school curriculum, and advised that the Council is presently working with the Bethel Historical Society to do a program this coming July. The members of the Council acknowledged that it is most beneficial for

their efforts if the Town continues maintenance of the facilities at the Church Street Common as a priority. Chairman Fox clarified the membership of the Council, noting that the Town Report will need to correct the roster of membership at its next publication. Members of the Council then departed.

At 8:07, Chairman Fox invited Amy Bergamo, Town Hall Finance Committee Chair, to address the subject of the Town Hall rehabilitation project. Ms. Bergamo expressed concern that the current construction season is fleeting past, and suggested that the Committee needs direction from the Selectboard regarding how to continue its efforts at this time.

Chairman Fox replied that the Selectboard is working on matters associated with various money issues including the Town Hall rehabilitation. He advised that, if a construction bond were to be presented to the voters, he would like to see the entire project finished via such approach, and he questioned if \$600,000 as has been recommended by the Committee would be sufficient. He emphasized that he would not want to have the voters approve a bond issue and then still have to return later to ask for annual appropriation(s) to finish the project. He added that he would also like to see income projections for the property, realizing at the same time that projected income would likely not be sufficient to provide for all expenses in maintaining the building.

Amy Bergamo suggested that continued fundraising would be done to help maintain the building over time; Bill Richards expressed a note of caution, stating he would be hesitant to depend on contributions to adequately attend the needs of the property.

Joe De Freitas encouraged the Committee to make public presentation(s) of the rehabilitation plans, to promote understanding and to stimulate interest in the project.

Winslow Ayer clarified the basis of the \$600,000 recommendation for a bond issue, citing that amount as being the 50% local match given the architects 1.2 million renovation estimate, wherein the other 50% would be sought from various grants.

Discussion ensued over multiple aspects of the subject, encompassing potential grants, scopes of work, time frames, contract methodology, validity of estimates, etc. This culminated with the determination by the Selectboard supported by the public present, to discuss with the architect how to best move forward expeditiously with the project, and to resolve with the architect how his services can be committed to the project. Both Delbert Cloud and Amy Bergamo will solicit the architect's assistance in these matters, particularly focusing on the need to correlate specific portions of the work with the parameters of specific funding sources.

Victoria Weber observed that the Committee's focus might be shifted away from fundraising per se. and more toward promoting the rehabilitation project and a favorable bond vote in support of it.

With discussion concluded, most members of the public departed at approximately 9:45 PM. Jason Lewis asked Chairman Fox if it would be possible for the Whitcomb Alumni Association to conduct a coin drop on Main Street on graduation day, June 14<sup>th</sup>. Subject to the customary conditions as would be obtainable from the Town Manager, motion to approve the request was made by Bill Richards, seconded by Joe De Freitas and unanimously carried.

Delbert Cloud then presented a brief over-view of solid waste program business as would be addressed in joint session with the Royalton Board on June 23, 2008. Of particular importance is the need to have all Towns utilizing the solid waste program to gain understanding of the recently State-approved "Solid Waste Implementation Plan," and formally adopt it by their legislative bodies prior to September 12, 2008. The Selectboard agreed that one of its July meetings could be scheduled in part as one of the two required public hearings on the Plan.

The Board agreed that two vacancies now exist on the Fire Department, which presently numbers at 23, and that the vacancies should be advertised and filled using the "Rules Applicable to Filling Fire Department Vacancies." Motion to advertise the vacancies was made by Bill Richards, seconded by Joe De Freitas and unanimously carried.

The Board next reviewed a request from Rhonda Ketner d.b.a. the "Second Cup Café" for water and sewage capacity. Commitment of an additional 1,650 gallons/day flow was approved by motion of Joe De Freitas, seconded by Bill Richards and unanimously carried.

A June 2, 2008 letter of resignation from the position of Green Up Day Coordinator was received from Chris Hemond. This was accepted with regret.

A letter in appreciation of the May 30, 2008 work day was endorsed, for conveyance to the students and adult coordinators who performed extensive work on various Town facilities.

A letter of appreciation was signed for the generous assistance Kenneth & Charlene Bostrom have provided to the Town Hall rehabilitation project; without such assistance the roof/structural work recently completed by Summit Construction could not have been done.

The following communications were reviewed and placed on file: (1) a May 23, 2008 letter from the National Trust for Historic Preservation, acknowledging the Town of Bethel as a member in good standing, (2) a May 2008 memo from the Vermont League of Cities & Towns re. a "Model for Low Impact Development Stormwater Management Bylaw," and (3) a copy of the recent "Wastewater System & Potable Water Supply Permit" issued by the State of Vermont for a two lot subdivision to be done by Gordon and Sharon Campbell at their property near 2678 River Street.

At approximately 10:00 PM, motion to enter executive session to discuss issues associated with litigation in which the Town is a party was made by Bill Richards, seconded by Joe De Freitas and unanimously carried. Delbert Cloud was the only person remaining with the Board for the executive session. No minutes were kept. Upon return to open meeting at 10:25 PM the only motion was that to adjourn, this being made by Bill Richards, seconded by Joe De Freitas and unanimously carried.

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Neal Fox

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Bill Richards

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Joe De Freitas