

Minutes of the July 7, 2008 Regular Meeting of the Board of Selectmen.

Present: Neal Fox, Bill Richards, Joe De Freitas, Delbert Cloud, and Geneva Gaiko.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by Chairman Neal Fox, the Board first reviewing and approving the weekly payroll and payables. The minutes of the June 23, 2008 meeting of the Selectboard were discussed, with specific reference to provisions of the "Cemetery Rules and Regulations." After clarification of procedures associated with the placement of corner markers, the minutes themselves were approved by motion of Bill Richards, seconded by Joe De Freitas and unanimously carried. The Board also endorsed a letter to Joann Wood re. the Council on the Arts. A memo from Tom Burgos dated June 27, 2008 re. the Council and its committee membership was also reviewed and placed on file. The Constable's report of June 29, 2008 similarly was reviewed and filed.

The Board then reviewed the Town Hall Committee minutes of June 26, 2008. It was agreed that Delbert Cloud should inquire about Royalton's reasons for returning to Selectboard oversight of the Royalton Academy building in lieu of utilizing a citizen committee, as was recommended per the subject minutes. The Board also asked Delbert Cloud to consult with Committee Chair Amy Bergamo re. the development of a business plan for the Town Hall.

The ECFiber committee minutes of June 10, 2008 were next reviewed and discussed. It was noted that another copy (revised) of the "Interlocal Contract" will be presented to Selectboards and they "should anticipate that they will need to approve the ILC in 6 – 8 weeks." The Board members expressed hope that the subject contract will be available sufficiently in advance of the anticipated approval date, to allow adequate time for review.

A communication from the Royalton Administrative Assistant dated June 26, 2008 re. the Royalton Selectboard's approval of recommended rate increases for the Solid Waste Program was noted. Per the recommendation presented at the joint Selectboard meeting of June 23, 2008, motion was made by Joe De Freitas, seconded by Bill Richards and unanimously carried, to increase the solid waste rates effective September 1, 2008 as follows: 15-gallon bag @ \$1.75, 30-gallon bag @ \$3.25, 45-gallon bag @ \$5.00, and tonnage rate @ \$135 per ton.

Delbert Cloud advised that Arden Edmunds has examined a copy of the proposed revisions to the "Cemetery Rules and Regulations" and voiced his agreement with the measures proposed. Discussion ensued and it was decided that clarification of Section III Item 10 should be made, to assure appropriate methodology and placement of cremation urns. Delbert Cloud will provide suggestions for the Board at a forthcoming meeting; action was tabled pending such submission.

A June 25, 2008 letter from the Vermont Water Supply Division was reviewed and placed on file, this letter confirming planning funds are available from the "Drinking Water State Revolving Fund" to pay for design and permitting costs associated with relocation of the water main on River Street Bridge.

A June 20, 2008 letter/attachments from Gifford Medical Center re. the "Last Mile Ride '08" program was next examined. It was agreed that the subject event is well-planned and monitored, and the Board members did not have further questions regarding the matter. No action was required or taken.

Budget Status Reports for the year ended June 20, 2008 were reviewed, along with Aged Receivables reports on water, sewer, and delinquent taxes. A June 30, 2008 letter from the Commissioner of the Vermont Department of Taxes was noted, this setting forth the State Education Tax Rates for FY'09: Non-Residential: \$1.3039; Homestead: \$1.3482.

Delbert Cloud provided the Board with tallies of budget overruns stemming from: increases in the cost of petroleum products during the 18 month fiscal year transition budget, ambulance service budget increases over the two year cycle covered by that same transition interval, legal expenses above budget associated with defense of public highways, and diminution of Grand List values subsequent to tax billings as resulted through the statutory tax grievance procedure which promulgated revenue shortfalls. The Board members agreed the resulting deficit should be dealt with over a short term interval rather than by bonding for long-term retirement of the obligations, which for the most part are not investments providing future value.

The Board then discussed the status of the most current Grand List value and the resulting tax rate necessary to support the FY'09 budget. It was determined that a rate slightly greater than \$.53 would be necessary for the future budget year, and per provisions of Vermont Statutes Annotated Title 24 Section 1523(a) that 5%

should be levied upon the Grand List to help liquidate the afore-noted deficit. The resulting tax rate was set at \$.56 by motion of Bill Richards, seconded by Joe De Freitas and unanimously carried.

The following communications were reviewed and placed on file: (1) Public Hearing notice re. the accessibility modifications project at the Town Office, (2) a June 20, 2008 letter from the Vermont Telecommunications Authority re. available project grants, (3) a June 23, 2008 letter from the Vermont Telecommunications Authority re. initiatives of Comcast in providing improved internet services, (4) an introductory letter from "802 Creative Partners," (5) a June 24, 2008 report from the Randolph Planning Commission re. proposed changes to that Town's Zoning Ordinance, and (6) the Summer 2008 Newsletter of the Connecticut River Joint Commissions.

At 9:20 PM the motion was made by Bill Richards to enter executive session to discuss matters associated with real estate acquisitions for which prior public knowledge would not be in the best interest of the Town; the motion was 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 9:35 PM, the only motion was to adjourn, this being made by Bill Richards, seconded by Neal Fox and unanimously carried.

Neal Fox

Bill Richards

Joe De Freitas