

Minutes of the September 10, 2007 Meeting of the Board of Selectmen.

Present: Neal Fox, Bill Richards, Eric Benson, Delbert Cloud, Toni Paquette, Geneva Gaiko, JoAnn Mills, Peter Sullivan, Jon Hodgdon, Tom Anderson, Donald Phillips, and Rachel Marvin.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00PM by Chairman Neal Fox, the Board first reviewing and approving the weekly payroll and payables. The Constable's reports of August 19, 2007 and September 9, 2007 were reviewed and placed on file.

Chairman Fox then welcomed Donald Phillips and Rachel Marvin of Forcier, Aldrich and Associates, that engineering firm having been retained to review and update the user charge system for the water and wastewater departments. Mr. Phillips briefly reviewed the experience his firm has with such matters and the agreement for services. Rachel Marvin then explained how the "Equivalent Unit" list has been updated with assistance from the Town Office. Discussion ensued re. the methodology by which the list of "Equivalent Users" is then utilized to produce quarterly billings in support of the respective departments' budgets. The Selectboard members have been concerned that reserve funds for both departments may not be keeping pace with the cost of maintaining systems, given today's level of costs. Mr. Phillips was asked how the Town's rates compared to typical rates in his acquaintance, his response being that the Town's rates are quite low. It was agreed that Forcier, Aldrich and Associates should evaluate the matter further to determine the level of rates appropriate for adequate maintenance and replacement of facility infrastructure in addition to meeting current expenses. Mr. Phillips and Ms. Marvin departed at approximately 7:30PM.

The minutes of the August 27, 2007 meeting of The Board of Selectmen were then reviewed and approved; motion for approval was made by Eric Benson, seconded by Bill Richards and unanimously carried. Under "old business" the Board executed a "Municipal Line of Credit" in the amount of \$400,000.00 with Mascoma Savings Bank as had been approved at the previous meeting, this note being for interim expenses associated with repairs to highways and bridges stemming from the July 11, 2007 flooding.

By motion of Eric Benson, seconded by Bill Richards and unanimously carried, The Board approved a "Report and Order" whereby it was ordered: "(1) that the purported public right-of-way commencing in the vicinity of the Royalton Town Line proceeding Northerly approximately 1200 feet and potentially serving to connect Vermont Castings Road with Bridge Street is hereby discontinued, and (2) per V.S.A. Title 19, Section 711, this "Report and Order" shall be submitted for recording by the Bethel Town Clerk."

"Budget Status Reports" as of 9-4-07 were then reviewed and placed on file for The Town General Fund, Water Department, Wastewater Department, and the Solid Waste Program.

At this time, the officers of the Board of Directors for the White River Valley Ambulance were welcomed and introductions exchanged. As the newly elected chair of that Board, Tom Anderson provided an update on the prioritizing the Board members have done on tasks at hand, and the philosophy by which the Board of Directors is working to provide the services needed by area Towns.

Peter Sullivan expressed his belief that much progress is being made to keep the ambulance service viable, and suggested that considerable discussion will be held with officials of member Towns as time goes by since the ambulance service needs to maintain accountability to the Towns which originally formed the program. He noted that the program does truly need an administrator, that office having been vacant for several months.

JoAnn Mills emphasized that The Board of Directors is taking the task of finding administrative services very seriously and is seeking input from many sources rather than assuming that all the answers are already known.

Tom Anderson added that the “program model” is actually representative of the trend being taken by ambulance services, and which in general appears to work the best.

Jon Hodgdon, as newly elected Treasurer for The Board of Directors, offered to meet with the Selectboard at whatever frequency might be desired, to share financial information.

Discussion continued regarding the ambulance program, this being informational in nature and not requiring any formal action by the Board. The ambulance’s Board of Directors departed at approximately 9:30PM.

The Selectboard members discussed the status of payments for ambulance service, and agreed that Delbert Cloud should prepare payment based on the 2006 voter approved budget through June 30<sup>th</sup>, and at the 2007-08 voter approved budget rate for July, August and September.

Delbert Cloud then provided the Board members with a status report on the extent of road rehabilitation completed since the July flooding, the cost for that work to date, and outlined the remaining work to be done. Some of the remaining work, particularly in the Gilead Brook area, will need to be evaluated further with FEMA officials before repair plans can be finalized.

It was noted that the Camp Brook Road, not being eligible for FEMA assistance, is still not repaired since no Federal Highway assistance program has been put in place thus far. It was agreed that the matter would be considered at the next meeting on 9-24-07 to decide the extent of repair which would be prudent for the town to make given that bids to make the full repairs are in excess of \$100,000.00.

The following communications were then reviewed and placed on file: (1) water quality reports from the White River Partnership for August 22 and 29, (2) a 9-6-07 memo from the Vermont League of Cities and Towns, (3) the “Proposed 2008 Vermont Municipal Policy” of the Vermont League of Cities and Towns.

With no further business to attend, motion to adjourn was made by Bill Richards, seconded by Eric Benson and unanimously carried.

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Neal Fox

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Eric Benson

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Bill Richards