Town of Montgomery - P.O. Box 356
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Minutes of the
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
SELECTBOARD & WATER COMMISSION
Monday, November 20th 2023
6:30pm
Town Office Conference Room (86 Mountain Road)

View Zoom Recording:
https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/6Pzh54MbTJzVde2LnovsfRkERQMgIREfq0fno_fFSc_6dpbIT-E4W56cf5CS4Crs.q_lp_XUQDYB-hebJ

Passcode: D&M51J?a

In Attendance: Emily Kimball, Charlie Hancock, Suzanne Dollois, Mark Brouillette, Leanne Barnard; Patrick Calecas, Lynn Locher, Peter Locher, Joan Hildreth, Bill Hildreth, Brian Fletcher – John Turner Consulting, Brad Elliott, Tom Stanley, Karen Stanley, Shelia Marshia, Jim Marshia, Larry Letourneau

On Zoom: Sue Wilson, Kip Potter, Forest Anderson, Carissa Stein, Dean Pierce, Merle VanGiesen, Laura Weston, Gabby Lumbra, Joanne Dennis

Meeting Called to order at 6:33pm

1. Review and make any changes to the agenda – add 'Property Purchase' under Wastewater (5b); remove item 6b

2. Review/approve minutes of the 11/6 meeting minutes

    a. Leanne moved to approve the minutes as written, Mark seconded. Motion approved 5-0-0.

3. Public Works - Updates *(discussion)*
    a. Longley Bridge Road/Trout River work update (*discussion*)
        i. Change Order – Brian Fletcher, John Turner Consulting, invited
            1. Brian Fletcher reports that his first day on the site was 7/11/23. The plans that he was given were two years old and out of date due to continued erosion. Quantities of materials were made off from the original survey. Brian assumed that everyone knew that material volumes were going to increase due to the continued erosion. Brain reports that he spoke with Mark weekly and so he "thought" he was all set.
            2. In late September Brian reports that he felt that there was too much material and that some needed to be removed.

3. Brian reviewed expenditure amounts against cost estimates
4. Charlie reports that according to Nidia (VTrans) no change order would be needed as the contract was written because the material items itself was in the original contract cost tables.
5. The town cannot wait to pay Kings Excavating until the spring, when the final balancing of the job will be reported. Currently King's is owed $271,000.
6. Mark reports that the town's original share was supposed to be $75,000. We continue to be under budget, due to savings in other areas.
7. Mark made a motion to approve the change order for additional material in the amount of $58,000, Charlie seconded. Motion passed 4-1-0 (Emily abstaining)

b. Other updates: we did take delivery of the back-up truck from The Town of Jay. It was purchased for $18,000.

4. Visitors (scheduled for 7pm)
    a. Tim Smith, Franklin County Industrial Development Corporation
        i. The goal of FCIDC is to attract manufacturing jobs to Franklin County. This has been the goal of the organization for the past 52 years. Each of the 17 towns in the county benefit from the organization's work.
            1. The organization is working to get a rest area built on 89 south bound. The hope would be to have people stop so and give them information about places to explore in the County.
            2. Franklin County Field Days has been asked to move from their current location in Swanton. They have one more year there. The organization is looking to help support Field Days find another suitable location.
            3. A strategic plan was written two years ago, the mission was altered because many of the employers in the region cannot find enough employees currently. As such, the organization is working to improve quality of life. The grants have been in amounts of $10,000 to various projects to meet this end.
            4. Tim reports to the board that as the town continues to move forward with the Wastewater Project that the board should begin looking for an operator for the water system because the current licensed workforce in the area is limited and that it is a long process in getting someone certified.
    b. Lauren Weston, Franklin County Natural Resources Conservation District re: Flood Resilience and Hazard Mitigation study for the Trout River, Black Falls Brook, and West Hill Brook
        i. A letter of support was issued for this study last year. Lauren is here to share that NRDC did receive the grant funding in order to begin this study. The Conservation District is looking forward to working with the town, and hoping to complete the work by 2025. The scope of the work is not action based, but it is data collecting. Lynn Locher extends a thank you to Carissa and Lauren for the immense amount of work that they have put into this project.
    c. Brad Elliot and friends re: (re)Formation of Grange Committee and ACCD *Better Places* grant program (*potential board action*)
        i. We do not currently have a Grange Committee/Town Hall Committee.

ii. There is a desire to have the Town Hall open for the winter to support community events.
iii. Mark reports that in the past people have been allowed to use the space in the winter but due to people not turning off the heat upon leaving and the costs are tremendous.
iv. There is interest from dance and yoga groups, a play group (Building Bright Futures), community dinners and movie nights.
v. Brad would like the town to consider keeping the space open for the winter so that these various groups can use the space throughout the winter.
vi. There may be a few people interested in forming a committee to oversee the Town Hall so that it can be used.
    1. People interested in this work would like to see a new sound system and a usable kitchen space as well. There is a possibility that this work could be grant funded through different organizations.
    2. The board is not opposed to standing up a committee to support all of this work. This will be calendared for the next meeting.
    3. There is efficiency work that can be done to help offset some of the heating costs and there was an energy audit that has recently been completed. The board will get those results to share.
vii. Brad will come back to Board with committee for consideration

d. Lynn Loher and Joan Hildreth re: Conservation Fund
    i. The conservation fund was voted in at the 2018 Town Meeting. In the spring of this year Joan and Bill were exploring applying for a grant from the fund. In this process the Conservation Commission noted that the funds in the reserve account did not appear to be the correct amount (rather they were too low). CC spoke with Charlie, and after investigation with Erin it was discovered that the multiplier used to transfer funds collected to the reserve account was off by a decimal point. The funds were collected, they just remained in the General Fund. None of the funds have been spent (which is why the GF still balanced, rather it was the internal funds transfer which was in error).
    ii. Erin consulted with the Auditors and was able to make a journal entry reconciling the fund and correcting the current reserve amount of approximately $41,000 by transferring the balance from the GF.
    iii. Recommendation was made to break out the CF rate in the tax bill in future years.

e. Lynn Locher re: Vincent's Bridge Swimming Hole
    i. Lynn met with the Kramer's (property owners) because of issues that they have had with garbage, pick up trucks driving through the river, etc. St. Onge owns the other side. There is a natural barrier of trees on one side. The Kramer's are looking for help from St. Onge to put some large rocks to stop the traffic through the river.
    ii. They are also wondering about putting up a dead end sign so that traffic does not drive all the way up to their yard; Mark will have Scott order the Dead End Sign.

f. Sue Wilson wants to remind folks that we are seeking Historic Designation for the Grange/Town Hall which will open up a lot of grant funding opportunities.

g. Gabby wants to know what the current status of the Class Four Gibou Rd. issue is; Charlie provided an update

    h. Forest Anderson joined the meeting to support the Waste Water project. He works with the Vermont Rural Water Association and hopes to assist us in this process. Charlie will follow up.

5. Old Business
    a. Streetscape Project update (*discussion)*
        i. No Update at this point
    b. Wastewater Project update *(discussion)*
        i. Property Purchase
            1. A proposal from the landowner was given to the town.
            2. Mark motioned to move into executive session to discuss property purchase (1 VSA 313 (2)), Suzanne seconded. Moved to executive session at 8:35pm.
            3. Mark motioned to exit Executive Session, Leanne seconded. Motion passed 5-0-0.
        ii. ARPA agreement and CWSRF loan/subsidy documents (*potential board action*)
            1. Charlie is still working with Engineering Team and State/Federal partners to tease apart the Village and Center costs estimates, and how they relate to the current funding stack's applicability to each phase of the project; trying to determine if the Center project is still viable without the Village.
            2. The engineers and the hydrogeologists are going back to the village to reexamine all of the possible sites that were previously identified in the village, but which were discounted due to limited capacity.
            3. We have been awarded approximately $2.7 million in state ARPA funding for the Wastewater Project. These funds would support all phases of the project.
            4. Mark motioned to sign the ARPA grant agreement, Emily seconded. Motion passed 5-0-0. Charlie will return executed agreement to the state.
    c. 98 Main St. / USPS (*update*)
        i. Charlie reached out to the post office to let them know that the town is looking at taking the building down and repurposing the property. We would like to have them back in the Center, and reiterated our desire to partner with them on this. He still has not heard back from anyone from USPS. Tim Chapin (Richford PO) had been helping us with this process, but he is retiring. Charlie will give them another week and then will begin reaching out for support from others.
    d. TD Bank ATM (*update*)
        i. Charlie reached out to TD Bank about the possibility that we may take down the building but would like to work with them to possibly build a stand-alone kiosk. He has not heard back from TD.

6. New Business
    a. Holiday Decorations/Tree Lighting (*potential board action*)
        i. No action as the company that we contacted for this work no longer has lifts.
    b. ~~Boundary Line Adjustment/Replacement PSB (*discussion/update*)~~ *Removed*
    c. Health Officer Appointment (*discussion/potential board action*)
        i. This position needs to be appointed. Charlie has reached out to a few people and is hoping to hear back.

d. Liquor/Tobacco Licenses (*board action)*
e. Fleet Permits (*board action*)

7. Open Mail / Sign Orders / Administrative Matters

8. Review Action Items for Board Members

9. Adjourn-Mark motioned to adjourn, Suzanne seconded. Motion passed 5-0-0, at 8:42pm.