Town of Montgomery - P.O. Box 356

Montgomery Center, VT 05471

802-326-4719

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REGULAR MEETING OF THE

SELECTBOARD & WATER COMMISSION

Monday, January 8th, 2025, 6:30pm

Town Office Conference Room (86 Mountain Road)

https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/j_Q5lD8JJ_UF_bVEFOJtfBLv-YMEDAbS5ygJMd-MXcYeaTMjzCyfykA8mdZfWYMg.DcXrh8je36AkTDK7

Passcode: 9Q2t^D53

In Attendance: Suzanne Dollois, Charlie Hancock, Emily Kimball, Mark Brouillette, Leanne Barnard, Scott Ovitt, Chris Pattullo, Peter Locher, Theresa Almy, Roberta Baker

On Zoom: Mike Sarnacki, Larry Letourneau, Merle VanGieson

1. Review and make any changes to the agenda
    a. Change the date to 2025
2. Review/approve minutes of the December 16th and December 31st meetings
    a. Suzanne motioned to approve the minutes of 12/16 with a second from Mark. Motion passed 3-0-2.
    b. Leanne motioned to approve the minutes of 12/31, Emily seconded. Motion passed 4-0-1.
3. Public Works

    a. Municipal Wastewater Project Updates (discussion)

i. Leanne addressed that there have been some claims of conflict of interest regarding the wastewater project because Abe owns a piece of property that would be impacted by the project. She has therefore chosen to recuse herself from discussions and voting on all related issues.

ii. Voter Petition Received re: Town Charter (board action)

a. Charlie read the second article of the petition into the record and reported that the petition was verified and then sent to the attorney for validation of language. It was deemed legally valid.

i. At this point this changes the planning and execution of town meeting due to the need for the town charter local option tax being by Australian Ballot.

ii. If these articles pass at Town Meeting it will essentially stop the project from moving forward due to funding

b. We are at the 90% deliverable estimates from the engineers. The project is over budget which is not surprising. We are looking at some measures to keep the core of the project while segmenting off other parts that could allow decisions to be made to build, if possible, the most cost-effective system.

b. Streetscape Project Update (discussion)

i. Meeting with VTrans to address the “wetlands” issue (drainage ditch at the rec center).

c. Longley Bridge Road Project – decision on warranty retainer (board action)

i. Army Corps wouldn’t sign off because of the plantings. VTrans said we could close the project but if the plants die off, the town would own the cost of any replacement plantings. The Town still owes King’s approximately $37,000 to close out the project.

ii. The question is if we can close out the project with King’s, while retaining some of the money in escrow in case there is a need to replace plantings. Mark motioned to close the project with VTrans and Leanne seconded the motion. Emily offered a friendly amendment that King’s would agree to support the planting if necessary. Mark and Leanne accepted the friendly amendment. The motion passed unanimously.

d. General Updates (discussion)

i. Grader Repair (update)

a. Scott will call this week to check on progress.

ii. Truck Repair

a. We have been down three trucks, and Avery's has been helping out. Truck 1 (2016, 100,000k plus miles) was towed to Allegiance. It needs an engine, they are on national backorder. The ton truck should be fixed tomorrow and needs to be picked up.
    i. It takes about 2 years to get a new truck.
    ii. Allegiance has a tandem coming in this week that was a lease from the town of Shoreham.
        1. Scott will call tomorrow to find out the lease numbers by tomorrow night that will be discussed tomorrow night at the Budget meeting.
        2. We will also begin to plan out long term solutions to the problems of the aging fleet that we currently have.
b. Budgeting for next year begins this week, and there are multiple things that will be paid off very soon which all needs to be considered as we move forward.

4. Visitors

Roberta asked about the local option tax and what is included in the 1% beyond meals and rooms and consumer goods. She also asked about the "cut off" for the wastewater project as far as the overall cost. Charlie responded about the affordability metrics being the determining factor of if the project moves forward.

Theresa addressed Leanne about initially bringing up the conflict of interest issue.

Chris asked about the timeline for the two public meetings that need to be held, Charlie responded that meetings have not been scheduled but he will be working with Liz to finalize timelines for Town Meeting and when these hearings fit into the overall schedule. Chris also reiterated the 1% sales tax.

Peter also followed up with Leanne regarding conflict of interest. Both Leanne and Charlie responded to Peter's questions, Peter also asked about the town having a Conflict of Interest policy. The state's conflict of interest policy may differ from the Town's. Peter asked also about the scope of the project changing and if it is still the same project.

Larry asked about the ARPA funds. The funds are not currently earmarked for anything at this time; to date what we have used them for is for match funding for grants and leveraging other money that becomes available.

Mike Sarnacki reiterated what Peter already had shared and then questioned what the board's action would be if the vote passes to halt the wastewater project; questioning if the board would follow the democratic processes of the town. Discussion ensued, and board members responded to the question that Mike posed.

Merle asked about the cost of the wastewater project in the village, and why the project costs have not changed significantly after the village has been removed from the scope of the project. Charlie responded that there have been significant changes to the properties, pump stations, and such as the project moved forward. Emily responded that inflation also has a significant impact on the overall costs related to the system as well. Merle also asked about the nature of functionality of the system. Merle then asked about the costs of the curbs for the streetscape project. Merle also about discussed the cellphone coverage in town and that in an emergency that there are obvious gaps.

5. Old Business

a. Town Hall Committee status (update/discussion)

i. Building Use Policy updates/Fee Schedule (discussion/potential board action)

Carried forward

b. Municipal ARPA Funds status follow-up and balance (discussion)
c. FNRDC Flood Resilience and Hazard Mitigation Study (discussion/scheduling)
    i. 2/3 meeting to review mitigation strategies
d. Hazard Mitigation Plan (update/discussion, board action)
    i. Charlie, Mark, Doug and Greg met with the state and are working to develop the plan. An RFP was put out for consultation on this process. There is a grant available to help offset these costs. Bids will be opened on 1/10/25.
e. Town Ethics Liaison (board action)
    i. Liz has volunteered to serve in this position. Emily nominated Liz to take this role. No other nominations were heard. The board appointed Liz as the Ethics Liaison 5-0-0

6. New Business

a. Budget Committee Appointment (board action)

The committee will be meeting beginning tomorrow. There will be significant sharing of information through screen sharing, and participation on Zoom is encouraged.

b. Liquor/Tobacco Licenses (board action)

none

c. Fleet Permits (board action)

none

7. Open Mail / Sign Orders / Administrative Matters

8. Review Action Items for Board Members

Please consider the date for the next meeting, it is supposed to be on 1/20/25 which is MLK day. Charlie will email scheduling options.

9. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn was made by Mark, Suzanne seconded. Motion carried, and the meeting adjourned at 8:11pm.