

UNAPPROVED
SELECTBOARD MINUTES
APRIL 23, 2019

MEMBERS PRESENT: Philip E. Mazzucco, Charles Rockwell, Deborah Baker, Linda Montague and Thomas Wilson.
OTHERS PRESENT: Andrea Lenhardt, Donald S. Lewis, Brett Lourie, Peter Pelton, William Meyer, Arlene Bentley, Val Almosnino, Kelli Raymond and Mark Lourie.

Meeting called to order at 6:32 p.m.

TOWN CLERK'S REPORT:

1. Another reminder to dog owners to get their animals licensed. So far, 152 dogs have been licensed this year.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

1. Berkshire Bank has issued a debit card to the Treasurer and it was used to purchase office supplies at Staples last Friday.

COMMUNICATIONS:

1. The speed cart is now gone from Rupert Village. Tom will request that the Vermont State Police place a speed cart in West Rupert Village.

2. The Bennington County Regional Commission will hold its annual meeting at the Taconic Hotel on May 23rd.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Tom said that it should require about \$36,000.00 to \$40,000.00 to finish chip sealing Pawlet Mountain Road, which should be done this year. If we can get the stone for the job now, and stockpile it in the salt shed, then the oil can be purchased later. The cost of the stone should be roughly \$15,000.00. There was a motion by Linda, seconded by Phil to draw stone for the Pawlet Mountain Road chip seal project at approximately \$15,000.00. Motion carried.

2. Cemetery Commissioners Don and Debbie met with Tom Griffin from the Vermont State Cemetery Commission, who advised them on a number of issues. Don said the Cemetery Trustees need to seek legal advice before they make certain decisions.

3. Discussion of renting out the Town Green to someone who will cut and remove the hay on a regular basis. It was the consensus of the Board to rent the Town Green for haying and will consider bids on the mowing job at the May 14th meeting. Tom will put up several notices around Town, stating that bids on the job be submitted by May 14th. Town Green Committee Co-Chair, Mark Lourie mentioned that there was about \$34,000.00 remaining in committed funds for the Town Green, and \$10,000.00 in private grants from Serena Hatch. So, if the \$25,000.00 received from the sale of the two acres behind the former Sheldon's Store could be added in, the Town Green project could be completed. Mark said he would be willing to be the liaison between the Town Green Committee and the Selectboard. He said Landscape Architect Ray Smith is going to draw up a plan and a budget for it. Linda said if there were funds left after completion of the Town Green, they should be spent on fixing up the sidewalks. Charlie said an application for a minor subdivision needs to be submitted to the Planning Commission, before selling the two acres behind the Store. Charlie and Don will meet on the site to draw the proposed property lines, and then call the land surveyor.

4. Lister Val Almosnino announced that all property owners should be receiving their Official Change of Appraisal booklets soon. The values of most properties went down an average of 11.699% from the 2018 – 2019 assessments. Appraisers from NEMRC will hold informal grievance hearings on May 13th and 14th from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon and 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Formal hearings will take place on May 20th and 21st from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon and 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. A grievance must be in writing and an appointment made to appear and present relevant evidence to support the appeal. Tom will call NEMRC and request that they hold some of the hearings on Saturdays, so people will not have to take time off from work to grieve their assessment.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Discussion of the sidewalks in Rupert Village and best way to repair them. Phil suggested that if the concrete slabs could be salvaged and moved aside, then a base of crushed stone could be laid with the slabs repositioned on it. The sidewalk should be about three inches above grade in order get the water to run off it. Need to get prices on materials etc. Tom said maybe we could borrow metal sidewalk forms from Greenwich to use if new concrete slabs have to be poured.
2. The Selectboard has to set a fee to accompany a permit application for having a sign. Charlie will call some area towns to ask what amount they charge. The sign at the junction of Hebron Road and Route 153 has no permit and is off the premises of the business it advertises. Tom will call Zoning Administrator John LaVecchia to notify him of the sign issue.
3. Debbie passed out copies of the research she did comparing Highway Crew pay and benefits offered by Rupert against those of seven nearby towns. Board members will consult Debbie's findings before making a decision on a pay raise or an adjustment to benefits.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Mark said he is willing to assist the Selectboard in any way and wants to help when the Board is ready to determine the 2019/2020 tax rate.

Orders were signed by the Board.

Motion by Debbie, seconded by Charlie to adjourn. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Montague
Selectboard Clerk