

TOWN OF CASTLETON SELECT BOARD MINUTES
Monday, December 27, 2021 7:00 p.m.
Castleton Fire Station Community Room 273 Route 30N, Bomoseen
In-Person & Zoom Virtual Public Meeting

Zoom Meeting Recording Link:

https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/Xp57_Ttj48049n05uUF8eWjLcXL7qm47g3pEbAXWDcaf8cvuQT7L0bZnrXpefX9_hnsOy9DxYrE94ttV

PRESENT: Jim Leamy, Chair; Richard Combs, Vice Chair; Joseph Mark, Parliamentarian and Secretary; Michael Holden, and Robert Spaulding, Members; Michael Jones, Town Manager, Ted Parisi, Heath Goyette, Brent Clark, Highway Foreman, PegTV filming, Allison Harvey, Recording Secretary, Heather and Dan Ducharme, Ellsworth Matthews
Attending via Zoom: Mike Finnegan, Mary Droeger, Mike Hall, Pam Arel, Nancy Mark

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Select Board Chair, Jim Leamy at 7:00 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mr. Leamy.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Holden made motion to approve the agenda. Mr. Combs seconded the motion. It was stated there are no minutes for approval, Tim Gilbert will be the first meeting of January, Mr. Mark asked to move decision on ARPA to next meeting, most just got the information this evening to review. **All were in favor. Motion carried 5-0.**

CITIZENS COMMENTS & CONCERNS - ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA:

Nothing at this time.

POLICE UPDATE – CHIEF PETER MANTELLO

Chief Mantello report will be first meeting in January.

DISCUSSION ABOUT THE FUTURE OF CASTLETON VILLAGE SCHOOL AND THE ASSOCIATED VOTING REQUIREMENTS – Ted Parisi

Mr. Parisi was not present at this time, and Mr. Mark stated that he had received an email from Attorney Parisi that he would be attending the meeting at 8-8:15pm. Mr. Jones stated it should be 8:30-8:45 for executive session.

FIRE TRUCK REPLACEMENT RECOMMENDATION – Chief Heath Goyette

Mr. Goyette stated other officers were going to be here, but they are running ahead of schedule, so they aren't present yet. He has prepared information from other equipment and departments, board members should have it in their packet. He still recommends replacing truck #6 with the truck discussed at the last meeting, the lowest bidder.

Mr. Spaulding made a motion to replace truck #6 with the low bid vehicle as presented. Mr. Combs seconded to discuss. Mr. Combs addressed the mechanical status of truck #2, and the replacement status of that truck. Mr. Goyette stated it has issues, there's rust on the body and frame and it basically has no replacement value. He would like to replace that and ladder #1 with a used pump truck with a ladder in a year and half to 2 years. Truck #6 is the one used the most and is relied on the most. At end of year, there should be \$100,000 left in sinking fund, then next year when there is enough in the fund, he would be looking to replace that truck then. It was stated that Mr. Ward had thought they would get one more year out

of truck #2, while Mr. Combs stated he was told that truck would see another sticker. Mr. Holden also stated he heard from Mr. Ward that he wouldn't put another sticker on it. Further discussion held on truck #6 and what it is able to do. Mr. Goyette stated the new one he is proposing has what they would need to get the job done. Discussion also held on the procedures of the department and how calls are responded to. Mr. Holden stated he feels truck #6 should not be replaced, they should do truck #2 first. Mr. Goyette stated truck #2 sits idle 75-80% of the time, and for 30 years the mini pumper has always been the first truck out the door. Mr. Mark stated from his perspective, he felt the board is supportive of the fire department and it is important to have what they need to keep the town safe. It was stated they should have a discussion and get a sense of what truck should be replaced, and to not vote now and have that conversation and see if they can find a point of mutual agreement so they can move forward on the subject.

Mr. Mark made a motion to table the motion on the table. Mr. Holden seconded. All voted in favor. Motion carried 5-0.

Mr. Goyette asked what the direction of the board is. Mr. Leamy stated to try to reach a mutual concern on the subject. Mr. Mark stated they should have a subset of the board and department members to discuss the options and next steps. Mr. Leamy stated there had been mention of a truck committee to address trucks, it was asked at a meeting, and was told the officers would take care of it. Mr. Goyette stated it has been offered multiple times but has not ever been followed through with. Mr. Goyette stated he felt the department heads run the departments, and now going to crew to decide equipment. opportunity to work with the officers and come back with a proposal that would be in the best interest of the community. Heather Ducharme was present and stated she takes minutes for the department and she can go back through the minutes to show documentation of the discussion that has been had about a truck committee.

APPROVAL OF CHAIN HOIST AND TROLLEY AT THE HIGHWAY GARAGE – BRENT CLARK

Mr. Clark stated that Fastenal would come and set up and do first annual inspection of the chain hoist being proposed. Mr. Combs asked if there were any other bidders, Mr. Clark stated there were, but he did not see the actual numbers. Mr. Jones stated Fastenal were only ones that replied that could do the job. **Mr. Combs made a motion to authorize the chain hoist purchase and associated equipment for the town highway garage not to exceed \$2,955.00. Mr. Holden seconded. All voted in favor. Motion carried 5-0.**

SUBMIT QUOTES AND DISCUSS REPLACEMENT OF THE FRONT-END LOADER AND GRADER – BRENT CLARK

Mr. Jones stated he'd been approached by Chris and Brent about the loader, and then the grader came into the discussion. He has not gotten a solid reply from the bank as to the term for financing this equipment. There is about \$117,000 on the reserve, feel better to recommend financing than paying for the equipment. Also need to have further discussion on the grader, Mr. Clark stated that he had the guy look at the grader while here looking at the loader. There is some discrepancy on the current value of the grader, and what it will be worth next year. Mr. Jones stated a 7-10 year financing is what he's looking at. Mr. Leamy questioned the cost of a new grader, it was stated \$320,000 with no trade. The loader is \$154,000 with a trade. Further discussion on the timeline of replacement and the funds available as well as trade in value. It was stated there's the last two payments of the tandem, the Ram truck is already paid, and then the new payment for loader will kick in. The loader should be the first, \$25,000 from caterpillar for a trade. Mr. Leamy asked about all vehicles the highway department has and their ranking compared to other towns. Mr. Clark stated he has gone through them: 2013 tandem truck, 44,000 to sand blast body and frame, 9,900 for that. 2003 could be done, runs good, has a few holes to sand blast, paint and run. Trade in value isn't great, he feels best to use until can't anymore. Mr. Jones asked if the oldest truck would get past the last loader payment, Mr. Clark feels it would. Mr. Combs asked how many trucks are CDL and how old are they? Mr. Clark stated there are 2 tandems, 3 single axles, the years are 03, 13, 15, 13 & 19 and now have a spare truck. Mr. Ward is in the garage full time, and 4 guys are on the road.

Mr. Holden stated he has made some calls, it is very tired and are going to be stuck if something goes wrong with it, putting a lot of funds into something that isn't worth anything now. The grader goes up 5% and loader 3% on the first of the year. This will be brought up at the next meeting.

REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF ARPA – TOWN MANAGER

Mr. Jones stated he spoke with Tim at VT Digital to be sure they had everything needed. He will come back after the holidays to make sure it is what is needed. Mr. Mark questioned Castleton University sewer funds and the recovery of those funds. There is a methodology to determine the lost revenue and it would be more beneficial to the town financially than itemize sources of lost revenue. Mr. Jones stated Christine Ettori sat through that class for methodology, and she and Melanie Combs started putting numbers into it but he has not seen a completed product. Mr. Mark stated he felt 4% of town revenue was about what was lost. Mr. Jones explained they will receive \$700,000 of the ARPA funds this year, another of that amount next year, and there are guidelines of how to use it, except any monies received for lost revenue is exempt from the guidelines, so that is why they should calculate the lost revenue.

ADOPTION OF TOWN PURCHASING AND FINANCIAL POLICIES – TOWN MANAGER

Mr. Jones explained at the last meeting he presented the policies, which were pirated from the Town of Norwich, they got it as a model from VLCT and he briefly reviewed what is included in the new policy. **Mr. Mark made a motion to adopt the master financial policy as presented. Mr. Combs seconded. All voted in favor. Motion carries 5-0.**

ANNUAL TOWN REPORT COVER, REPORT DEDICATION, AND SELECTBOARD REPORT – TOWN MANAGER

Mr. Jones stated he put this on for discussion before is too late, he wants board to consider these three items so it's not down to the last minute. He noted for consideration that Paul Eagan retired, it has been recommended for the cover a sketch of the assisted living project being proposed. He will need someone to draft the report of the board as well. **Mr. Spaulding made a motion to have Mr. Leamy draft the selectboard report. Mr. Holden seconded. All voted in favor. Motion carries 5-0.**

Mr. Mark stated he cannot recall a business being recognized and would suggest Woodard Marine, as they assist the fire department with water for lake property when needed and through his sailing camp, they were also very helpful and accommodating. He would recommend them for the cover. **Mr. Mark made a motion Woodard Marine be put on the front cover of the Town Report, Mr. Combs seconded. All voted in favor. Motion carries 5-0.** Mr. Combs made mention that he felt the senior living project should not be addressed in the town report. Mr. Mark also stated that they still have a pandemic and he felt they still need to acknowledge the front-line workers who continue to serve us, not just town employees. After brief discussion, **Mr. Mark made a motion to honor front line workers as the dedication of the town report and that he would like to see a collage of photos that included Highway, Fire Department, community people, diners, etc. would be more personalized than generic photos. Mr. Combs seconded. All voted in favor. Motion carries 5-0.**

DRAFT OF FYE2023 OPERATING BUDGET

Mr. Jones stated they are going on the 12/13/2021 version of the budget. **Mr. Mark made a motion to approve the 3rd draft submitted on 12/13/21 in amount of \$3,538,382. Mr. Spaulding seconded.**

Mr. Mark stated he understands the \$50,000 increase in the rec budget and full-time position rec director which represents half of the increase in this years over last years budget. He feels there's no pulse in the community of whether in support of that expense or not, and if they could split the funding of that department on the ballot with the current level and the increase separate it might be helpful.

Mr. Spaulding amended the motion and Mr. Holden seconded the amendment to do them separate, and reduce the amount of the budget by that amount. Mr. Combs questioned if they approve draft budget at the above amount, and then split out the 50,000 to be voted on it would be confusing. Further discussion on the need for a full time director, and whether two part time would be needed as well. It was felt that it would need to be clear that if the full time is approved, the two part time would not be funded. Lengthy discussion continued on the full and part time budget numbers for the rec department. It was felt it was too difficult to present by giving a choice of full-time director. The numbers speak for themselves and should consider budget submitted by Mr. Jones with a 3.2% increase.

Mr. Leamy stated he will vote against it, with inflation, gas, groceries he doesn't feel the taxpayers can afford an increase. If it were for, he would be agreeable. Mr. Spaulding stated it is a \$109,000 increase, with recreation being \$51,000, public works at \$32,600 and special events at \$22,300, which is mostly self-supporting and then single digit increases after that. Mr. Jones made a point of the assessment of Hubbardton at the transfer station, operating vs revenue is \$4,332 to the red. To make cost neutral, may have to raise something at transfer station, and suggested a scale fee from \$180 to \$185, which would be a little over \$6,000. **Mr. Spaulding, Mr. Mark, Mr. Combs and Mr. Holden voted yes. Mr. Leamy voted no. Motion carries 4-1.**

MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Mark made a motion to raise the scale fee for ton of waste to \$185. Mr. Combs seconded. All voted in favor. Motion carries 5-0

Mr. Jones stated it would go up July 1.

Mr. Jones stated at the last meeting Mr. Spaulding asked about the park and ride being too dark. Mr. Jones went down with Paul McClure, they found they needed a special tool and he has not heard back from him, and Mr. McClure is also looking at door at police station with water damage.

Mr. Jones stated he has not received a report on the assessment of Castleton Village School, still expecting to have report in 3-4 more days.

Mr. Spaulding asked why there is a charge for microwaves at the transfer station. He also noticed that mattresses outside of the roof put over the construction and demolition which he feels kind of defeats the purpose of the roof. Mr. Jones will check on microwaves.

Mr. Combs stated it is his understanding the deadline for the firefighters grant has been extended, and they are going to follow up with air packs and engine 6 replacement.

PURCHASE ORDERS FOR APPROVAL

Mr. Combs made a motion to approve Purchase Order #047955 to Ferguson waterworks in amount of \$3,320.00 for culverts. Mr. Holden seconded. All voted in favor. Motion carries 5-0.

WARRANTS FOR APPROVAL

Mr. Combs made a motion to approve check warrant #1227 in the amount of \$188,771.14, check warrant #1227R in the amount of \$3,775.00, check warrant #1224 in the amount of \$1,696,974.97, check warrant #1216 in the amount of \$6,264.43, check warrant #1223P in the amount of \$16,978.17 and check warrant #1216P in the amount of \$17,638.79. Mr. Holden seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Holden made a motion to approve check warrant #1224P in the amount \$632.66 and check warrant #1217P in the amount of \$632. Mr. Spaulding seconded the motion. Mr. Combs recused himself. All remaining members voted in favor. Motion carried 4-0.

SELECT BOARD COMMENTS & CONCERNS:

Mr. Holden stated he wanted to follow up with Mr. Mark about the light out in front of the Fire Station entrance. He doesn't feel one light will cover it and would like to see more light. Mr. Jones stated he asked Erica in the Poultney Green Mountain Power office to put 85-watt bulb to determine what else is needed. If doesn't work, was thinking about another pole on

same side of road and it's felt the medical center would share the costs. Mr. Mark stated he put a few reflectors on stakes out at the entrance of the Fire Station/Medical Center but that they are not worth much.

Mike Finnegan present via Zoom, stated he wanted to bring up the truck committee for fire department. Ellsworth Matthews was also present and is a member of the Fire Department and stated he did ask in September for a truck committee, the chief looked at him and said the officers will bring it up in the net meeting and will get back to him if they want a truck committee. He wants the board to know that it was said, and Mr. Finnegan was also there when he asked and was told by the chief that the officers would discuss it first and then go to the members after that discussion. Ellsworth feels they should have a truck committee, and if they won't do one within the department, he feels up to the board to have a truck committee.

BRIEF RECAP & ITEMS FOR FOLLOW UP:

Mr. Jones asked to confirm on the Town Report discussion, the cover is Woodard's, board report will be prepared by Mr. Leamy and the dedication is to front line workers. Board members agreed.

8:45 pm EXECUTIVE SESSION: With Town Attorney re CVS and Town Manager

Mr. Combs made a motion to enter executive session at 8:45 p.m. to discuss Castleton Village School and real estate with the Town Manager and Ted Parisi. Mr. Holden seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried 5-0.

Mr. Combs made a motion to leave executive session at 9:19 p.m. with no action taken. Mr. Spaulding seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried 5-0.

ADJOURN

Mr. Holden made a motion to adjourn at 9:20 p.m. Mr. Spaulding seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried 5-0. Meeting adjourned.