## TOWN OF CASTLETON SELECT BOARD MINUTES

Monday, January 10, 2022 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/8pAZfjI1-xTOAKxUieLH\_PrNV9vnltSILdsm**](https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/8pAZfjI1-xTOAKxUieLH_PrNV9vnltSILdsm)

**PRESENT:** Jim Leamy, Chair; Richard Combs, Vice Chair; Joseph Mark, Parliamentarian and Secretary; Michael Holden, and Robert Spaulding, Members; Michael Jones, Town Manager,

Attending via Zoom: Allison Harvey, Recording Secretary, Mary Droege, Martha Clifford, Nedra Boutwell

**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. All were in favor. Motion carried 5-0.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Mr. Combs made a motion to approve the minutes of December 13, 2021 as presented. M. Holden seconded.** Page 4, third from last paragraph, Mr. Mark stated the ?? should be replaced with ‘draft motion regarding the Grandpa’s Knob Turbine proposal. He also stated that Mr. Combs should be replaced with Mr. Mark. Mr. Spaulding stated in the next line, the next to last paragraph on Page 4, ‘at the’ should be inserted between lights and park. **All were in favor with noted changes. Motion carried 5-0.**

**Mr. Combs made a motion to approve the minutes of December 27, 2021 as presented. M. Holden seconded.** Mr. Spaulding stated the second ‘was’ should be deleted in the last line on page 1. Mr. Mark stated on Page 3, paragraph in the middle of the page first line should state: Mr. Mark stated he cannot recall the businesses being recognized. Last line of the same paragraph, dinners should be replaced with diners. **All were in favor with noted changes. Motion carried 5-0.**

CITIZENS COMMENTS & CONCERNS - ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA:

Mary Droege – question of whether board has any verbiage on the vote for the Castleton Village School for town meeting day. Mr. Leamy stated they do, and Mr. Combs reviewed what is drafted. Ms. Droege asked if that article would be on the town or school ballot, it was stated it would be on the town ballot. Ms. Droege asked for a hard copy, Mr. Jones stated he had just emailed it to her.

REQUEST TO USE CRYSTAL BEACH BY THE FAIR HAVEN ROTARY FOR THEIR FISHING DERBY

Mr. Holden made to allow the Fair Haven Rotary Club to use Crystal Beach for their annual fishing derby headquarters from February 25-27, 2022. Mr. Mark seconded. Mr. Combs stated it was his understanding they will be sharing use of portable rest rooms and trash bins with Lions Club and would also like to see proof of insurance. All were in favor. Motion carried 5-0.

QUARTERLY UPDATE – RUTLAND COUNTY SOLID WASTE DISTRICT – TIM GILBERT

Mr. Gilbert are doing a water run off study, looks like it might be about $400,000 to manage the run off at the Merck building. Will pay for over a course of 4 years. There will be a $.50 increase in tipping fees, which calculates to about $660 annually for the Town of Castleton. Is necessary because of State regulations. They had a small fire on Gleason Road in the hazardous waste section, which was taken care of by the town department, also tested the fire suppression system. The facility is open 6 days a week, Town of Castleton residents can get stickers to use those 6 days it is open. They are on a calendar not fiscal year, but small detail. There were some scheduling changes due to COVID but nothing major. The budget shows a 5% increase, due to environmental issues and salary increases for cost of living. Mr. Spaulding questioned the district surcharge and difference between 2020 was $812,000 and 2019 was $870,000. Mr. Gilbert stated it is based on tonnage that comes in, with further discussion on the tonnage price and what the upcoming expenses are, tipping fees and the tonnage increase. Mr. Spaulding stated he believed 50% of district liability has gone away as a building has been paid off and was going to ask about changes in those liabilities. Mr. Gilbert stated the rental income also is in the formula, $5,500/month from Casella. Casella prepaid for the building, and they were paid back by not charging rent, and they are now paying rent. Mr. Spaulding stated it is his understanding that the building is paid for, and there is some complication to the formula that is used to calculate expenses, etc.

7:20 p.m R. Spaulding made a motion to recess for a few minutes to fix a technology issue with the Zoom part of the meeting. M. Holden seconded. All voted in favor of the motion. Motion carried 5-0

Board was back in session at 7:24pm

POLICE UPDATE – CHIEF PETER MANTELLO

Chief Mantello reviewed his report as presented to the board. He stated that the new state system Valcour vs the previous program of Spillman will make reporting easier. Castleton is one of 2 agencies in the entire county that does fingerprinting which generates income. Mr. Holden asked about fingerprinting commercial drivers, Chief Mantello stated yes they can, and they are doing them on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. Further review of report, tickets, arrests, highway safety, etc.

Vehicles – Chief Mantello stated the bid from Williams indicates it will be 5.5 months to get the vehicle from the time of the order. If he is granted authorization to order at the end of the month, should be ready around beginning of July, the next fiscal year. Board felt they should place the order, but would like to see more detail, then will make a motion at the next meeting.

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

Mr. Fouracre stated he is present to discuss just the loader tonight, to replace the existing 19 year old loader. Brent did a lot of work on bids, etc. and the trade in and net price of one selected is $154,500 with trade in of 25,000 for existing. He further explained how they arrived at decision to replace, using the decision replacement template used, considers value, futuristic trade in value, ease of maintenance, safety aspect, visibility out of cab, parts availability. Cat fits those criteria the best. Also discussed interest rates and the reserve funds to be used. Hope to keep around $30,000 per payment, is about $41,000 per the quote. Board asked questions of how many hours used a year, the trade in values. They are looking for permission to buy new loader from reserve budget with payments.

Mr. Spaulding asked about loader going to Ruby’s pit, can’t be good for transmission. Mr. Ward explained the use and the transmission issues. Further discussion on funds and that there is $117,000 in reserve. Mr. Jones stated they budgeted $80,000 a year for vehicle reserve and $40,000 used to pay on new tandem, the new Ram is paid for, so frees up $40,000, which is put into reserve from the operating account. Mr. Combs stated he felt the $154,500 was a good price. Mr. Holden made to approve $154,500 to purchase the 926 Cat loader as presented in the quote. Mr. Spaulding seconded. All voted in favor of the motion. Motion carries 5-0.

REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF ARPA – TOWN MANAGER

Nothing at this time.

VILLAGE SCHOOL DEFERRED MAINTENANCE (POST INSPECTION REPORT) – TOWN MANAGER

Mr. Jones stated he had included in the board’s packet the information from Alex Tolstoi, Vermont Preservation Consultants and from Paul McClure for the recent school assessment – it was noted there was not a lot of deferred maintenance for any period but some things imminent that should replace within 1-5 yeas. Estimated annual expenses also handed out, provided by school district, which is $170,000, but $87,850 of that was personnel and benefits. Mr. Spaulding asked about who was coming in to check on fuel system and oil tanks. It was also stated that duct work should be addressed periodically per Paul McClure. Mr. Leamy asked if it would be necessary to remove tank prior to property transfer, he is not sure about municipal property. Mr. Holden stated he was under the impression the tank was supposed to be taken care of a few years ago, per State regulations, not sure if there would be a penalty and if so, who would be responsible for that tank still being underground.

FINAL RULE FROM U.S. TREASURY ON THE ELIGIBLE USES OF ARPA FUNDS – TOWN MANAGER

Mr. Jones presented a summary of a 600-page document, there was an article that was forwarded by Mr. Mark regarding use of the funds, basically saying they have broadened the discretion on the use of the funds. There are different sources and changes, and Mr. Jones stated he is going to have to delve into it a bit deeper to see what they can be used for, it seems there are some significant changes. Discussion on the uses and whether there are strict rulings that dictates what can be used for.

REVIEW OF THE FYE 2023 RECREATION DEPARTMENT OPERATING BUDGET – SELECTBOARD & TOWN MANAGER

Mr. Jones started with apology for mess up on the spread sheet and hourly wage he presented at the last meeting. Mr. Jones reviewed the differences in the numbers, stated there was a $4,901 reduction in the rec budget, and the bottom line is that the numbers have been corrected, and he would rescind the motion made at the last meeting and start with a new motion to adopt the budget as presented this evening. Mr. Jones reviewed in details the errors made in the budget that was approved previously, whether full time rec director should be a separate ballot item, or change the numbers from error and do it again with new numbers.

Martha Clifford stated she would be weary of one article, as she felt if it is voted down, then there’s no money for the part timers and would have to revote on the rec budget. She would like to avoid that if possible. She suggests having two articles, one with full time director and a second with the budget without the full time and salaries of the two co directors put in. Mr. Spaulding questioned what happens if they vote yes to both. Mr. Jones felt language would have to have an

explanation, differentiating the full vs two part time. Mr. Combs suggested if they have two numbers that includes the part time, then another article, what net difference is with full time and not two part time and an explanation of difference and benefits and what the net difference would be for full time vs part time. Ms. Clifford when they know how they are addressing it, the rec committee will use public meetings and social media to further explain. Rec committee will try to have someone available at town meeting as well. Discussion on timing and wording of the ballot items and should be reviewed at next meeting. Mr. Mark questioned the procedures and motion to approving budget of last meeting. R. Spaulding made a motion to rescind the approval of the budget at last meeting, dated 12/13/21, in the amount of $3,538.482. Mr. Holden seconded. All voted in favor of the motion. Motion carries 5-0. The board will approve new budget number at next meeting and they further discussed the budget numbers and whether is an easy calculation for the next meeting and whether should be approved again this evening or next meeting. Mr. Jones stated he believes it would be $20,325 more for full time director, that’s just wages, no benefits.

MANAGER’S REPORT

Mr. Jones stated the Staso road scoping study indicates at the end, there is a grant and match amount, in addition to the salt/sand shed. There will be a $153,000 and change surplus from last year, the board can choose to apply to something or it goes back to general fund. A few years ago, they chose to use the sale of the fire station to go into reserve to help pay for our share of salt/sand shed. Depends on how the board wants to go about it, if it is not used, it goes back into the general fund and goes against the tax rate for the following year. The board did receive a sheet that showed the difference between using some, a portion, or all of the surplus. Mr. Jones stated he is not sure what they will get with infrastructure, in addition to ARPA funds, it is hard to determine what will go to where. They have until the next meeting to deal with it, will give time for board to consider what to do with surplus and must be approved by voters so putting it out there if they want it on the ballot.

Mr. Jones stated the increase of $.50 per ton on solid waste the district is imposing, is a little over a $600 increase for the year for the surcharge, he wanted the board to know that the increase they approved on tonnage at the last meeting, the solid waste increase is covered.

Mr. Jones stated the solar project update is noted on page 3 of his manager report, they had done a site visit, and the project is within the boundaries required

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On Page 4 of the manager’s report, regarding the trestle project on south street they’ve applied for $60,000 better roads structures grant, they got $30,000 from FEMA to bring it back to pre-storm conditions, but when Chris Fouracre solicited quotes for the concrete box culverts, they are $86,000 for one. They will come back to the board once they meet with RRPC and VT Emergency Management to find a funding source. They are currently $75,000 short.

Upstairs at Fire Dept, Paul McClure will check damage from leak from vent pipe and can follow up with VLCT on insurance claim.

Mr. Jones stated they are still working on the garage equipment and more to file and working on vehicle replacement plan. Encouraged board to site visit town garage, have made some big changes. Mr. Jones stated he spoke with fire chief, who wants to meet with the board to discuss some of the rumors and dispel them. Mr. Mark stated he would be in favor of the public safety and public works committee, to address vehicles, budgets, conflicts, etc. on an as needed basis. It was stated they are part way through the inspection of truck #2 and have listed what is recommended. DMV is also working on a CDL training at the town garage, and they are going to look at trucks as well while they are there. Park and ride lighting has been a mystery, but they are close to solving it. Appears to be a controller, but they can now trouble shoot and go from there.

Union negotiations, Mr. Mark asked for a copy of the current contract for everyone to review, so they can all give suggestions or recommendations to those on the committee. First meeting is for ground rules and proposals and goes from there.

Mr. Jones gave a brief review of plowing and roads that the Town of Poultney and Castleton share plowing duties on town lines. He will have a sand resources and salt report at next meeting.

Mr. Jones stated that there are a few groups for appropriations requests on the ballot that are not in yet, he asked if board would still accept those that are late. Not asking for more money but did not meet the deadline of when due to be turned in. He would recommend accepting them. Mr. Holden made a motion to accept the appropriation requests after deadline date. Mr. Spaulding seconded. It was stated that they are requested by November 10, discussion on why so soon and not closer to December, when budgets are finalized later in the year. Mr. Mark stated they could change policy, and communicate to late petitioners they will accept, but don’t anticipate every year that they will be. All voted in favor. Motion carries 5-0.

Mr Jones stated Green Mountain Power installed a lite at the entrance of Police Department/Medical Center entrant and may need to be adjusted, and also going to address one at Castleton Meadows, where there is already a pole. Mr. Jones stated he will check with the Medical Center on cost share when completed.

## PURCHASE ORDERS FOR APPROVAL

## None at this time.

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## WARRANTS FOR APPROVAL

Mr. Combs made a motion to approve check warrant #0110 in the amount of $95,721.64, check warrant #0110R in the amount of $650.00, check warrant #0106 in the amount of $10,200.26, check warrant #1231 in the amount of $9,102.99, check warrant #0106P in the amount of $16,609.42 and check warrant #1230P in the amount of

$17,862.78. Mr. Holden seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Holden made a motion to approve check warrant #0107P in the amount $634.28 and check warrant #1231P in the amount of $632.26. Mr. Spaulding seconded the motion. Mr. Combs recused himself. All remaining members voted in favor. Motion carried 4-0.

**SELECT BOARD COMMENTS & CONCERNS:**

Nedra Boutwell stated if they are postponing approving the budget until the next meeting, she wanted to make them aware that she must have the ballots drafted and submitted by the 24th at 5pm to send for proofing for absentee voters. Mr, Spaulding asked Nedra where she stands on sending ballots out to every individual on the checklist. Nedra stated the board must decide if they want one mailed to everyone, both Mr. Leamy and Mr. Holden had asked for a price of that, which the board has. She would have to order more, she usually orders three quarters of the number of voters. Then there’s postage to mail back also to be considered. Mr. Spaulding asked when she needs to know, she replied by Monday the 24th she sends proof, would need to know by then, and if the number of ballots ordered is to change, that would also affect timing of getting them back. She estimates $2,400 to mail them out, same amount of postage on return. She has not budgeted for that task and would need help to process it or hire a company that could process it all, as it is a big job. **Mr. Mark stated it seems the situation is far worse this year than has been in the past, and he would make a motion to mail ballots to all voters. Mr. Holden seconded**. Mr. Combs asked to include authorizing the Town Clerk to hire staff or farm out the processing to take care of it. Nedra stated they would also need to contact the school, as they are included in the election, and would have to mail ballots to anyone in the school district. Mr. Leamy stated anyone who wishes to vote by absentee ballot has a right to get one, and they should make voting reasonably easy, but on the other hand, any contact to Nedra regarding covid she will mail them if requested. He further stated he feels there should be some personal responsibility for individuals to contact the clerk to do this. Mr. Jones stated if the board chooses, he will reach out on social media to request voters to contact the clerk about absentee ballots. Mr. Mark stated the clerk’s comment on the school ballot changes things. **Motion and seconded rescinded.**

**Mr. Combs questioned what the board would do with the $153,000 surplus, and felt they should follow the direction of the town manager and made a motion to ask voters to allocate $100,000 of the surplus to the salt/sand shed project. Mr. Spaulding seconded. Mr. Holden amended the motion to the full amount of $153,000. Mr Spaulding seconded. All voted in favor of the amendment. Amendment carries 5-0. All voted in favor of amended motion. Motion carries 5-0.**

Mr. Holden stated he would like to be considered and is available for the fire dept, public safety and public works committees. Mr. Spaulding also volunteered. Mr. Combs stated he felt should be discussed in executive session as is a personnel issue.

Mr. Mark stated that there are vacancies on a few town boards, and he felt it would be a good time to ask the town manager to put out information for volunteers and applications, Planning, DRB and CEDRAC all have vacancies.

BRIEF RECAP & ITEMS FOR FOLLOW UP:

None at this time.

## 9:05 pm EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Mr. Holden made a motion to enter executive session at 9:05 p.m. to discuss labor relations/contracts to include the Town Manager. Mr. Combs seconded. All were in favor. Motion carried 5- 0.

Mr. Holden made a motion to leave executive session at 9:25 p.m. with no action taken. Mr. Spaulding seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried 5-0.

## 9:26 pm EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Mr. Combs made a motion to enter executive session at 9:26 p.m. to discuss personnel to include the Town Manager. Mr. Spaulding seconded. All were in favor. Motion carried 5- 0.

Mr. Combs made a motion to leave executive session at 10:15 p.m. with no action taken. Mr. Spaulding seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried 5-0.

## ADJOURN

Mr. Combs made a motion to adjourn at 10:16 p.m. Mr. Spaulding seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried 5-0. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted

Allison Harvey

Recording Secretary