

**TOWN OF CASTLETON
SELECT BOARD MINUTES
Monday, September 27, 2021
Zoom Virtual Public Meeting**

PRESENT: Jim Leamy, Chair; Richard Combs, Vice Chair; Robert Spaulding, Member; Michael Holden, Member; Michael Jones, Town Manager (Via Zoom); Peter Mantello, Police Chief; Chris Fouracre, Director Public Works; Zack Holzworth; Sam Carlson, Grandpas Knob Community Wind; Todd Boutwell, Boutwell Logging. Missing: Joseph Mark; member (Parliamentarian)

CALL MEETING TO ORDER: Mr. Leamy called the meeting to order at 7:09 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Mr. Leamy led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Mr. Holden made a motion to approve the agenda. Mr. Spaulding seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion passed 4-0

APPROVAL OF MINUTES 8/9 & 9/13: 9/13 minutes not available to approve. Mr. Holden made a motion to approve the minutes of 8/9/2021. Mr. Spaulding seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion passed 4-0.

CITIZENS COMMENTS & CONCERNS - ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA Zach Holzworth commented that three (3) DRB (Development Review Board) members live on Sand Hill Road and will be voting on that project (Senior housing). Is there anything that Selectboard to do to prevent the members from voting? Holzworth urged the Selectboard to do something before it becomes a problem and he was unsure if any lawsuits would happen if they [DRB] do vote down the project. Mr. Holzworth stated he sees it as a clear conflict of interest. He stated that is not fair the three people with a conflict of interest can vote it down and cause the town to suffer for all of the work that it has put in the last four or five years. No questions or comments by the Board. Mr. Holzworth thanked the board and left the meeting.

WIND ENERGY IN CASTLETON - SAM CARLSON (GREEN LANTERN SOLAR): Sam Carlson addressed the Board and stated he is no longer representing Green Lantern Solar and is working for another group to discuss a more controversial renewable energy project. Grandpa's Knob Community Wind is proposed as a single wind turbine that honors Castleton and Grampa's Knob as the birthplace of the American wind energy industry. This is where it all started in 1941, with Palmer Putnam, the very first wind energy turbine ever to connect to an electricity grid in the world. The promoter is Dave Blairsdorf, who grew up in Pittsford. He wants to honor the legacy to put up a wind turbine there. The electricity generated would be purchased by Green Mountain Power and would go toward the State renewable energy objectives. Mr. Carlson advised the project is 9-12 months away from being ready for permitting. He asked for an opening dialogue, asking to reserve judgment as they develop more info about the project and share the information with total transparency from Mr. Carlson. Simulation of the view from Hubbardton Battlefield presented. Currently there is a communication tower there with existing road and power lines. The tower is slightly less than 300 feet high and would be installed below the knob, below the height of the communication tower. Blade would sweep 143 feet above the tower. He stated it is not clear at this point what type of view the surrounding towns would have of the windmill. He stated that there would be a clear view from Lake Bomoseen and West Castleton Road. Benefits of the project were briefly discussed. This is not a project to make money, this is to honor Palmer Putnam and the birthplace of the American wind energy industry. Mr. Spaulding asked if they have the location pinned down to the exact spot. Is it state owned? Mr. Carlson said it is not owned by the State, it is a private landowner. They have site control and a land lease with the landowners. Mr. Spaulding asked if it is going to be placed anywhere near the original? Carlson has not been there but believes that it is very close to where the communications tower is now. The plan is to place it about 1000 feet away from tower. Fiberglass blades will be used as not to interrupt radio frequency from the communication tower. Mr. Spaulding: "What is the longevity of the windmill?". Carlson: "Minimum expectation is 20 years; typical life is 30 years. Assumption is to replace the blades after 20 years." Mr. Combs: "How much disturbance of the land will there be?" Carlson: "Minimal tree clearing", doesn't know about any further disturbance but would find out. Mr. Carlson advised that power lines are already there, but a third line would be installed for three phase power. Left business

cards in case anyone would like to get in touch with him. Next update expected in January.

ALDRICH & ELLIOT - STATUS REPORT ON WWTF UPGRADE PROCESS-Reviewed in Sewer Commission meeting prior to start of tonight's meeting. Refer to Sewer Commission minutes for details.

POLICE REPORT: Chief Mantello thanked the board for renewing his contract for another five (5) years. He looks forward to finishing his career with Castleton. August recap: Calls at university up a bit now that school is back in session. Have written more tickets. Arrests went down. Continue to assist Castleton cares by picking up food from Prunier's on Friday night and deliver Saturday mornings. This is done every 2-3 months. Added extra officer hours, past the 2 a.m. shift on Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays, leaving to officer discretion as needed. Special DUI patrol week. No questions by the Board. Combs expressed his neighbor has concerns on River Street regarding speed and offered for patrol to park in his driveway to run radar. Mantello commented that he provides increased radar patrols based on citizen concerns who want more enforcement. Chief Mantello advised the board that he wants to get grants to install permanent, solar powered speed signs. Mr. Jones shared that there is a town that is selling a brand new one, very inexpensive. He sent email to Mantello and contact him if he is interested. Mr. Holden stated that he would like Chief Mantello to follow up and try to make that purchase.

TIRE PURCHASE BIDS – Skipped – no discussion

TIRE CHAIN PURCHASE BIDS – Mr. Jones provided updated quote from Boutwell logging, price went up about \$300. All chains needed are in stock. Total amount is \$4653.64 for 16 sets. Recommendation by Jones to purchase. Mr. Holden made a motion to purchase tire chains from Boutwell Logging in the amount of \$4,653.64. Mr. Spaulding seconded. Discussion ensued regarding ordering in springtime when discounts are offered between 10-20% off and this ensures the quantity of stock. Ships in October. Boutwell says right now we are at the mercy of what they have in stock. Jones has on schedule to review in spring. All were in favor. Motion passed 4-0.

On-Road / Off-Road Diesel Bids – Mr. Jones revisited the question based upon last meeting about switching to on-road Canadian diesel vs. off-road diesel that would require kerosene to be added in the winter months. Canadian diesel is not avail until after October 1st. He recommended waiting until November to get Canadian diesel. We have an 8000-gallon tank so will be needing fuel before long. Previously the Board had deferred to Mr. Holden for recommendation. Holden since spoke to the vendor in depth and is recommending now in his professional and personal his opinion we [Town] should go with the Canadian fuel. If there is a cold snap, could add an "A" blend (kerosene) to prevent gelling issues. He suggested to run the fire trucks as low as possible to get the summer fuel out to minimize issues. Mr. Holden made a motion to go with Canadian fuel. Mr. Combs seconded with suggestions to put into two motions.

Mr. Holden made a motion to buy 1000 gallons of fuel tomorrow (Tuesday) delivered, withdrawing the first motion. Mr. Combs seconded the motion. All were in favor. Spaulding recused himself. Motion carried 3-0.

Combs made a motion to authorize the town manager to buy 8000 gallons of Canadian diesel from Champlain Valley Fuels when the time is right later in the fall and the cost will be rack price plus 10 cents. Mr. Holden seconded the motion. All in favor. Spaulding recused himself. Motion carried 3-0.

PRESENTATION OF PROPERTIES SUBJECT TO TAX SALE – The Tax Collector presented list of properties that meet criteria for tax sale. Board has already authorized to go forward, but this would start the wheels turning on the process with attorney(s). Mr. Holden made a motion to authorize the tax collector, Michael Jones, to move forward with the attorney to process with property tax sales as presented as of 9/27/21. Mr. Spaulding seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried 4-0.

MANAGER'S REPORT - TOWN MANAGER

Mr. Holden asked when the mirror was going to up on Corey Lane. Mr. Jones stated they had ordered a new one

because the old one they had placed was too small.

- Page 1, #1 – October 11, 2021 @ 6:15pm is the proposed meeting for public comments for the transportation alternative grant scoping study for pedestrian accessibility. Jones wanted to confirm that there will be a quorum. Mr. Spaulding not available. All other members will be available.
- 1d – Grants and aids project: Barker Hill Road- culvert taken out of project because it won't come in in time to complete the grant. Looking at other roads where we could potentially maximize the grant. Nothing else really can be tackled right now because of the paving and shoulders to put down, so a little money will be left on the table but best at this point to prepare for winter.
- 1e – Windy hollow payment received, third drawdown and in that payment Town funds were recovered for administrative and attorney fees. This is the first payment Town has received.
- Page 2 – Transfer station- Jones is looking for the board to authorize him to pull out an old bin sitting in woods and scrap it and use the funds to purchase a pressure washer to be able to clean compost bins and to clean salt off trucks in winter. Prices of steel are up right now. Approximated cost of pressure washer is less than \$500 and cost of scrap for this bin is \$500. **Mr. Holden made a motion take the bin down and use the funds to purchase a pressure washer, an electric pressure washer. Mr. Spaulding seconded the motion, Mr. Combs commented that if they don't get enough in the scrap steel, they have enough to pay the extra \$50. Mr. Jones thanked him but didn't think any extra would be needed. All were in favor. Motion carried 4-0.**
- Vehicles: next October is when the inspection runs out on the Chevy, and they (Bob & Joe) have been looking for a replacement. Mr. Jones looked into state bid pricing for a new truck, and it is 25K for a 2021 Chevy, everything listed on state bid for Ford was 2020, Dodge 2019. MSRP is 13-14K more than state bid. Mr. Jones stated that there is money in the vehicle reserve, regardless of purchasing new or used, without depleting it. Eventually the compactor will need to be replaced but there is still enough money for this without depleting the funds. Holden feels they should purchase new rather than deal with the unknown of used but stressed it does not need to be diesel or double cab. Discussion ensued in regard to truck/plow details what they need and why they need it. **Mr. Holden made a motion to allow the Town Manager to look into purchasing a plain jane Chevy gas powered pick up for the Transfer Station through the state bid and with a straight blade fisher plow, a regular cab with an 8-foot box, an amount not to exceed \$29,000. Mr. Combs seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried 4-0.**
- Page 3, #4 – sidewalk project, Mr. Jones received a call from concerned citizen about why they weren't putting the brand-new curbs on the east side of Drake Road as they did on the west side last project. Oversight by the engineers. Addressed and will be fixed. Corners – Jones visited the corners after Holden came to talk about the opening and the concern that semi-trailers delivering fuel would have a rough time getting through without running over everything including curbs. Spoke with VTRANS and the project manager from Fuss and O'Neill. They are looking into it to see if they can expand the opening but there is resistance from the State. Needs to be approved and permitted, cannot just be done on our own. Jones took pictures and agrees it is a valid concern. The owner states that this will cut off his business because the fuel trucks won't be able to get in. Dan Monette is working on the issue. Emails are in circulation in an effort to resolve. Mr. Spaulding questioned the hold up in front of the fire station. Jones says waiting for curbs to be done and are doing them all at once.
- Page 5 Little Rutland Road – need executive session to review some letters Mr. Jones received. South Street Trestle: Mr. Jones received a drawing from Josh Carvajal about what that culvert would look like. Project keeps getting more complex. It will go into the bid packet in probably January to get on contractor's radars early. The \$39,000 FEMA grant won't touch it and would need to apply for a VTRANS Structures grant to cover it. He will apply for that in the fall when they become available.
- Crack sealing is scheduled to start the 28- 29 September and go for 5 days. Not going to do it if raining or lots of water on road.
- Page 6 – Town office buildings and fire station – Mr. Jones had roofer look at vent at fire station. It came apart and was leaking. Some water damage in the drop ceiling but it is put back together. Eaves are not insulated (to save money during construction) and there was ice back up and they think that is what is causing it. Mr. Jones asked for a quote from Mickey McClure to insulate the eaves properly.

- Highway garage & fire house overhead doors need service and waiting for quotes to come back
 - Public works all employees are back working
 - Fire Department held their coin drop with there was a request in the packet to approve.
 - Trees came in and took down problem tree in the Common Area and is being picked up by crew today.
 - Park and ride – Solar lights are still a problem. Paul McClure still needs to test controllers.
- Page 7, 11d – Historic Cemeteries – Joey Kinney, Castleton University student, spearheaded an effort to clean stones. Photos on social media. They cleaned over 50 stones. Jones would like to board to recognize this. **Mr. Holden made a motion to send a letter to Joey Kinney and everyone who participated, from the Selectboard. Mr. Spaulding seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried 4-0.**
- Page 8 – Mr. Jones hasn't heard from Recreation commission regarding their request to meet with the selectboard. **Mr. Holden made a motion to allow the 8th grade to do a coin drop on October 23rd in the Town of Castleton. Mr. Spaulding seconded the motion.** Discussion: Mr. Combs asked if they were aware of all the safety requirements. Mr. Jones advised had sent the coin drop policy to Tim Smith. Jones advised that the school had previously been granted permission, but they had not done it. **All were in favor. Motion carried 4-0.**

PURCHASE ORDERS FOR APPROVAL: None

WARRANTS FOR APPROVAL

Mr. Combs made a motion to approve check warrant #0927W in the amount of \$20,159.00, check warrant #0927R in the amount of \$180,776.00, check warrant #0927 in the amount of \$134,956.76, check warrant #0924 in the amount of \$9,970.00, check warrant #0923 in the amount of \$6,108.14, check warrant #0922 in the amount of \$24,777.62, check warrant # 0921 in the amount of \$1,695,380.11, check warrant #0917 in the amount of \$55, check warrant 0916 in the amount of \$5,972.18, check warrant 0923P in the amount of \$16,663.72 and check warrant #0916P in the amount of \$16,073.38. Mr. Holden seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion passed 4-0.

Mr. Spaulding made a motion to approve check warrant #0924P in the amount \$628.33 and check warrant #0917P in the amount of \$628.33. Mr. Holden seconded the motion. Mr. Combs recused himself. All remaining member voted in favor. Motion passed 3-0.

Mr. Jones introduced Chris Fouracre as new Director of Public Works. Discussion with and regarding Fouracre ensued. Mr. Jones noted to the Board that he has been receiving positive messages regarding Chris' customer service from the community. Mr. Combs and the [Board] welcomed Fouracre and offered their assistance if needed.

-Mr. Jones mentioned to the Board with confirmation from Fouracre that the Float Bridge weed whacking has been completed.

SELECT BOARD COMMENTS & CONCERNS

- Mr. Spaulding asked about missing minutes. Jones stated the recording clerk quit and accounting clerk is helping to fill in those minutes.
- Mr. Spaulding asked why the Slate Valley Union Unified School district thinks that they own the school, doesn't it belong to the voters? Mr. Mark is working on this. Mr. Leamy believes that when the district was formed that the ownership went to the district. Mr. Combs stated that the town entity, government never owned the elementary or village schools, they were owned by the Castleton-Hubbardton Union school district, theoretically owned by taxpayers, so when the Slate Valley district was formed the ownership transferred to them.
- Mr. Combs wondered about the status of a new recording secretary. Jones stated prior to the Administrative Assistant being out, there was a party interested but since that initial time there has been no communication from said party.
- Mr. Spaulding was curious of the line painting of sidewalks. Mr. Jones stated that it was discussed prior meeting, but they need additional materials to complete it, but it is in the works.
- Mr. Leamy stated they have been advised that the DRB is holding a second hearing on the proposed senior citizen center on Sand Hill Road possibly on October 5th at 7 p.m. at the fire station. If three members plan to attend, they would need to warn it. Members in attendance all stated they would like to attend. The date would need to be

double checked prior to warning to be sure it is accurate. Mr. Jones will warn the meeting this week.

SET FUTURE PUBLIC MEETING DATE ABOUT CASTLETON VILLAGE SCHOOL (CVS) & DISCUSS/APPROVE AN EDUCATIONAL CAMPAIGN REGARDING THE CVS VOTE - Set date of November 1st for input from the community on the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). Jones recommended October 27th for the CVS vote and keep with November 1st for ARPA funds. Meeting set at 6pm October 27 for a public meeting to discuss the CVS vote.

BRIEF RECAP & ITEMS FOR FOLLOW UP: None

EXECUTIVE SESSIONS: REAL ESTATE 1VSA §313(A), (2), PERSONNEL 1VSA§313(3) (A)(3), LABOR RELATIONS/ CONTRACTS 1VSA §313(A)(1)

Mr. Combs made a motion to enter executive session at 8:37 p.m. for personnel with the Town Manager and the board. Mr. Spaulding seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried 4-0.

Mr. Combs made a motion to leave executive session at 8:52 p.m. with no action taken. Mr. Spaulding seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried 4-0.

Mr. Combs made a motion to enter executive session at 8:52 p.m. for possible litigation with the Town Manager and the board. Mr. Spaulding seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried 4-0.

Mr. Combs made a motion to leave executive session at 8:57p.m. with no action taken. Mr. Spaulding seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried 4-0.

Mr. Combs made a motion to enter executive session at 8:57 p.m. for contracts with the Town Manager and the board. Mr. Spaulding seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried 4-0.

Mr. Holden made a motion to leave executive session at 9:09 p.m. with no action taken and return to regular meeting. Mr. Combs seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried 4-0

Mr. Holden made a motion to adjourn at 9:09 p.m. Mr. Combs seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned.