

TOWN OF CASTLETON SELECT BOARD MINUTES

**Monday, October 23, 2023 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/SUEoaPSNHE3mcWAQq_ITJpZrEIRbaFU8mpqLYqwik2jUHglK3pMMN5JSIEQirRI.24JH SOBjhwFJiCpw

PRESENT: James Leamy, Chair, Joseph Mark, Parliamentarian, Richard Combs, Michael Jones, Town Manager, See Attached List

PRESENT VIA ZOOM: Robert Spaulding, Jim Thomas, Jeff Davidson, Highway Foreman, Nedra Boutwell, Mary Droege, Melanie Combs, Allison Harvey, Recording Secretary

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by J. Leamy. J. Leamy asked for a moment of silence in honor of Joseph Bruno who has been a member of multiple boards and committees within the Town.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

R. Combs made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. ML Harris seconded. All voted in favor. Motion carried 5-0.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – September 25, 2023

R. Combs made a motion to approve the minutes of September 25, 2023 as presented. J. Mark seconded.

Page 4 – first sentence of the second paragraph should read: *J. Mark brought up the matter of the plaque being returned to the property on South Street at the owner's request.*

All voted in favor. ML Harris abstained. Motion carried 4-0.

CITIZENS COMMENTS & CONCERNS - ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA:

Mark Brown stated that over the past few years there have been many conversations about the CVS building. He believes in a perfect world it would be perfect to keep it in the community. If programs could be expanded to such things as volleyball, basketball, family broom hockey days, they are only limited by imagination, but there has been social disintegration. It would be wonderful for all to become more engaged in the community. M. Brown further stated he has spoken with Devon Neary and asked about a feasibility study, which is where they should start. He learned there are community planning grants available, applications are due November 1. To apply would need the blessing of this board, and he feels it would be a cost-effective way to find out if it would be feasible for the Town to continue to own the property. M. Jones stated there are matching grants available, it would need to be cash meaning no in-kind matches. He can apply but would need the go ahead from the board. Discussion and review of the grant and its requirements and timeline. **ML Harris made a motion that M. Jones apply for this grant process, how do they really know which way is best if they don't do it by a party not involved. She believes they should apply. J. Mark seconded.** Discussion on whether they could stay within the two years and whether could be compressed in the timeline. R. Combs questioned the feasibility study. M. Jones stated he would have to seek bids to do the study. Discussion on what would happen to the process if the property is sold and/or put under contract. Further discussion on the factors and dynamics of the property and how the Town can move ahead with the recreation portion/use of the property. **All voted in favor. Motion carried 5-0.**

Mr. Morales was present to explain and purpose and to share information on the latest updates on FEMA and SBA deadlines that are available until October 31. They are able to assist businesses and homeowners to apply for FEMA assistance, they brought flyers to present as well. Mr. Morales gave an explanation of the program and who can apply.

TOWN CLERK: Contract presented for approval Avenu Land Records

M. Jones provided a corrected copy of the proposal to the board for review. He further stated that this is a 5 year contract and Nedra has done a lot of research on it. What is being presented is less than month in the long run. It is cloud based, not a server in the office. **J. Mark made a motion to authorize the Town Manager to sign the contract with Avenu Institute and Analytics for provisional service for the cloud-based contract for \$700/month and \$100 search portal fee plus supplies and film. ML Harris seconded. All voted in favor. Motion carried 5-0.**

ON ROAD DIESEL BID AWARD

M. Jones stated Jeff Davidson the Highway Foreman was present on zoom to address the winter blend diesel bids. Champlain Valley Fuels is the lowest for price and rack price. R. Combs asked if the price reduces in January and February. It was stated they will have a partial blend that they will be able to use in the next few weeks, then it goes to a full blend, then the price reduces as winter progresses. J. Mark questioned if the rack price for Sam's U-Save and Champlain Valley will not apply if they are award bid. It was stated they are giving a rack price at \$.14 less than Sam's. **R. Combs made a motion to enter into a contract with Champlain Valley Fuel for winter diesel fuel for the 23/24 season at the rate specified in the October 4, 2023 letter to the Town Manager. ML Harris seconded.** R. Spaulding asked why they are going to on road when they have always used off road, which is legal. M. Jones stated the Canadian blend is \$.01 cheaper. R. Spaulding thought it was because it voided a warranty on trucks if they used off road. **All voted in favor. Motion carried 4-0. R. Spaulding abstained.**

HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT PARTS PURCHASE

The bids for the plow and grader blade equipment was presented, which included wing blades, grader blades and shows as 48" ditching bucket blade and scarifier blade for the grader. They have gone with a few different vendors and it is felt it saves money in the long run to go with the better quality blades, they last longer, there is less time in labor changing blades, etc. and J. Davidson recommends option #1 at the bid of \$7,313.54. **R. Combs made to authorize the Town Manager and highway foreman to purchase the carbide blades and buckets in option one at the cost of \$7,313.54. ML Harris seconded All voted in favor. Motion carried 5-0.**

WINTER SALT VENDOR APPROVAL

J. Davidson stated that after research and seeing what other towns are doing and the history. They added magnesium chloride last year to clear salt is a reduction of 30%, it can be purchased and add yourself. If they go with Cargill for the clear salt, they would get 15% instead of 30% and they would still come in under on the tonnage and there is no chance of mixing errors. The addition of the magnesium chloride makes for melt at a colder temperature. M. Jones stated he agrees with the research and option one is recommendation. **R. Combs made a motion to authorize the Town Manager and highway foreman to purchase 1,000 tons of bulk treated salt clear lane from Cargill for a price of \$83,300.00. J. Mark seconded. All voted in favor. Motion carried 5-0.**

J. Davidson thanked all for their efforts for helping him, he has enjoyed his first 90 days, everyone has been fantastic to work with.

POLICE UPDATE

Chief Mantello reviewed calls of service for the month of September, which is about the same as August. They had some increased traffic stops, more directed patrol and property watches. For criminal arrests, they had 7 in September, 23 from August. Traffic violations are new, comparing August to September. Further review of numbers, it was noted most traffic violations were on North Road. Further review of the reports and calls, as well as TSA and fingerprinting. J. Mark asked about people around the CVS building. P. Mantello stated he felt the more time it is vacant, the more trouble they will have. The officers are going around the building and library to address concerns and not finding anything out of the ordinary. M. Jones stated he received a message from the Hubbardton Town Clerk. Their constable passed away recently and they are concerned with not having that 8 hours of coverage and they are asking the Town of Castleton if they can take that coverage. Chief Mantello stated he doesn't feel they have the time to do that to make it worthwhile. R. Spaulding questioned staffing of the department. P. Mantello stated they are down two-part timers. M. Jones questioned the Hubbardton coverage and how he should reply. P. Mantello stated when they get into calls for service in other areas and stretching out his personnel,

he would be concerned with time limits.

NOISE ORDINANCE: Updates for Review

P. Mantello provided a new draft of the ordinance and explained the changed section numbers and added definitions. And that the highlights are new language and time frames. Discussion and various questions on the hours, business and residential coverage, enforcement and decibels. They are not looking to have this adopted at this time, P. Mantello will make further revisions and bring it back for further review. Also, discussion held on whether there should be 50 or 70 decibels for limits after 10 pm and whether they should separate ordinary noise from music levels. P. Mantello stated he would make further revisions and send it to board members.

SALE OF TOWN PROPERTY POLICY REVIEW

M. Jones referred to the copy of the current policy with the recommended changes. The current has October and April dates and coming to the board for review, he put some language in that the board should review and get feedback. He recommends rather than October and April, perhaps it should be monthly or the first meeting of the month or as needed. He also doesn't understand the language of the Town Meeting bid opening and it being after Town Meeting day. There are multiple sites that things could be posted on that would save advertising costs for most items. Discussion on notification of availability of things for sale, and how it could be improved upon.

PROPOSE SALE OF DUMP TRUCK

M. Jones stated by the current policy, they are to bring a list of things to be sold, this truck is one of them. Someone has asked for a quote on the value of a piece of equipment, the 2007 International 7400 is what is being requested. It has been quoted at \$9,300 to fix, which is not economically feasible. J. Davidson recommended they use a value of \$10-\$20,000 being from where it's at to being in really good shape. Discussion on what the truck is in for a condition and whether it would be better to sell it or repair it. R. Spaulding suggested putting it out to bid to the highest bidder. They have a right to refuse any and all bids. M. Jones felt they should set a what they will accept bid price. Discussion on bids to accept and how to put it out to bid and whether they would get more for it if it went to scrap metal.

ACCEPTANCE OF SMALL-SCALE GRANT: SOUTH STREET PEDESTRIAN ACCESSIBILITY AND SAFETY

M. Jones stated he was not aware that when they were awarded the large-scale grant of 1.5 million, they also got the small scale grant for the project from Castleton University to Main Street. Two were applied for, they got both and \$75,000 is the Town share, for a of \$150,000. They can get the funds from the highway department sidewalk carryover and the reserves can cover it. They will still be short money on the sidewalks, he had recommended using ARPA to cover some of that. M. Jones also stated they should maybe consider increasing sidewalk budgets, as once this is built it will have to be maintained. **J. Mark made a motion to accept the small scale bike and pedestrian program grant and authorize the Town Manager to sign on behalf of the Board. R. Combs seconded.** R. Combs asked if it will roll into the large scale, or a separate entity. M. Jones stated it is separate. **All voted in favor. Motion carried 5-0.**

MANAGER'S REPORT

M. Jones stated there are some citizens present to comment on the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan for public comment on invasive species, it was not put on the agenda as it should have been. J. Thomas stated there is a Northern University professor that is doing a tick study in the area, and it has been found that they also have jumping worms, honeysuckle and barberry on Town property which could impede local forest growth. The professor wants to do a tick study for a few years and may come back with some mitigation for decreasing the tick habitat. J. Mark asked which Town lands. J. Thomas stated the three ten-acre parcels from New Road parallel and between Pencil Mill Road and Crystal Heights. M. Jones reviewed the letter presented by the professor. M. Jones asked if the Selectboard has any concerns, as they are approaching the end of public comment for the Mitigation plan. It was pointed out that the Plan states hiring an additional highway personnel and economic development director. M. Jones felt it was not required if it is in the plan, J. Leamy disagreed, if it's in there, it will have to be followed through. J. Leamy stated the Town of Castleton tax burden is second highest in Rutland County. M. Jones stated they are the second largest town in Rutland County. J. Mark stated he felt it was easier to link the highway department with the mitigation plan rather than the economic development connection. Discussion on the contents of the Plan, and where the proposals within the Plan came from and whether they should stay within the Plan.

M. Jones stated the Board will have to consider the treasurer position, N. Trudo is retiring before the next election. The Board can appoint an interim until the next election, then anyone wanting the position will have to seek election in March. An ad will be done that will include all requirements of the position.

There has been a mediation date set for the 30th of October for the Sand Hill project.

October 29 is Bo Elliott Ramos' last day, they will have a farewell get together, no certain dates or times yet.

Recreation Director interviews were done, M. Jones needs to meet with M. Clifford and B. Ramos to review.

There are two applicants for the upcoming accountant vacancy.

The new Tahoe is in Town, it has not been lettered yet.

There still needs to be a meeting with the negotiation team to get going with the collective bargaining unit.

The roll off truck back in service. They currently don't have an employee with a CDL at the Transfer Station, jim Bruno will continue to drive until the roustabout it CDL certified.

The Holland tractor has been looked at, there is a crack in the arm, it will be taken care of but can't be done in house.

R. Combs questioned the treasurer retiring, and whether they do have an assistant. M. Jones stated there is, they are not appointed by this Board but by the Treasurer. This Board will have to appoint an interim however.

PURCHASE ORDERS FOR APPROVAL

None at this time.

WARRANTS FOR APPROVAL

R. Combs made a motion to approve check warrant #1006 in the amount of \$3,821.33, check warrant #1012 in the amount of \$35,406.32, check warrant #1019 in the amount of \$6,554.04 check warrant #1023 in the amount of \$227,359.45, check warrant #1012P in the amount of \$17,596.49, check warrant #1019P in the amount of \$18,182.31. ML Harris seconded. All voted in favor. Motion carried 5-0.

J. Mark made a motion to approve check warrant #1013P in the amount \$641.32, check warrant #1020P in the amount of \$641.32. ML Harris seconded. R. Combs recused himself. All remaining members voted in favor. Motion carried 4-0.

SELECTBOARD COMMENTS and/or CONCERNS:

ML Harris requested the budget go out earlier this year than last. M. Jones stated M. Combs is working on getting the worksheets out to the departments in the next few weeks, should get a draft to the board by the first week in November.

J. Mark commented they would need to make a decision on the plaque for the South Street school and requested it be put on the agenda for the next meeting.

BRIEF RECAP & ITEMS FOR FOLLOW UP:

None at this time.

ENTER EXECUTIVE SESSION – 9:24 PM

R. Combs made a motion to enter Executive Session to discuss Personnel to include the Town Manager. J. Mark seconded. All voted in favor. Motion carried 5-0.

EXIT EXECUTIVE SESSION – 9:38 PM

R. Combs made a motion to exit Executive Session, no action taken. J. Mark seconded. All voted in favor. Motion carried 5-0.

ADJOURN – 9:39 PM

R. Combs made a motion to adjourn at 9:39 p.m. J. Mark seconded. All voted in favor. Motion carried 5-0.

Respectfully Submitted
Allison Harvey
Recording Secretary

DRAFT