

**TOWN OF CASTLETON SELECT BOARD MINUTES**

**Monday, December 11, 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/oLk8HIRE1f0ORVI52zRbRGcM0i3kABawa-ctjq6g4akfGDEtlq\\_mN-PoyWlsq9eO.uGgY91qQ1\\_iBWIRM](https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/oLk8HIRE1f0ORVI52zRbRGcM0i3kABawa-ctjq6g4akfGDEtlq_mN-PoyWlsq9eO.uGgY91qQ1_iBWIRM)**

**PRESENT:** James Leamy, Chairman, Richard Combs, Vice-Chair, Joseph Mark, Parliamentarian, Robert Spaulding, Mary Lee Harris, See Attached List

**PRESENT VIA ZOOM:** 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.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**R. Spaulding made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. J. Mark seconded.** It was noted that the lighting at E. Crystal Haven and Route 30 be added to the agenda before the noise ordinance discussion. **All voted in favor. Motion carried 5-0.**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES – November 27, 2023**

**R. Combs made a motion to approve the minutes of November 27, 2023 as presented. R. Spaulding seconded.**

Page 1 – Call Meeting to Order – *Vice-Chair R. Combs* should be replaced with *Chairman J. Leamy*

Page 2 – First line of Lions Club Request for Crystal Beach – *a motion* should be inserted after made

Page 3 – second line of Tree Bid Award – *Popal* should be replaced with *Poplar*

Page 3 – paragraph before Brief Recap – *burner* should be replaced with *waste incinerator in Hudson Falls*

**All others voted in favor. Motion carried 5-0.**

**R. Combs made a motion to approve the minutes of November 28, 2023 Special Meeting as presented. ML Harris seconded. All others voted in favor. Motion carried 5-0.**

**CITIZENS COMMENTS & CONCERNS - ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA:**

Town Clerk N. Boutwell stated to the board that she has been working on a project for 5-6 years to fix a five-year gap in the land records index, and as of Friday, it has all been done, the index is done and the pages are all entered.

**WELCOME/INTRODUCE THE NEW PARKS AND RECREATION DIRECTOR – Town Manager**

M. Jones introduced John Alexander as the new Parks and Recreation Director. Mr. Alexander has been a lifelong resident in town, he started as a youngster working for the town on maintenance at Dewey Field and other things during the summer. He has vast knowledge of fields and building maintenance, as well as experience in coaching sports. J. Alexander stated he is looking forward to working with town in this formal context and hopes to expand recreation for kids and adults and develop and use the CVS building and natural resources within the town to better the recreation experience for residents and visitors alike. R. Spaulding asked for the recreation revenues for review, brief discussion held on how much of that information is readily available.

**LIGHTING AT EAST CRYSTAL HAVEN AND VT ROUTE 30**

R. Combs addressed the fact that at the last meeting it was stated that the Board felt the Town Manager and the Police Chief could handle this without action from the Board. **R. Combs made a motion to authorize the Town Manager to put a light at the south corner of E. Crystal Haven and Vt Route 30. ML Harris seconded. All voted in favor. Motion carried 5-0.**

**NOISE ORDINANCE: Amendments for Adoption**

**J. Mark made a motion to adopt the modified Noise Ordinance for the Town of Castleton at this meeting recognizing that there is a 60 day period before this could possibly go into effect. R. Spaulding seconded. All voted in favor. Motion carried 5-0.**

**REVIEW AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT (ARPA) FUNDS COMMITMENTS AND LIST OF PROPER USES: Selectboard and Town Manager**

M. Jones stated this is the same form that has been before them in the past. There are other issues with a later agenda item, and he is not sure where to go with it. He is looking for any changes the board members may have to the spreadsheet that has been provided. J. Mark stated he noted there are some blank spaces, which if filled in that would appear to change the bottom line that is printed. He feels the board should make a low and high priority on the list. R. Combs has done that and stated he felt the fund replacement for engine 5, the van at the Fire Department, the Parson's Hill sidewalk project and the town's share of the village sidewalk project top the list. They have not funded reserve accounts for either of the sidewalk projects in his opinion, and he feels when it is time to replace engine 6 and 3, what they have won't be adequate. Also, the \$45,000 a year for the sidewalks will not get those funds to the needed amount as well. Also, he would like to fund the town or mechanic vehicles in the highway dept. R. Spaulding stated they need to put some money aside for the salt and sand shed, and he said in the beginning he would not vote to approve the use of any of the ARPA funds until he saw that, and it still is not on the list and the entire first page has been approved. M. Jones explained the progress of the salt and sand shed, and the research being done with contractors and costs of the project, it would appear they could be \$200,000 short in funds. ML Harris stated she agrees with R. Combs on keeping the town equipment safe and in good working order. J. Mark would want to use these one-time funds only if they can make the reserve funds what they should be down the road, say five years from now. M. Jones stated he would like to think he can get to the board a more accurate list by the second meeting of January. J. Leamy felt the purchase of any equipment should be supported by an analysis of the equipment, it's condition and it's life expectancy, specifically highway and fire trucks. Also, water, sewer and highway are the areas that the funds were intended for, they have nothing to do with water, but they do the other two. He further stated that the board is here to represent the taxpayers, not the departments.

**REVISIONS TO PROPOSED BUDGET 2024/25**

j. Leamy stated an email was sent to the board asking them to get with M. Jones with any questions or concerns prior to the next scheduled meeting on December 21. J. Mark asked if the information is available to the public. M. Jones it is not, but he can get it there.

N. Mark asked to clarify the budget regarding the library. J. Leamy suggested she contact the Town Manager when he returns to his office on Thursday.

**TOWN REPORT 2022/2023: Cover, Dedication & Selectboard Comments**

M. Jones asked if there is anything that the board wants in the report that they could suggest, rather than just his words concerning the comments. He put the cover and dedication out there to get them thinking about what they would like to see on those pages. J. Mark stated he would like to see a list of the last five or ten years of dedications for review. J. Mark also offered to draft something if the other board members could provide an outline of what they would like to see in the board's report.

**LIQUOR LICENSES FOR APPROVAL:**

J. Leamy stated the police chief has indicated there are no problems or concerns for any of the establishments on the list for approval.

**R. Combs made a motion to approve the Liquor Licenses for:**

**Lake Bomoseen Lodge – First Class, Third Class and Outside Consumption Licenses;**

**Toltec/Beverage King Market & Deli – Second Class License and Tobacco Endorsement;**

Castleton Pizza Place & Deli/Blue Cat – First Class, Third Class and Outside Consumption Licenses;

Castleton Pizza Place & Deli/Birdseye Diner – First Class and Outside Consumption Licenses;

Castleton Village Store – Second Class License and Tobacco License.

ML Harris seconded. All voted in favor. Motion carried 5-0.

#### **ALLOCATION OF RETURNABLE DEPOSIT BOTTLE AND CAN REVENUE FROM THE TRANSFER STATION - Selectboard**

ML Harris stated it is her understanding that there are four organizations that are designated for these revenues. **ML Harris made a motion that any redemptions that are not approved for the four organizations that the money goes to the recreation department. R. Spaulding seconded.** R. Combs stated he recalls that any nonprofit that wanted the proceeds had to request them, and it needed to be approved by Town Office staff. R. Combs further stated that if there are no requests or previous allocations made that any the funds should go to recreation. M. Combs stated it is an open field, if organization comes in and fills out form, if they meet basic nonprofit criteria met, they are vetted by the Town Manager. Otherwise, if they are approved in past, she has signed off on it, it is not guaranteed for any particular months, they are awarded to the next available, they cannot pick and choose the month they receive the revenues. In more recent years there has not been a lot of organizations to sign up, primarily it has been senior center, project grad, women's club for scholarship program and the Hubbardton Fire Department. They can sign up two times a year, they can't be for the same months two years in a row, and they can't be consecutive months. If no one signs up, the proceeds are retained by the Town. J. Mark asked if they were redeemed monthly? It was stated yes, they are and overall revenue has declined, but is maybe \$150 average. M. Jones asked if could specify maybe youth sports or adult recreation, as there are a number of sections in Recreation. **ML Harris amended the motion to add that the funds go to youth sports, adult sports and programs connected to CVS and/or the sports field behind the school. R. Spaulding seconded.** M. Combs questioned the nonprofit not being addressed in the motion. It was felt the nonprofit doesn't need to be addressed in the motion, but it is within the policy. There may be a need for the policy to be reviewed as well, and how the vetting process is handled within the town office. R. Steele suggested all of the proceeds go into youth sports, rather than wasting employee time to vet and process the requests. **ML Harris withdrew her motion, R. Spaulding withdrew his second.** This will be addressed at the next meeting where they will review the policy to go in the direction of the suggestion of R. Steele.

#### **AUTHORIZATION OF NEEDED REPAIRS TO HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT EQUIPMENT – Town Manager**

It was stated they have received two estimates – one from Lyle Welding for the repairs to the 20 ton trailer and one from Capital Tractor for the New Holland roadside mower tractor. There should also be an estimate coming for the 2013 International tandem truck, which is at Earl's Truck Repair and a cost estimate for repairs on that, could be \$15-20,000 in repairs, but there are no actual numbers yet. M. Jones stated the repair budget is already in dire straits, due to other unexpected repairs. These three are close to \$30,000 plus or minus for all of them. There is unassigned highway carryover which is already obligated to repairs for the grader, the asset management and salt and sand shed for the current fiscal year, so they have overcommitted and there is no money there to help with these repairs. He will have to get the solid numbers before the board can act on any of this, but the only exit he sees working is using ARPA for these repairs or continue to overspend the maintenance budget. J. Davidson explained his needs of the equipment being discussed and that these pieces of equipment are being used year-round. J. Mark questioned the ages, the trailer is 1980's, the New Holland is a 2001, the International Truck is 2013. It was stated the tandem truck and the mower would be priority.

#### **MUNICIPAL ENERGY RESILIENCE PROGRAM (MERP) MINI GRANT – Town Manager**

M. Jones stated this grant is a spin off from the municipal energy program they have already been awarded. It is first come, first serve, once gone, the funds are gone. This is an energy resilience and energy savings that can be available to taxpayers, M. Jones reviewed a Town of Chittenden program that is similar to this grant. There may not be a lot of participation, but he felt they should at least make it available. **R. Combs made a motion to authorize the Town Manager to apply for the Municipal Energy Resilience Program mini grant. R. Spaulding seconded. All voted in favor. Motion carried 5-0.**

#### **MANAGER'S REPORT**

M. Jones asked for any questions on what has been provided to the Board. J. Mark has not had a chance to review, as did other members.

**PURCHASE ORDERS FOR APPROVAL**

None at this time.

**WARRANTS FOR APPROVAL**

**R. Combs made a motion to approve check warrant #1211R in the amount of \$3,025.00, check warrant #1130 in the amount of \$7,498.34, check warrant #1207 in the amount of \$25,526.55, check warrant #1211 in the amount of \$113,523.63, check warrant #1130P in the amount of \$18,126.30, check warrant #1207P in the amount of \$17,381.58. J. Mark seconded. All voted in favor. Motion carried 5-0.**

**J. Mark made a motion to approve check warrant #1201P in the amount \$641.32, check warrant #1207P in the amount of \$631.91. ML Harris seconded. R. Combs recused himself. All remaining members voted in favor. Motion carried 4-0.**

**SELECTBOARD COMMENTS and/or CONCERNS:**

R. Spaulding stated he would like to see the recreation expenses from day one to the current date. M. Jones stated it has already done as it was needed for the Town of Hubbardton.

R. Combs stated there will be a Wreath's Across America event on Saturday at the Hillside Cemetery at 11:30. All are welcome to help distribute the wreaths on the veteran's graves.

J. Mark asked the T. Manager about the budget total for the CVS building for the expenses of about \$80,000. In the past that has been quoted at \$50 or \$60,000, and he questioned why it is so much higher. M. Jones stated the only thing that comes to mind is unexpected repairs, it is at \$90,519 in the current year, so if maintenance issues are taken care of in current year, it might go down, but it would be hard to tell for sure. The electricity is running about \$1,200-\$1,300 per month, which is a rather large increase. R. Spaulding thanked J. Mark for the question being asked, he also feels they need to get a handle on the expenses of the building.

**BRIEF RECAP & ITEMS FOR FOLLOW UP:**

None at this time.

**ENTER EXECUTIVE SESSION – 8:26 PM**

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

**EXIT EXECUTIVE SESSION – 8:42 PM**

**R. Spaulding made a motion to exit Executive Session, no action taken. ML Harris seconded. All voted in favor. Motion carried 5-0.**

**ADJOURN – 8:43 PM**

**J. Mark made a motion to adjourn at 8:43 p.m. R. Spaulding seconded. All voted in favor. Motion carried 5-0.**

Respectfully Submitted  
Allison Harvey  
Recording Secretary