

TOWN OF WOODFORD, VT
BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING

October 15, 2014 Unapproved

MEMBERS PRESENT: Ryan Thurber, Steve Wright, Mike Charette

ALSO PRESENT: Avis Bruce-Hurley, Gene Irons, Jock Irons, Jim O'Connor, Gail Rutkowski (treasurer), Susan Wright, (clerk).

Motion by Ryan, 2nd by Mike to call the meeting to order at 7:00pm. All in favor, Motion carried.

1. GENERAL PUBLIC

A. Jim O'Connor from Pownal introduced himself as an Independent candidate for the House of Representatives representing Pownal and Woodford. He expressed that one of his main concerns is the educational property tax and has a proposal to reduce this tax by 1/3rd in addition to keeping it stable. Ryan thanked him for attending and encouraged him to get the word out to the local people.

B. Jock Irons expressed he was looking forward to moving to Woodford.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ryan noted that the minutes did not include Gail's unpaid bills she posted and signed in the amount of \$3776.08.

Gail asked if the minutes had noted that the Bank of Bennington required two signatures to do anything. Ryan answered no, the select board chair and the treasurer have the consent to "view" accounts. Mike stated that it takes a majority of the Trustees of Public Funds to withdraw any funds. Ryan explained to Gail that she was the only one who will be moving any money for investments, decisions and bill paying with the majority of the board's approval.

MOTION by Ryan, 2nd by Mike to approve the minutes as posted. All in favor, Motion Carried.

3. TREASURER'S REPORT

A. Unpaid Bills

Gail presented the outstanding bills to the board for a total of \$9740.23. Ryan stated that both Steve and Mike's wives were on the list and that they needed to be separated in order to prevent a conflict of interest (see attached).

Gail explained to the board that there was more money in the tax account but that it had taken about two weeks to catch up on all the payments. She was able to collect about 90% of

what was due for the fiscal year. The other 10% would be in a report to be sent to the delinquent tax collector. She was however, unfamiliar as to how to create this report. She was reminded that NEMRC was still under contract to assist her but if she desired to have the town clerk assist her instead then that was her decision to make as to how she wanted to do her job.

Discussion followed about the school's portion of the school tax that had to be sent to the state. Avis suggested that the Supervisory Union could advise Gail on this process.

As the board reviewed the unpaid bills, a question arose as to a \$765.58 propane bill, similar to one presented last month. An energy audit had been completed and upgrades done so there didn't seem to be an explanation as to why so much propane was being used. A suggestion was made to invest in programmable thermostats and perhaps get other quotes for propane prices. Upon further review Gail realized that the bill was a duplicate and the amount listed should have been a \$15 late fee. Steve clarified to Gail that the amount for Uncle Bob's Septic was for ditch work done on Notch road and should be from the highway budget. With revisions Gail re-submitted the unpaid bills for a total of \$8989.56. Ryan questioned whether Gail had the opportunity to discover the individual balances for specific accounts. Some categories were appropriations that the town's people voted on specifically and need to be kept separate and accounted for. Since Gail had not attained this information NEMRC was again suggested as a resource to help her since budget time was fast approaching.

MOTION by Ryan to approve unpaid bills as presented for \$8989.56. He further motioned that Steve abstain from approving Susan's payroll while approving the others. Mike 2nd. All in favor. Motion Carried. Motion by Ryan that Mike abstain from Betty's payroll while approving the others, 2nd by Steve. All in Favor, Motion Carried.

Avis asked about the highway fund and expenses for the month. Gail inquired whether or not there would be enough money in the highway account. Steve answered that there should be but the select board needs to be notified if this is not the case.

B. Warrants

MOTION by Ryan, 2nd by Mike to approve the warrants for the payroll account as presented for \$2327.53. All in favor, Motion Carried.

Motion by Ryan, 2nd by Mike to approve the warrants for the dog account for \$101.63. All in favor, Motion Carried.

Ryan stated that the warrant for the general fund did not match the amount for approved unpaid bills for this account for last month. Motion by Ryan, 2nd by Mike to table approval for further clarification for the next meeting. All in favor, Motion Carried.

4. AWARDING OF BIDS

Ryan explained that on October 1st and invitation for bids for demolition of the two acquired properties went out and posted as required (see attached for requirements). Three bids were

received by the Town as follows: HNB Inc for \$3900.00. Weaves Excavating for \$7500.00, and Chelsea Trucking for \$3250.00. He further explained that this money was coming from Fema funds and will not be coming from Woodford's funds. It was asked where the money was being held and the response was by the State of Vt.

Avis inquired as to where all this information was being held since this is public information and what Jason Morrissey held. Ryan answered that all information from the property buyouts, their closings as well as the town clerk's fees for the recording of the land transfers are being held. The town has the recorded deeds in the office as part of the land records and is in the town clerk's office. Information regarding the river work is being held in a blue box secured in the town's vault available through the town clerk. These documents must be available for an audit for 7 yrs. She questioned the property buy out expenses pointing out that the Davis' had to pay out of pocket for their clean up where as the Wright's did not. The Lafountain's were interested in the buyout until they were told they had to pay for their own clean up and chose not to participate in the buyout. The board informed Avis she was 100% incorrect in her information concerning the buyouts. Avis answered that she would do research in the Fema box. Ryan strongly suggested that she read the sub-grantees handbook to better understand the process.

The board continued discussion of the bids. Steve stated that Billy Smith was extremely helpful and accommodating during the aftermath of Irene and his bid was also the lowest. Motion by Steve, 2nd by Mike to accept Chelsea's Trucking bid for \$3250.00. All in favor, Motion Carried. Ryan will notify Billy Smith and inform him the work must be completed by Oct. 25, 2014.

5. TOWN BUDGET

Specific categories were discussed to be set up and included in the town budget. A road specific account since the Dunnville Hollow road is still impassable, bridge acct needs to be reviewed and researched, and emergency fund should be established. Rebuilding the Woodford Reserve Fund should be discussed and how to proceed with it. These discussions need to happen as soon as possible to be included in the budget presented to the town's people.

6. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Mike stated that the SAM (System for Award Management) will expire on Oct 21, 2014. This is an annual registration and he will check into how to renew it.

B. Mike also discussed that a property tax resolution was sent from the town of Dorset. They are asking the town to join them to ask the State for a property tax freeze for 2 yrs and relook as to how schools are funded.

C. Mike presented the suggestion of separating the town treasurer position from the school treasurer position and to be on the ballot as two separate voted positions. Avis stated that it was not a select board vote but a school district's vote. Ryan responded that there is no discrepancy there but that the important thing is that the people are fully informed of the

positives and negatives. He stated that open communication of the entire school board would be beneficial for the town as a whole. The board will add the topic of separation of the treasurer's position on the agenda for the Nov 19th meeting.D.

Ryan stated that the hazard mitigation debris clean up had to be completed by October 25, 2014. An inspection done by the State is scheduled for early November. Once the inspection is completed then all bills will be paid. All records then will be part of the Town's Fema records and available through the town clerk.

Motion by Ryan, 2nd by Steve to adjourn the meeting. All in favor, Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 8:55pm- NEXT MEETING NOVEMBER 19, 2014 at 7 pm.

Susan Wright - Clerk