

Town of Mendon

Selectboard

April 13, 2020

Members of Selectboard present: Richard Wilcox, Geoff Wells, Scott Bradley

Town Officers and employees present: Sara Tully, Town Administrator & Health Officer, Bill Ellis, Road Commissioner, Nancy Gondella, Town Clerk & Treasurer, Phil Douglas, Constable and Director of Public Safety

Visitors present: Ann Singiser & Fred Bagley, Mendon Historical Society, Dennis Charles

The Selectboard Meeting was called to order at 5:00 PM with all participants participating remotely.

In response to COVID-19, the Selectboard strongly encourages the public to participate in this meeting by video or teleconferencing. The public can follow the directions on the agenda and posted publicly on the Mendon website at www.mendonvt.org.

As Chair of the Town of Mendon Selectboard I find that, due to the State of Emergency declared by Governor Scott as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and pursuant to Addendum 6 to Executive Order 01-20 and Act 92, this public body is authorized to meet electronically.

In accordance with Act 92, there is no physical location to observe and listen contemporaneously to this meeting. However, in accordance with the temporary amendments to the Open Meeting Law, I confirm that we are:

- a) Providing public access to the meeting by video with additional access offered through telephone. We are using Gotomeeting.com for this remote meeting. All members of the Selectboard have the ability to communicate contemporaneously during this meeting through this platform and the public has access to contemporaneously listen and, if desired, participate in this meeting by **joining the meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone.**

<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/710329309>

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- b) Providing public notice of instructions for accessing the meeting. We previously gave notice to the public of the necessary information for accessing this meeting, including how to access

the meeting using telephone and video in our posted meeting agenda. Instructions have also been provided on the town website at: www.mendonvt.org.

- c) Providing a mechanism for the public to alert the public body during the meeting if there are problems with access. If anybody has a problem, please *e-mail mendonclerk@comcast.net* and
- d) Continuing the meeting if necessary. In the event the public is unable to access this meeting, it will be continued to a time and place certain.

Please note that all votes taken during this meeting that are not unanimous will be done by roll call vote, in accordance with the law.

Let's start the meeting by taking a roll call attendance of all members participating in the meeting.

Roll call: Richard Wilcox, Geoff Wells and Scott Bradley

Agenda: R. Wilcox moved to approve the agenda. Motion seconded by G. Wells. The Selectboard unanimously approved the motion.

Administrative Matters

Selectmen's Orders were reviewed. Motion by G. Wells to approve the General Fund pay order in the amount of \$24,229.91. Motion seconded by S. Bradley. The Selectboard unanimously approved the motion.

Motion by R. Wilcox to approve the Payroll Warrant for the period ending 04/05/2020 for a gross payroll amount of \$10,601.24. Motion seconded by S. Bradley. The Selectboard unanimously approved the motion.

Motion by R. Wilcox to authorize one Selectboard member to approve and sign the orders until the State of Emergency in response to the COVID19 pandemic ends. Motion seconded by G. Wells. The Selectboard unanimously approved the motion.

Minutes of Previous Meeting: G. Wells moved to approve the minutes of March 23, 2020. Motion seconded by S. Bradley. The Selectboard unanimously approved the motion.

Business

Old Town Hall Park The Selectboard reviewed the Request for Bids prepared by Ann Singiser with input from S. Tully. A. Singiser explained they hoped to advertise for bids as soon as possible. A start date can not be determined at this time due to the state of emergency and under the Governor's Stay Home Stay Safe orders. The Selectboard questioned whether companies

that make the signs have the authority to work in their shops under the current orders. S. Tully will look into for further clarification. A. Singiser discussed approximately \$1160 in design work has been completed for the project and paid for by the Mendon Historical Society. The MHS members support the project. The Selectboard discussed the positioning of the project on the site. Some members have not had the opportunity to drive by. Motion by G. Wells to approve the Request for Bids to advertise as soon as orders are amended by the Governor to allow for non-essential work. Motion seconded by S. Bradley. The motion passed unanimously.

COVID-19 Response & Town Government Operations

COVID-19 Financial Update N. Gondella reported the cost to respond to the COVID19 pandemic is \$6,600. This includes laptops and software to operate essential town business remotely, town-wide mailing of information and cleaning supplies. Most expenses are not eligible for FEMA reimbursement under the Public Assistance Program.

Recreation Area The Selectboard is restricting use of the Mendon Recreation Area to include safety recommendations from the state. Signs will be posted to restrict access to no more than 10 people utilizing the facility at one time, to follow social distancing recommendations, to use hand sanitizer, to use playground at own risk-it is not disinfected, do not share sports equipment.

Continuity of Operations Plan The Town of Mendon is strictly following the Governor's Stay Home Stay Safe orders and staff is monitoring all requirements as they develop. Procedure Manuals for the Bookkeeper and Treasurer's positions are being created in case replacement personnel is needed due to COVID-19 sickness. S. Tully will create a Town Administrator project list and maintain updates for information for the Selectboard if replacement personnel is needed due to COVID-19 sickness. Towns with 3 members of the Selectboard have a greater risk of securing a quorum to make decisions for the town than 5 member boards. VLCT has identified this as an issue and potentially the legislature may issue a solution. The Selectboard discussed options for the town if one or more members of the Selectboard become hospitalized from COVID-19. The statutes regarding filling vacancies on the Selectboard were discussed. The Selectboard agreed that each member would resign from the Selectboard if they become hospitalized with COVID-19. The remaining members in accordance with statute would appoint a replacement member.

Vulnerable Populations The town has not received any requests for services from vulnerable residents from the town-wide mailing. S, Tully as the Health Officer will create a form to collect necessary data from a caller if one reaches out to the town. The town can have Mary Ann Reich, Town Service Officer, or Phil Douglas, Director of Public Safety respond to needs as they arise.

Personnel Information The town has posted required information regarding the Family First Act. The Selectboard directed S. Tully to email a copy of this poster to each employee. All

accumulated sick and vacation time for each employee was provided to the Selectboard. Employees are encouraged to take vacation time as usual before the end of the fiscal year. Anyone who needs services can also contact 2-1-1.

Town Clerk Report Town business is being conducted 100% remotely or behind closed doors not open to the public or other town staff and officials. N. Gondella reported the General Indexes have been posted on the town website. Researchers are able to look up specific book and page numbers they need copies of and email www.mendonclerk@comcast.net to obtain electronic copies. The copies are emailed with an invoice to be paid to the Town. This allows for the continuation of business such as refinancing and real estate transactions. Taxpayers can also request by telephone or email copies of their tax bills, make tax payments and obtain dog licenses. N. Gondella provided a list of activities the Town Clerk's office can continue to complete working independently. She has received great feedback from title searchers that property owners are still able to refinance. D. Wilcox commended all the staff for what they are doing to serve the town.

2020-2021 Goals and Objectives Issue tabled until the Selectboard is able to have a comprehensive discussion of this years goals.

Town Wide Reappraisal The Selectboard has received a one year extension from property valuation and review to complete the Town-wide Reappraisal. S. Tully presented an amendment to the contract with Vermont Municipal Assessor extending the completion to the 2021 Grand List. The draft was sent to Spencer Potter and he had no comments or suggested changes. Motion by G. Wells to have D. Wilcox execute the contract amendment with Vermont Municipal Assessors. Motion seconded by S. Bradley. The Selectboard unanimously approved the motion.

AT&T Status The Selectboard reviewed an email sent from AT&T W. Dodge to S. Tully on April 8, 2020. The Selectboard discussed the response to include that the town must operate under strict adherence to the Governor's Stay Home Stay Safe orders which does not allow for town staff and officials to be driving around town observing a balloon test. The town has been working with AT&T to develop a list of locations in Mendon with high visibility since the last week of February. The town received no correspondence from AT&T since March 10th in which the town responded to on March 13th. AT&T intends to advertise and conduct the balloon test on April 24th or April 25th from 9 am to 1 pm weather permitting and in the midst of a declared state of emergency and in contrary to the Governor's Stay Home and Stay Safe orders. AT&T has proposed a public hearing be conducted just a few days later between April 30th and May 4th. This does not allow the town to participate in the due process. The town will draft a response and immediately send to AT&T by noon tomorrow with copies to the state Public Utility

Commission. The town will ask that the balloon test be conducted without leaves on the trees and not under a global pandemic and under a declared state of emergency. The earliest this might be accomplished is late October 2020. The town will also request AT&T submit a request for extension of their application to the PUC for up to one year.

Local Emergency Operations Plan P. Douglas sent drafts of the LEOP for the Selectboard to review. The LEOP will be adopted at the next Selectboard Meeting April 27th.

Dry Hydrant S. Tully provided an update regarding the Cortina Dry Hydrant project. She has inquired to the Department of Commerce whether this project would be considered essential work because it involves installing a dry hydrant for fire protection. S, Tully will proceed with the VTRANS T.1111 permit and the easement from the owners of the property.

Town Plan Adoption Schedule Act 92 extended the deadline for adoption of the Town Plan for 90 days after the declared state of emergency ends. The original timeline required the Town Plan to be adopted not less than 30 nor more than 120 days after the Planning Commission adopted the plan on February 19th. The Selectboard intends to meet the original time schedule, but is aware this can be extended if needed.

Culvert 07-42 The Notice of Award has been sent to Northwoods with a Contract Agreement. Once signed and executed the Selectboard will issue the Notice to Proceed. The Agreement includes a provision that the construction timeline is dependent on the Governor's Stay Home Stay Safe orders in response to COVID-19.

There being no further business, R. Wilcox moved to adjourn at 7:15 PM. Motion seconded by S. Bradley. The Selectboard unanimously approved the motion.

Date Approved _____

Richard Wilcox

Sara Tully - Clerk of the Board

Geoff Wells

Scott Bradley