

## Town of Mendon

### Selectboard

July 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, Teri Corsones, Planning Commission

Visitors present: Representative Jim Harrison

The Selectboard Meeting was called to order at 5:00 PM with all present 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](http://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:

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.**

Selectboard 07/13/2020

Mon, Jul 13, 2020 5:00 PM - 7:30 PM (EDT)

**Please join my meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone.**

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- a) 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](http://www.mendonvt.org).
- b) 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
- c) 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 with the addition of Town Plan Public Hearing, H966 and status of in-person office meetings. Motion seconded by G. Wells. The Selectboard unanimously approved the motion.

#### Administrative Matters

*Selectmen's Orders* were reviewed. Motion by R. Wilcox to approve payroll for the period ending 06/27/2020 in the amount of \$10,698.96 and to approve payroll for the period ending 7/11/2020 in the amount of \$11,076.22. Motion seconded by G. Wells. The motion passed unanimously. Motion by R. Wilcox to approve pay orders for the period ending 06/30/2020 in the amounts of \$46,078.80, \$25,392.17 and \$30,405.00 and to approve pay orders for period ending 7/9/20 in the amounts of \$2,589.56 and \$533.93. Motion seconded by S. Bradley. The Selectboard unanimously approved the motion.

Minutes of Previous Meeting: R. Wilcox moved to approve the minutes of June 22, 2020. Motion seconded by S. Bradley. The Selectboard unanimously approved the motion.

#### Business

*Rep. Jim Harrison* attended the meeting to provide the Selectboard with some updated

information regarding the legislative session as it has extended into the summer due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It is expected the state will have effects regarding recovery for years to come. The legislature acted to provide for the ability for online meetings, implemented voting changes and expanded healthcare licenses. Money is available from the CARES Act that is being distributed through various grants. There will be \$13,000,000 available for local government reimbursement on eligible COVID-19 expenses. These include expenses like hazard pay, supplies, equipment, and plexi-glass shields for offices. Municipalities can apply for up to \$25 per capita for their towns. There is \$2,000,000 being distributed for the digitalization of records for municipalities. The legislature has been discussing a policing bill that bans choke holds and requires towns to collect data regarding traffic stops as well as to require police officers to intervene in situations and will address a requirement to utilize body cameras.

*Financial Update* N. Gondella provided a financial update for the Selectboard that anticipates a cash balance of approximately \$100,000 to end the 2019-2020 fiscal year. Reduced spending by \$10,000 and increased revenue by \$93,000 will contribute to the cash balance forward number. N. Gondella continues to finalize the year end fiscal year budget and will make a recommendation to the Selectboard in order to set the 2020-2021 tax rate. It is expected that the tax rate will be set at the first Selectboard meeting in August.

*Preparing to Set the Tax Rate* S.. Tully presented the tax rate flyer for 2021-2022. Once N. Gondella determines the cash balance forward number the tax rate can be finalized. The time frame of setting the tax rate was discussed and the Selectboard should have all the information required to set the tax rate at the first meeting in August.

*Primary Election Update* N. Gondola discussed the primary election and requirements for social distancing in limiting the number of occupants in the building for the election. The office is processing 200 absentee ballot requests and expect this trend to continue.

*AT&T Status* The ZBA has informed the Selectboard that they have completed a deliberative session and should have a report available for review this week. T. Corsones requested an update on process for filing comments to the PUC. The Selectboard stated the ZBA will be handling the issue. N. Gondella reported the final Statistics of the survey conducted regarding the AT&T project. There were 54 responses of which 52% supported the project and 41% opposed the project with 7% issuing no opinion. The responses 2 whether the town should impose additional expenses to oppose the project 23% supported while 76% opposed spending additional funds to oppose the project.

*COVID-19 Response & Town Government Operations-* N. Gondella reported the cost to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic is approximately \$12,500 for the town of Mendon. Some of these expenses include communications, face masks and plexiglass shields for the office, computers to work remotely, sanitizing agents and cleaners, staff time to respond to regulations and additional cleaning requirements and to install a wireless VTEL router for internet access in the parking lot. S. Tully reported that updated guidance from the State allows playgrounds to open, but recommend hand sanitizer be available. The Selectboard discussed this is difficult to regulate at the Mendon recreation Area and determined the play structures should remain closed and fenced. The capacity of individuals utilizing the Mendon Recreation Area has also increased to 150 people. S. Tully will update signage to be posted at the Mendon Recreation Area. S. Tully reported the state has determined quarantine requirements for out-of-state travel to those counties that have a higher COVID-19 caseload than Vermont. In order to protect the health of the town's employees, officials and the general public that utilize municipal buildings and vehicles, S. Tully and R. Wilcox have drafted a memo for out of state travel guidance for employees and elected & appointed officials. They are requesting Selectboard approve for distribution. The Selectboard approved the memo for distribution.

*Appropriations Request Procedure* The Selectboard discussed the appropriation request procedure for getting on the ballot for Town Meeting 2021. Although petitions would not be due until January 2021 many organizations start obtaining signatures early in the fall. The Selectboard has received a request to amend the appropriation request procedure for filing a petition signed by 5% of the voters based on the exposure to COVID-19. The Selectboard continues to believe that the requirement of the petition demonstrates community support for an organization. However, they agreed that if an organization was funded in the 2020-2021 budget as approved by the voters and the request remains at the same value that the Selectboard will waive the petition requirement for the 2021-2022 budget. This is a one-year exception and the town will revert back to the petition requirement for following years. Any new requests or if an organization wants to increase their request, a petition signed by 5% of the voters needs to be submitted by January in order to get on the ballot. S. Tully will inform the organizations that are currently being funded of this change in the appropriation request procedure for town meeting 2021. The Selectboard also request that it be posted on the town's website.

*Rutland County Sheriff Contract* Motion by R. Wilcox to amend the motion on June 22, 2020 to approve and sign the contract with Rutland County Sheriff to provide coverage for 32 hours per week at \$44.52 per hour without specifically specifying the contract will guarantee a certified

Level III Deputy Sheriff is assigned in Mendon. Motion seconded by S. Bradley. The Selectboard unanimously approved the motion

*VMA Contract* S. Tully submitted a draft contract for appraisal services with Vermont Municipal Assessor. Lengthy discussion regarding the process of preparing and finalizing the grand list annually and the deliverables required under the contract as well as payment procedures. The Selectboard made suggested changes to the draft. S. Tully will prepare an updated contract for review by Vermont Municipal Assessors.

*Fitzsimmons Access Permit Required* The Selectboard reviewed and approved a letter to be sent certified to the Fitzsimons property off Clark-Mason Rd requiring the owners to obtain an Access Permit for work completed within the right of way.

*Town Hall Park Fence* The Selectboard will reach out to Ann Singiser for an update on whether she has received a quote for digging the post holes for the fence or if the town will be responsible for digging the post holes. Issue tabled until the next meeting.

*KnowBe4 Security Awareness Training* S. Tully reported the information on no before securities website is not specifically relevant to Mendon's size town. She has submitted a request for a quote. Based on the information that is available, the cost for services could be \$3,800 for a three year contract. She will continue to try and obtain a direct quote as the discount the Vermont League of Cities and Towns negotiated with KnowBe4 Security expires July 31st.

There being no further business, R. Wilcox moved to adjourn at 6:56 PM. Motion seconded by G. Wells. The Selectboard unanimously approved the motion.

Date Approved\_\_\_\_\_

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Richard Wilcox

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Sara Tully - Clerk of the Board

\_\_\_\_\_  
Geoff Wells

\_\_\_\_\_  
Scott Bradley