

Town of Mendon

Selectboard

November 9, 2020

Members of Selectboard present: Richard Wilcox, Geoff Wells

Town Officers and employees present: Sara Tully, Town Administrator & Health Officer, Nancy Gondella, Town Clerk & Treasurer, Bill Ellis, Road Commissioner, Teri Corsones, Planning Commission

Visitors present: Val Taylor, Judy Barone

The Selectboard Meeting was called to order at 5:01 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.

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 Meeting

Mon, Nov 9, 2020 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (EST)

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.
- 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

Agenda: G. Wells moved to approve the agenda with the addition of Mendon Hiking Guide, Bulletin Board at former Beaver Pond, Personnel Complaint Follow Up and Thanksgiving Week Schedule. Motion seconded by R. Wilcox. The Selectboard unanimously approved the motion.

Announcement

The Town of Mendon is accepting applications for a Highway Maintenance/Equipment Operator and Building/Grounds Maintenance. This is a full-time position. Information can be found on the town website at www.mendonvt.org. The Town of Mendon is also accepting applications for a part time Highway Maintenance/Equipment Operator seasonal position from November 2020 to March 2021.

There is a vacancy on the Selectboard. Interested parties should submit a letter of interest to Sara Tully, Town Administrator at mendonadmin@comcast.net

The Selectboard wanted to thank everyone that assisted in the Presidential Election. It was a lot of hard work. Luckily, everything went very smoothly in Mendon.

Administrative Matters

Selectmen's Orders were reviewed. Motion by R. Wilcox to approve payroll for the period ending 10/31/2020 in the amount of \$9,339.90. Motion seconded by G. Wells. The Selectboard unanimously approved the motion. Motion by R. Wilcox to approve orders for period ending 11/9/20 for \$11,824.72 and \$4,847.69. Motion seconded by G. Wells. The motion passed.

Minutes of Previous Meeting: R. Wilcox moved to approve the minutes of 10/26/20. Motion seconded by G. Wells. The motion passed.

Business

Mendon Hiking Guide Fred Bagley has prepared a hiking guide to all public trails in Mendon. This guide has been published on the Town of Mendon website at www.mendonvt.org. The guide is also available at the Town Office.

Bulletin Board at the former Beaver Pond The Selectboard received a request to remove the bulletin board from the former Beaver Pond parking area. The board has not been utilized for years and has recently been tagged with graffiti. The property is owned by Rutland City. S. Tully will follow up by contacting Jeff

Thanksgiving Week Schedule N. Gondella requested closing the office for the week of Thanksgiving. The Selectboard declined the request.

Community Visit In March, the Mendon Steering Committee and volunteers were working with the Vermont Center for Rural Development to plan a Community Visit called Mendon on the Move. The planning came to a halt after the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. VCRD is now offering a hybrid program conducting all meetings virtually and has inquired whether Mendon is still interested. The Selectboard discussed and continues to support the program however it is a program that is community driven, not organized by the town. The pros and cons of participating remotely were discussed. J. Barone, Chair of the Community Visit Steering Committee with the help of S. Tully will reach out to the Steering Committee members and volunteers to gauge interest in continuing the program in Mendon. If they receive positive feedback to continue, S. Tully will confirm this with VCRD.

Health Insurance 2021 R. Wilcox moved to increase the employee share of the insurance premium by 2.75% and to change the buyout option to 40% of the town's premium. Motion seconded by G. Wells. The Selectboard passed the motion.

Budget 21-22 S. Tully reported that she received department head input from Public Safety, Highways and Recreation. She provided an overview of the recommended changes which currently represents a 5% increase of the budget. N, Gondella will provide additional information regarding the Administrative portion of the budget at the next meeting. S. Tully discussed that the Reserve Fund timelines will also be discussed at the next meeting.

COVID-19 Response & Town Government Operations- COVID-19 is sharply on the rise in VT. Now 8 out of 14 counties have >400 cases per million people. The Selectboard discussed updating the Continuity of Operations Plan for all departments the current recommendation is to develop plans three people deep. This is a challenge for small towns, but necessary to plan for staff shortages. N. Gondella discussed the state is providing alternatives to in person Town Meeting and allowing towns to implement voting the budget by Australian ballot for one year. The Selectboard must decide at least 30 days before Town Meeting to vote the budget by Australian ballot. N, Gondella recommended this decision be made as soon as possible so the town can get this information to the public. She recommended publishing in the newspaper, Mendon Website, Facebook and Front Porch Forum. In 2021, candidates running for office will not need to submit a petition signed by 1% of the voters. The Selectboard had previously decided that Appropriation requests the town funded in the 2020-2021 budget if not requested an increase would not need to submit a petition for Town Meeting 2021. The state has not made

any changes to date to the petition requirement for appropriation requests. N. Gondella would recommend using the tabulator for Town Meeting 2021 at a cost of approximately \$1,000. S. Tully discussed the Everyone Eats Program. The Town of Chittenden is distributing meals on Wednesday and Thursdays. Residents of other towns can pick up meals in Chittenden and there are households in Mendon taking advantage of this program. Mendon thanks Chittenden Emergency Management for all their hard work. Mendon is not going to pursue an Everyone Eats program at this time. This need will be re-evaluated as the COVID-19 pandemic persists.

Update Holiday Dinner The Selectboard will not be organizing a Holiday Dinner due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Selectboard wishes to thank the staff, elected officials and appointed officials for their dedication to the town and countless number of volunteer hours to keep the town running. The Selectboard decided to offer gift certificates to local restaurants and vendors.

Road Crew Opening The Selectboard discussed the Road Crew Opening. The Selectboard approved hiring Dan Hendee to fill the part time seasonal position. The Town continues to interview candidates for the full time position.

Selectboard Vacancy Val Taylor attended the Selectboard meeting to discuss filling the vacancy of the Selectboard. V. Taylor discussed her interest in serving her community and getting involved. R. Wilcox thanked V. Taylor for expressing her interest and mentioned the town received interest from one additional candidate. The Selectboard did not make a motion to appoint someone to fill the vacancy at this time. Issue tabled until the next meeting.

Personnel Complaint Follow Up Motion by R. Wilcox to enter Executive Session at 7:11 PM to discuss personnel with the Selectboard and S. Tully present. Motion seconded by G. Wells. The Selectboard passed the motion. The Chair declared the Board out of Executive Session at 7:24 PM

The Selectboard directed S. Tully to request written documentation from Steve Cosgrove of the events that transpired from his perspective. R. Wilcox will request written documentation from Christine Kennedy-Riffon of the events that transpired from her perspective. The town has received a document from Nancy Gondella.

There being no further business, R. Wilcox moved to adjourn at 7:40 PM. Motion seconded by G. Wells. The Selectboard approved the motion.

Date Approved _____

Richard Wilcox

Sara Tully - Clerk of the Board

Geoff Wells