

Town of Mendon

Selectboard

March 23, 2021

Members of Selectboard present: Richard Wilcox, Larry Courcelle, Val Taylor

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

Visitors present: Brett Yates, Elizabeth Swett, Hal Rosenzweig, Gordon Stake, Dennis Charles, Justin Lindholm

The Selectboard Meeting was called to order at 5:28 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.**

- 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.

Selectboard Meeting

Tue, Mar 23, 2021 5:30 PM - 7:30 PM (EDT)

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

<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/993475101>

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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, Larry Courcelle, Val Taylor

Agenda: R. Wilcox moved to approve the agenda with the addition of payroll to the agenda. Motion seconded by L. Courcelle. The Selectboard unanimously approved the motion.

Announcement

Public Invited to Comment on Aitken State Forest Draft Management Plan: members of the public who wish to review and comment on the plan can visit <https://arcg.is/0KinX5> to learn about the Aitken State Forest draft plan and to take the public comment survey. Comment can also be shared by email to ANR.AitkenSFPublicComment@vermont.gov.

L. Courcelle informed the Selectboard that the VT Department of Forest Parks and Recreation does not plan on doing a timber sale in the Aiken State Forest this year. The next timber harvest may be scheduled for 2022.

Mendon on the Move – Community Visit Program March 24th! Learn more about the process and register to attend at: bit.ly/MendonOnTheMove

L. Courcelle informed the Selectboard about the RRPC's Road Roundup newsletter that will provide updates on important transportation programs such as paving, roadside management, and the municipal roads general permit. S. Tully provided a brief update regarding the status of Mendon's compliance with the municipal roads general permit.

L. Courcelle provided an overview of upcoming trainings for Town Officials offered by VLCT. S. Tully recommended the Selectboard participate in trainings if they are available to do so. Board members may register for trainings by contact N. Gondella.

Policy Adoption:

Town Road and Bridge Standards S. Tully reviewed the Town Road and Bridge Standards for the Selectboard. Motion by L. Courcelle to adopt the Town Road and Bridge Standards as stated by S. Tully. Motion seconded by R. Wilcox. The motion passed unanimously.

2021-2022 Goals and Objectives S. Tully presented the 2021-2022 Goals and Objectives for the Selectboard to review and prioritize. S. Tully will identify which goals and objectives are at the Selectboard's discretion to prioritize versus task required with imposed deadlines for review by the Selectboard.

Administrative Matters

Selectmen's Orders were reviewed. Motion by R. Wilcox to approve pay orders for 3/22/21 for \$125,692.46 and \$1,013.93. Motion seconded by L. Courcelle. Motion by R. Wilcox to approve payroll for 3/20/21 in the amount of \$15,806.58. Motion seconded by L. Courcelle. The motion passed unanimously.

Minutes of Previous Meeting: R. Wilcox moved to approve the minutes of 3/10/21. Motion seconded by V. Taylor. The motion carried.

Business

Appointment of Officers

R. Wilcox moved to appoint:

William Ellis, Road Commissioner for a one year term ending March 31, 2022

Sara Hebert Tully, Administrative Road Commissioner for a one year term ending March 31, 2022

Mary Ann Reich, Town Service Officer for a one year term ending April 14, 2022

Fred Bagley, Planning Commission for a four year term ending March 31, 2025

Phil Douglas, Planning Commission for a four year term ending March 31, 2025

Jack Kennelly, Zoning Board of Adjustment for a three year term ending March 31, 2024

Larry Courcelle, Recreation Committee for a four year term ending March 31, 2025

Liam Fracht-Monroe Recreation Committee for a four year term ending March 31, 2025
Phil Douglas, Emergency Management Director, for a two year term ending March 31, 2023
Larry Courcelle, Rutland Regional Planning Commission for a three year term ending March 31, 2024
Mary Ann Reich, Deputy Health Officer for a three year term ending April 14, 2023
Mary Ann Reich, Regional Ambulance Service for a three year term ending April 14, 2023
Susannah Loffredo, Rutland County Solid Waste District for a three year term ending March 31, 2024.
Motion seconded by L. Courcelle. The motion passed unanimously.

Motion by R. Wilcox to appoint:

Val Taylor, Cemetery Commission for a one year term ending March 31, 2022
William Ellis, Cemetery Commission for a one year term ending March 31, 2022
Dennis Charles, Cemetery Commission for a one year term ending March 31, 2022
Motion seconded by L. Courcelle. The motion passed unanimously.

Motion by R. Wilcox to appoint:

Jesse Bridge, E911 Coordinator for a two year term ending March 31, 2023
Motion seconded by V. Taylor. The motion passed unanimously.

Health Insurance N. Gondella inform the Selectboard that an employee will be turning 65 and eligible for Medicare. The Personnel Policy and Rules Handbook does not address eligibility for Health Insurance through Medicare specifically. The Selectboard should consider defining the eligibility in the Personnel Policy and Rules Handbook. N. Gondella received estimates from MVP on supplemental coverage that ranges from \$40 to \$140.00 per month. S. Tully will research other municipal policies through VLCT.

Dog Licenses N. Gondella reported that last year the town waived late penalties for dog licenses due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Many veterinarians were not open in March 2020 and April 2020 to issue rabies vaccinations required for registration. The Selectboard discussed and determined there is no need to waive late penalties this year.

Delinquent Taxes N. Gondella reported that she will be turning over \$206,230 in delinquent taxes to Nancy Merrill, Delinquent Tax Collector. This amount is higher than last year of approximately \$190,000. The town has received approximately \$50,000 in taxes that paid late and have been charged the 9% penalty. Several late paying taxpayers have requested whether the town would consider or look into waiving the late fees due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Current procedure allows taxpayers to request a reduction in taxes to the Board of Abatement. The Selectboard discussed and determined there is no need to waive late penalties as a system of appeal is in place.

Otter Creek Communications Union District Resolution S. Tully read the Resolution to join the Otter Creek Communications Union District. There is no financial exposure to the town. The District would bring broadband throughout Mendon regardless of remote locations through fiber optic technology. Motion by L. Courcelle to adopt the Resolution to join the Otter Creek Communications Union District. Motion seconded by R. Wilcox. The Selectboard unanimously approved the motion. Motion by V. Taylor to appoint L. Courcelle the Mendon Representative to the OCCUD and Richard Wilcox, Alternate Representative. Motion seconded by R. Wilcox. The Selectboard unanimously approved the motion.

Local Emergency Operation Plan Update must be readopted in April The Selectboard discussed the Local Emergency Operation Plan and look for updated information to be submitted by P. Douglas at the next meeting.

Firearms Discharge Ordinance: Recap of the Public Hearing held 3-15-21- discuss next steps The Selectboard would like to thank the public that attended the Public Hearing on the 15th. The discussions were cordial and well presented. S. Tully presented an outline of next steps as a result of the Public Hearing on March 15th. The Selectboard continues to review the comments from 63 members of the public that attended the Public Hearing. There were 25 people that submitted letters and emails. Three of the letters were from attorneys. One letter represented 34 property owners. One petition had approximately 116 signatures of which 21 were identified with Mendon addresses. The Selectboard has reached out to meet with the State Police and Game Warden to gain clarity on the state statutes that regulate the discharge of firearms in Vermont. The Selectboard discussed setting up meetings with the State Police and Game Warden. S. Tully will publicly warn these Special Selectboard Meetings when scheduled. S. Tully commented that an authorization to enter Executive Session in accordance with T. 1 VSA § 313(1) to discuss Civil Action or prosecution by the State may be in order. Once the Selectboard has had an opportunity to evaluate additional information they will either propose amendments to the proposed Firearm Discharge Ordinance or seek alternate solutions to some of the complaints received by the Selectboard.

Zoning Violations S. Tully provided an overview of the status of two zoning violations. The Selectboard requested continued assistance by S. Tully for the property owner on South Mendon Road to obtain the proper permits. The Selectboard waived the current COVID-19 safety restriction to not conduct in person site visits. This was a town-imposed safety precaution and not part of the Governor's orders. The site visit must occur to ensure the project meets the Town of Mendon Zoning regulations. Masks must be worn by all parties. Motion by R. Wilcox to enter Executive Session at 7:15 PM for the purpose of discussing matters authorized under T. 1 VSA §301(1) with the Selectboard and S. Tully present. The motion was seconded by L. Courcelle. The Selectboard unanimously approved the motion. The Chair declared the Board out of Executive Session at 7:44 PM.

Zoning violations will be served by law enforcement officers.

There being no further business, R. Wilcox moved to adjourn at 7:45 PM. Motion seconded by L. Courcelle. The Selectboard approved the motion.

Date Approved _____

Richard Wilcox

Sara Tully - Clerk of the Board

Larry Courcelle

Val Taylor