

Town of Mendon

Selectboard

June 28, 2021

Members of Selectboard present: Larry Courcelle, Val Taylor

Town Officers and employees present: Sara Tully, Town Administrator & Health Officer, Nancy Gondella, Town Clerk & Treasurer, Phil Douglas, Constable, Bill Ellis, Road Commissioner, Nancy Merrill, Delinquent Tax Collector

Visitors present: Carol Gates, Stephanie Sheehan

The Selectboard Meeting was called to order at 5:00 PM at the Town Office. The Selectboard welcomed everyone to the first in person regular Selectboard Meeting since the COVID pandemic started in March 2020.

Agenda: L. Courcelle moved to approve the agenda with the addition of the Rutland County Sheriff Contract, Office Cleaning and payroll to the agenda. Motion seconded by V. Taylor. The Selectboard unanimously approved the motion.

Announcement

SAVE the DATE Mendon Town Picnic Remembering Irene September 18, 2021 Noon to 3 PM at the Mendon Recreation Area.

Administrative Matters

Selectmen's Orders were reviewed.

Motion by L. Courcelle to approve pay orders for 6/28/21 for \$25,975.87 and \$17,676.75 and payroll for period ending 6/28/21 for \$9,184.73. Motion seconded by V. Taylor. The motion passed.

N. Gondella stated there will be a year end order to be signed next week.

Minutes of Previous Meeting: L. Courcelle moved to approve the minutes of 6/18/21. Motion seconded by V. Taylor. The motion passed.

Public Comment C. Gates attended the Selectboard Meeting to request further response to a submitted public information request. S. Tully informed the Board that she responded to three public information requests submitted by C. Gates. L. Courcelle informed C. Gates that there are no transcripts of meetings of all comments made by whom and that minutes are reflective of action by the Selectboard.

S. Sheehan attended the Selectboard Meeting requesting information about the reappraisal process and issuing complaint against VT Municipal Assessor, the town's contractor. S. Tully provided information regarding the state's mandated reappraisal process. N. Gondella provided information about the grievance process and the multiple layers of appeal that each property owner is entitled to. She added that VT Municipal Assessor is acting under state guidelines, meeting all state deadlines and his contract obligations with Mendon.

Business

Tax Sales N. Merrill requested the Selectboard authorize the use of legal assistance by Chris Corsones to issue three letters of payment for Delinquent Taxes in order to avoid the town sending these properties to tax sale. Motion by L. Courcelle to authorize Chris Corsones to send letters requesting payment of delinquent taxes to Paul Bisceglia, Thomas and Elizabeth Intrieri, and Darren and Susan Snitker. Motion seconded by V. Taylor. The motion passed.

Otter Creek Communication Union District Update L. Courcelle updated the Selectboard on the Otter Creek Communication Union District. The OCCUD expects to plan for the build out of access of broadband in underserved areas. The business plan should be completed by the end of the year. They are also creating a short-term plan. The VT Public Service Board has received federal funds and will be determining eligible expenses to use these funds. Any municipalities looking to become part of a Communication Union District now has to go to town vote for approval. The Rutland Regional Planning Commission is conducting an engineering study on each town to identify underserved areas. L. Courcelle has been appointed as the OCCUD's representative to the Vermont Communication Union Districts Association.

COVID -VT Forward Plan- VOSHA Workplace Safety Guidance S. Tully reported that an updated safety guidance memo has been distributed to all elected & appointed officials and town staff.

Declaration of Inclusion S. Tully presented a draft Declaration of Inclusion created from a template published by VLCT with an amendment in wording to replace "will protect these classes to the fullest extent of the law" with "Our town promises to provide safety, security and protection to all of its citizens to the full limits of its legal authority." The Selectboard additionally discussed the first sentence "The Town of Mendon condemns racism and welcomes all persons, regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity or expression, age, or disability" and chose to replace with "The Town of Mendon condemns racism and welcomes all persons to our community". The Selectboard agreed to change the word "promise" to "strives" in the second sentence and add additional wording to the last sentence "as allowed by the US Constitution". This complete sentence in the current draft of the Declaration of Inclusion will read "The Town of Mendon has and will

continue to be a place where individuals can live freely and express their opinions as allowed by the US Constitution.” These changes will be incorporated in a draft Declaration of Inclusion for further discussion at the July 12, 2021 meeting.

Procurement Policy/Conflict of Interest Policy The updated draft policy was reviewed. S. Tully recommended increasing the purchasing thresholds. Further review was tabled until the next meeting.

Public Information Request Policy N. Gondella submitted a model policy. S. Tully supported the Selectboard adopting a Public Information Request Policy. Issue tabled until the next meeting for opportunity of further review.

Journeys End Speed Limit Selectboard has received a request to lower the speed limit to 15 mph on the section of Journeys End from Eaton Brook to the end of the road. P. Douglas provided a copy of *Setting Speed Limits- A Guide for Vermont Towns* published by Vermont Local Roads www.vermontlocalroads.org to the Selectboard. It states “State Law and the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) regulate the procedures for establishing effective and enforceable speed limits. Title 23 V.S.A. §1007 authorizes the Selectboard to establish effective and enforceable speed limits on town highways at not more than 50 mph or less than 25 mph and to do so on the basis of a traffic engineering investigation or study. This provision mandates that any speed limit must be justified and reasonable based on the conditions that prevail on the particular road being considered.” In addition, the Town of Mendon Traffic Ordinance sets the speed limits for each town highway in Mendon. The process of amending an ordinance was reviewed by the Selectboard. The Rutland Regional Planning Commission provides the service of conducting a traffic study. L. Courcelle will invite Devon Neary, RRPC Transportation Planner to the next Selectboard Meeting on July 12, 2021 at 5:30 to provide an overview and cost of the study. S. Tully will provide a letter of information to the property owners on Journeys End.

Mendon on the Move Committees There are multiple subcommittees for the Mendon on the Move Program. Megan Smith is the Chair of the Route 4 Subcommittee and has submitted information that she has secured funding for a feasibility study regarding retail business on Route 4 in Mendon. The Selectboard questioned what organization is contracting on behalf of the project as Mendon on the Move is not a legal entity. M. Smith indicated via email that she has secured funding for this project. The Selectboard directed S. Tully to follow up with the Mendon on the Move subcommittees explaining the process for approved expenses and entering contracts on behalf of the Town of Mendon. The subcommittees should represent themselves in the community as a public interest group or citizen initiative. The Selectboard would like to thank all volunteers working on the priorities set forth in the mending on the move program.

Office Cleaning N. Gondella requested approval to hire a company to perform office cleaning. The office cleaning is part of the Buildings and Grounds Maintenance Job Description. A position currently vacant. The Selectboard authorized the expense until the position can be filled.

Rutland County Sheriff Contract The Selectboard reviewed the 2021-2022 Rutland County Sheriff Contract. There is a 1.5% rate increase. Motion by L. Courcelle to approve the 2021-2022 Rutland County Sheriff contract for \$75,196. Motion seconded by V. Taylor. The motion passed.

There being no further business, L. Courcelle moved to adjourn at 7:50 PM. Motion seconded by V. Taylor. The Selectboard approved the motion.

Date Approved _____

Larry Courcelle

Sara Tully - Clerk of the Board

Val Taylor