

Monkton Select Board Meeting Minutes
August 13, 2012 approved 8-27-2012
Monkton Town Hall

1. Call to Order: Chair J. Phillips called the meeting to order at 6:59 PM
2. Select Board (SB) Members Present: Anne Layn, John McNerney, Peter Norris, Sr., John Phillips, Stephen Pilcher

Others Present: Town Treasurer Charles Roumas, Michael Alderman, Henry Boisse, Chris Bray, Bill Joos
3. Announcements: None
4. Regular Business:
 - a. **Approve minutes** of Previous Meetings: The SB reviewed the minutes of July 9, 2012. **J. McNerney moved to approve the 7/9/12 meeting minutes as written; motion seconded by P. Norris, Sr. Voted and approved.** The SB reviewed the minutes of July 23, 2012. S. Pilcher commented on the organization of item 6 d., and requested changes; the SB concurred. **S. Pilcher moved to approve the amended 7/23/12 meeting minutes; motion seconded by J. McNerney. Voted and approved.**
 - b. The SB reviewed and approved the following **check warrants**:
 - A/P# 20806, 8/06/12, \$18,102.47
 - A/P# 20813, 8/13/12, \$ 5,139.83
 - P/R# 20730, 7/30/12, \$ 8,935.34
 - P/R# 20813, 8/13/12, \$ 7,237.71
 - c. There were no **overweight permits** to review.
5. Old Business:
 - a. Gould Legal Matter – Update: J. Phillips reported that no further developments have occurred since the last SB meeting. It is expected that the court will issue a ruling soon.
 - b. Astle Property Clean-Up Update: J. Phillips confirmed that the project has been completed, but associated costs are greater than anticipated. The increased cost involved more debris removal than planned. Casella Waste Management made more frequent container hauls, since only a smaller container was useable at this site. Final costs will include labor, Casella's charges, and legal fees.
 - c. Set 2012 Tax Rate: C. Roumas appeared and advised that the listers have finalized the Grand List. C. Roumas distributed a revised 5 Year Tax Rate Comparison, 2008 – 2012, and an updated Municipal Tax Rate worksheet. C.

Roumas commented on anticipated delinquent taxes (\$100,000), and asked whether a delinquency reserve should be included when setting the tax rate. A lengthy discussion followed, with all SB members asking questions and offering suggestions. A good portion of the conversation centered on the viability of setting aside a delinquent tax reserve. J. Phillips circulated a Vermont state statute regarding taxation by towns, and “specific amounts voted” by its voters. In response to S. Pilcher’s inquiry, C. Roumas confirmed that a deficit would result if the delinquent tax reserve was not created. J. Phillips shared his view about how tax sale proceeds would apply once received later in the year. C. Roumas referred to the 2011 Monkton Town Report to explain the rationale for setting aside a delinquent tax reserve, which has been used annually for a number of years. **P. Norris, Sr. moved to set a 2012 Municipal Tax Rate of 0.3696; seconded by S. Pilcher.** More discussion followed. J. McNerney commented specifically about the rate as moved (which would not include any Anticipated EOY Delinquent Taxes reserve). The SB considered various hypothetical tax receipt scenarios. J. McNerney expressed concern that increased costs will ultimately be borne by the town. A. Layn mentioned moving up the tax sale date – to April 15th annually, for example. S. Pilcher moved the question. **P. Norris, Sr. made a motion to set a 2012 Municipal Tax Rate of 0.3696; seconded by S. Pilcher. The motion was voted and approved [4-1 (J. McNerney)].**

- d. Tax Sale Update: C. Roumas advised that several delinquent property tax payments have been received by the town. The tax sale notice that appeared in a recent *Addison Independent* included 22 parcels.
- e. Animal Control Issue – Update: J. Phillips advised the SB of various costs to kennel (in Bristol) and care for a dog that was recovered during a Vermont State Police traffic stop and arrest in Monkton. The dog has subsequently been adopted. J. Phillips reviewed the Animal Control Officer protocol that should have been applied by ACO Gary Clodgo. The town will cover the fees.
- f. Neighbor vs. Neighbor Complaint: L. Phillips provided further details about a dispute involving neighbors on Old Hollow Rd. The SB will ask the Zoning Administrator to send a letter to all involved parties.
- g. Dog Licenses/Non-Compliant Owners: The SB discussed briefly what remedies to consider for dog owners who fail to register their dogs. In some cases, the problem is habitual. No action was taken by the SB at this time.

6. New Business:

- a. Candidate Visit – Chris Bray: C. Bray introduced himself to the SB and circulated a bio sheet. C. Bray shared brief remarks, and confirmed that he is seeking election in November to the Vermont Senate. C. Bray pledged to work with the SB on issues of importance, if elected.

- b. Resident Concern – Vermont Gas Line Extension: H. Boisse commented on the notice he received approximately 2 months ago from the Vermont Gas Company regarding the proposed gas line extension planned along the existing VELCO power transmission lines. H. Boisse has noticed surveyors and stakes and survey pins appearing along Monkton Rd. H. Boisse and M. Alderman expressed concern about VT Gas potentially changing its line expansion plans without proper prior notice to the town, and the SB. H. Boisse has been in contact directly with the Vermont Gas Company, and expects a response soon. S. Pilcher commented on the SB's prior conversation with VT Gas. H. Boisse is concerned about the proximity of his home to the possible line (if it was to travel near to/along Monkton Rd.). The rights-of-way of various stake holders were mentioned. M. Alderman asked if survey pins can be driven without notice to the town, and particularly the Highway Department. The SB expressed its appreciation to H. Boisse for helping to keep everyone in Monkton informed.
- c. Policy on Audio Record for Quasi-Judicial Hearings: The SB discussed the need to have audio recordings made of quasi-judicial hearings, and how to store the recordings and likewise allow public access. J. Phillips wants to encourage the SB to develop a policy; S. Pilcher offered to create a draft policy for further SB consideration.
- d. LHS (Tabulator) Project: J. Phillips explained LHS' role in providing and programming voting machines, which are available at no charge to VT towns. The state expects all towns with a voting population exceeding 1,000 to use a tabulator. The VT legislature agreed to a contract with LHS to provide service, to the best of J. Phillips' understanding (requires confirmation). J. Phillips is seeking a better understanding of the contract/process to improve tabulator use costs, perhaps via bidding. J. Phillips mentioned seeking VLCT's input. S. Pilcher expressed a willingness to research the issue.

7. Other Business:

- a. Sheriff Department Report: J. Phillips circulated the report, which now includes daily logs with activity detail. The SB briefly considered which roads are most routinely patrolled by the sheriffs, and asked that Rotax Rd. and Hollow Rd. be included in the patrols.
- b. Addison County Community Trust: The ACCT called the town regarding a dilapidated mobile home located at Vaughn Mobile Home Park. The mobile home, which is now in foreclosure, was trashed and looted over this past weekend. The ACCT wants to remove and junk what remains of the home. J. Phillips noted that taxes are due on the property (a minimal amount). The Board of Abatement will likely need to become involved. P. Norris, Sr. expressed concern about the recurrent tax delinquencies associated with the mobile home park, and noted the home has a title. J. McNerney wondered about establishing a precedent for the non-payment of taxes. **S. Pilcher**

moved to allow ACCT to remove and scrap the mobile home in question at no cost to the town. The motion failed, for lack of a second. It was noted that all taxes need to be paid and/or abated prior to removal. For further discussion at a forthcoming SB meeting.

- c. ANAC Application – Orb Weaver Farm: J. McNerney reported on behalf of ANAC the receipt of a formal application packet for the Orb Weaver Farm conservation effort. ANAC has yet to review the application or make a site visit, but will do both soon.
- d. Municipal Building Committee – Update: S. Pilcher advised that the committee has mailed 8 Requests for Qualifications, with 4 firms responding. A Request for Proposal (RFP) is the next step, and an RFP is being created now. J. McNerney recommended that the proposed roof be able to accept solar panels. The SB discussed the merits of a single story versus two story building. P. Norris, Sr. inquired about the archeological dig at the building site. The next meeting of the committee is scheduled @ Town Hall for Thursday, 8/16 @ 7:30 PM. A clerk of the works will be considered.

8. Adjournment:

Motion made by A. Layn to adjourn at 8:49 PM; seconded by S. Pilcher. Voted and approved.