

Monkton Select Board Meeting Minutes

November 26, 2012

(Approved 12/10/2012)

Monkton Town Hall

1. Call to Order: Chair J. Phillips called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM
2. Select Board (SB) Members Present: Anne Layn, John McNerney, John Phillips, Stephen Pilcher

SB Member Absent: Peter Norris, Sr.

Others Present: Alyth Hescok of Coler & Colantonio, Inc., Jennifer Baker, Gretchen Beaupre, Marc Beaupre, Nancy Beaven, Henry Boisse, Janet Cassarino, Joe Cassarino, Ricky Clark, Katherine George, Sue Ledoux, Holly Lukens, Ellen Perry, Deb Rehbein, Maren Vasatha and Bill Joos

3. Announcements: None
4. Regular Business:
 - a. **Approve minutes** of Previous Meeting: The SB reviewed the minutes of November 12, 2012. There were no requests for edits or additions. **A. Layn moved to approve the 11/12/12 meeting minutes as written; motion seconded by J. McNerney. Voted and approved.**
 - b. The SB reviewed and approved the following **check warrants**:
 - A/P# 21120, 11/20/12, \$212,287.80
 - A/P# 21126, 11/26/12, \$ 36,608.46
 - P/R# 21119, 11/19/12, \$ 9,161.14
 - c. There were no **overweight permits** to review.
5. Old Business:
 - a. Vermont Gas – Distribution Site: The SB made available a map of the proposed pipeline. H. Boisse commented that the proposed route of the high pressure line along the roadway would be very near to existing homes, and potentially dangerous. H. Boisse confirmed that multiple roadside culverts already exist along Monkton Rd. H. Boisse also asked if the proposed line would crisscross the road. An audience member asked how running the pipeline through Monkton would benefit the town and its residents. J. McNerney mentioned the VT Land Trust easement at Morris Park, and wondered if it would be difficult to build on that property. A. Hescok answered various questions from the audience but noted that he does not represent VT Gas. J. Phillips asked about the original plan to run the line along the existing VELCO power line corridor. A. Hescok shared his understanding that a portion of the pipeline will follow the VELCO power line but mentioned that significant archeological finds and the wetlands encountered [with resulting permitting challenge(s)] necessitated a new route. J. Phillips asked about the equipment necessary (a “step down/gate station”)

and its possible location to allow gas distribution to Monkton Central School (MCS), for example, or other locations/residences in Monkton. S. Pilcher will seek details and an explanation from VT Gas about the purported challenges encountered regarding use of the VELCO corridor. VT Gas representatives had stated previously that wetlands were a challenge regularly overcome with other similar projects. H. Boisse cited VT Gas' comments to that effect during an information meeting held at Vergennes Union High School. Numerous audience members were critical of VT Gas for the lack of specific detail(s) presented at the informational meeting held in Monkton on November 19th. J. Cassarino asked how gas service would be provided to MCS. J. Baker asked if Monkton would be the first town to have a VT Gas pipeline running through it, but no gas service provided. The audience repeatedly shared its concerns about the project, including safety, construction disruption, and a seeming inability for Monkton residents to receive VT Gas service. H. Boisse stated his belief that the SB should not create any letter endorsing the project. A. Layn shared her concern about the likely "changing nature" of the project and asked how the SB could responsibly endorse something that is not yet finalized. J. Phillips offered to contact Steven Wark of VT Gas to understand better why the VELCO corridor within Monkton (in its entirety) is seemingly no longer an option. Various audience members asked how Monkton will benefit from the project, as it is not clear. J. Baker asked about the 50' right-of-way for vegetation removal. H. Boisse commented on the potential loss of ancient trees along the proposed street route. J. Phillips apologized for not having accurate meeting information appearing on the town hall outdoor sign. An audience member asked if the town could vote on the pipeline project. H. Boisse referenced a recent explosion in southern VT, and spoke about safety concerns associated with any gas line. It was asked if 1000 psi supply lines are common along roads and within neighborhoods, especially in Chittenden County. J. Phillips solicited ideas about the best method to communicate with residents and other interested parties. H. Boisse suggested a mailer. J. McNerney commented that the entire town should receive information. H. Boisse requested a minimum 2 week notice to future meetings, as residents are very concerned about a lack of information. J. Phillips offered his email as a contact point (jphillips@monktonvt.com). Monkton Talk was also mentioned. A question was asked whether any ordinances/laws exist within Monkton about a safe distance to place a line adjacent to a residence. H. Boisse expressed his concern about ledge along Monkton Rd, and the potential disruption to water wells. S. Pilcher expressed a concern about the possibility of significant legal costs to the town. J. Phillips mentioned that VLCT might be a good resource for legal advice, along with the Regional Planning Commission. J. Phillips commented that VT Gas is willing to return to town to hold another meeting, with the timing TBD.

- b. Public Records Request – Status Update: S. Pilcher commented on the two sets of record requests from Don Gould, one of which is related to the new Unified Planning Document. S. Pilcher advised that Jim Carroll is visiting town hall on Tuesday, 11/27, to review the records and electronic files. The second request from Mr. Gould involves DRB matters, though very few emails or other electronic files exist among DRB files/email accounts. Town Clerk Sharon Gomez is creating a catalog of the various documents produced. Jim Carroll will help determine if any of the collected documents

are privileged. S. Pilcher expressed a concern that several DRB members have yet to respond to the records request.

- c. Conservation Committee Vacancy: Steve Parren has resigned from the committee, due to his professional role as the grants coordinator for the proposed wildlife crossing on the Monkton - Vergennes Road. The SB discussed the mechanics of finding a replacement for Steve, whose term expires in 2013. For further discussion at a forthcoming SB meeting.

6. New Business:

- a. Right-of-Way Permit Application: Road Commissioner Wayne Preston provided a form used by a neighboring town, and asked the SB whether the form might be applicable to Monkton. The SB reviewed briefly the form, but made no decision. Use of the form will be discussed at a forthcoming SB meeting.

7. Other Business: None

8. Adjournment:

Motion made by S. Pilcher to adjourn at 8:37 PM; seconded by A. Layn. Voted and approved.