

Monkton Select Board Meeting Minutes

January 14, 2013

Approved Jan 28, 2013

Monkton Town Hall

1. Call to Order: Chair J. Phillips called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM
2. Select Board (SB) Members Present: Anne Layn, John McNerney, Peter Norris, Sr., John Phillips, Stephen Pilcher

Others Present: Town Treasurer Charles J. Roumas, Jennifer Baker, Thea Gaudette, Renee McGuinness and Bill Joos

3. Announcements: None

4. Regular Business:

- a. **Approve minutes** of Previous Meetings: The SB reviewed the minutes of December 7, December 10, and December 27, 2012. There were no requests for edits or additions to the 12/7/12 minutes. **S. Pilcher moved to approve the 12/7/12 meeting minutes as written; motion seconded by J. McNerney. Voted and approved.** The 12/10/12 minutes were reviewed. S. Pilcher expressed concern about the content of a sentence. P. Norris concurred, and moved to have the sentence deleted. S. Pilcher seconded the motion, which was then voted and approved. **J. McNerney moved to approve the 12/10/12 meeting minutes as amended; motion seconded by A. Layn. Voted and approved.** The 12/29 minutes were reviewed; there were no requests for edits or additions. **J. McNerney moved to approve the 12/29/12 meeting minutes as written; motion seconded by S. Pilcher. Voted and approved.**

- b. The SB reviewed and approved the following **check warrants**:

- A/P# 30114, 01/14/13, \$ 47,565.75
- P/R# 30114, 01/14/13, \$ 8,875.55

- c. There were no **overweight permits** to review.

5. Old Business:

- a. Vermont Gas Systems (VGS) – 1/10/13 Meeting Review: J. Baker appeared and circulated a proposed draft letter dated 1/14/13. The letter contains language and cites statutes arguing that the petition as filed by VGS is incomplete. J. Baker is hopeful that the SB will submit the letter (and additional attached correspondence/supporting documentation) to the Vermont Public Service Board in Montpelier. J. Baker also commented favorably on the 1/10 informational meeting held at the Monkton Fire Station. J. Baker expressed dismay that VGS changed the pipeline route very late and without prior review of the right-of-way. Monkton resident (and volunteer FF) Buzz Kuhns also drafted a letter commenting on safety concerns. T. Gaudette mentioned that the Monkton Planning Commission is drafting a letter as well. After some continuing discussion, **P. Norris moved to send the 1/14 letter as written. The**

motion was seconded by S. Pilcher. More discussion followed. J. McNerney expressed concern that he has not had sufficient time to review the draft. S. Pilcher expressed some reservation about the tone of the letter. J. Baker views the draft letter as a “statement of fact.” J. Baker mentioned that a significant portion of the pipeline route changed, apparently, between October and November. P. Norris feels strongly that letter should be sent. A. Layn supports sending the letter, but cautioned that the community needs to work with VGS as well. With discussion concluded, the **motion to send 1/14 letter as written was voted and approved.** J. McNerney expressed a concern for the town/SB when drafting correspondence with data appearing, as no one on the SB is an expert in such technical matters. J. Baker advised that she has been invited by VGS CEO John Gilbert to form a committee to work with VGS. Various Monkton citizens have expressed interest in joining the committee. J. Baker asked if a SB member would consider joining. J. Baker mentioned landowner needs, should the pipeline be rerouted off the Vergennes Rd. and back to the VELCO corridor. More back and forth discussion followed. J. Baker advised that she is attempting to get articles related to the VGS pipeline and a legal reserve fund (for various community matters) included in the 2013 Town Meeting warning. J. McNerney read aloud the content of each article, and discussion followed. The SB mentioned the possible need for a legal reserve in the next budget. SB will take the article request under advisement. J. Phillips applauded J. Baker for her work on the issue. J. Phillips confirmed that the 1/14 draft letter with attachments will be sent to the PSB.

- b. Post Office (PO) 1/10/13 Meeting Review: S. Pilcher and J. McNerney attended the meeting. A point schedule exists to evaluate PO business over the counter, via rural routes, etc... S. Pilcher noted that 121 surveys were returned by residents, with the overwhelming opinion that the respondents want the PO to remain, even with reduced hours of window operation. The changing hours may involve a reworking of the space to allow PO box access when no staff is on site. PO window service is to be reduced to 4 hours daily. P. Norris commented on the PO maintaining regular Saturday hours, and referenced whether Town Hall should likewise be open for business on Saturdays. S. Pilcher mentioned having the Town Clerk appear before the SB to consider this question. C. Roumas advised that Town Clerk Sharon Gomez has an extended hours proposal in mind. S. Pilcher asked that Town Hall operating hours be added to the agenda for 1/28/13 (next SB regular meeting). It was mentioned that finding a postmaster might be a challenge, given the reduced hours and inconsistent schedule.
- c. Municipal Building Committee (MBC) – Status Update: J. Phillips circulated a color brochure that will be mailed to all Monkton residents prior to the informational meeting scheduled for 10:00 AM on Saturday, 1/26 at the Monkton Fire Station. NBF Architects P.C. and Naylor & Breen Builders, Inc. have been selected to perform the work. The project target cost is \$1 million. C. Roumas noted that a bond counsel was secured today, and advised that a warning and public meeting is required. S. Pilcher noted the potential time crunch. The MBC hopes that the SB will authorize that the bond be warned for Town Meeting on 3/5/13. A. Layn asked if other fund raising activities have been considered (“No,” per S. Pilcher). P. Norris commented that he understands that the existing library property may be sold.

- d. 2013 Budget Preparations: C. Roumas appeared and advised that the town's public auditor is arriving on Friday, 1/18. C. Roumas reported on a projected deficit, and stated that a stabilization fund may be available to the SB to close the budget gap. C. Roumas then reviewed specific budget line items. The SB discussed legal fees at length. The SB reviewed how legal fees are paid and applied toward cost centers/budgets. Several pending legal matters were evaluated for potential legal costs going forward. Best guesses for legal fees were considered. The Treasurer and SB reviewed each line item, and C. Roumas responded to numerous specific questions. The Energy Committee expense is new this year, as per the request of committee member Wendy Sue Harper. C. Roumas prepared a pay rate sheet with 2013 wages for each and every town employee.
6. New Business:
- a. Norris Tax Appeal: Discussion of this subject was tabled for tonight's meeting.
7. Other Business: a) Due to the many issues and detailed budget decisions anticipated, A. Layn proposed an earlier meeting time for the next SB meeting on **1/28: 6:00 PM. The SB agreed to begin its next regular meeting on Monday, 1/28 at 6:00 PM;** b) S. Pilcher received a call from the Addison Regional Planning Commission (ARPC) asking if Monkton has any traffic ordinance(s). It was noted that a stop sign ordinance exists. The ARPC believes that Monkton should have a more comprehensive traffic ordinance, with reference to speed limits/stop signs/yield signs, etc... S. Pilcher will use the existing ordinance from a neighboring town to prepare a draft ordinance for further consideration.
8. Adjournment:
Motion made by S. Pilcher to adjourn at 9:06 PM; seconded by A. Layn. Voted and approved.