

Monkton Select Board Meeting Minutes

February 11, 2013

(Approved Feb. 25, 2013)

Monkton Town Hall

1. Call to Order: Chair J. Phillips called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM
2. Select Board (SB) Members Present: Anne Layn, John McNerney, John Phillips, Stephen Pilcher, Peter Norris

SB Member Absent: none

Others Present: 16 town residents (see attached sign-in sheet)

3. Announcements: Wi-Fi is now available at the Town Hall
 - Wi-Fi internet access is now available at the Town Hall
 - S. Pilcher is researching bringing a VLCT workshop/training session to Monkton on running an effective town committee.
4. Regular Business:
 - a. **Approve minutes** of Previous Meetings: The SB reviewed the minutes of January 23, 2013 Special Meeting and the January 28, 2013 regular meeting. There were no requests for edits or additions. **A. Layn moved to approve the 1/23/13 and 1/28/13 meeting minutes as written; motion seconded by S. Pilcher. Voted and approved.**
 - b. The SB reviewed and approved the following **check warrants**:
 - A/P# 30211, 02/11/13, \$ 16,612.28
 - P/R# 30211, 02/11/13, \$ 8362.81
 - c. The SB reviewed and approved the following **overweight permit**:
 - G. Stone Commercial
 - R.K. Miles, Inc.
5. Executive Session: **S. Pilcher moved to enter executive session to allow S. Pilcher and J. Phillips to update the Select Board on their meeting with the lawyer representing the town before the Public Service Board on the VT Gas issue. Motion seconded by P. Norris. Voted and Approved.** Entered Executive session at 7:06 PM. Executive session ended at 7:18 PM
6. Old Business:
 - a. **Energy Committee Expansion**: The Energy committee has asked to expand the number of committee members, and will set up staggered terms for members. **S. Pilcher moved to increase the number of members on the Energy Committee from 5 to 7. Motion seconded by A. Layn. Voted and Approved.** A community member asked for an explanation of what the Energy Committee does S. Pilcher explained some of the projects the Energy Committee has been working on: Investigating and evaluating proposals for solar electricity for the town, organizing the

Monkton Energy Fair, arranging an Energy Audit for the Town Garage, promoting the town's participation in the energy saving challenge (see cards available in the Town Hall), guiding the Town through the steps necessary to become a PACE (Property Assessed Clean Energy) district, and at one point started looking in to establishing a "Wood Bank" for donated firewood for families in need. This has been a very active committee. More members are needed to help move various projects forward

- b. VT Gas Pipeline update: Discussion opened with a question from a resident asking what direction has been given to the lawyer the Town retained. S. Pilcher explained that the initial direction was focused on the Jan. 30 PSB prehearing conference on the schedule for upcoming proceedings. To that end, his focus was on assuring that the town had appropriate opportunity to respond as the various stages of the PSB process. S. Pilcher added that we have discussed with the lawyer the need to establish a list of the town's goals for negotiations with VT Gas, and at PSB proceedings. The select board will start compiling this list. It will represent the interests of the Town, and will hopefully parallel the interests of residents as well, but may not be 100% aligned. Mr. Pilcher cautioned that if an individual wants their views represented 100%, they should consider retaining their own lawyer.

A lengthy discussion ensued. Some of the points and questions raised: What are the financial benefits to the town, from property taxes or other means (lump sum, annual payments). J. Baker provided a paper showing VT Gas tax assessment levels in other towns. A number of residents felt that if the pipeline is running here, natural gas service should be made available here as well, and especially to those whose property hosts the pipeline. Others suggested we should consider whether the pipeline should even be in the town in the first place, questioning whether this energy is as clean as it is portrayed, and why the towns that benefit from natural gas service are not hosting the pipeline. Other points raised: • The Town should continue to press for 300' setback from homes. • Compensation to landowners should be for more than just the narrow strip of land on which the pipeline lies. It should reflect the impact on the whole property. Value of land taken should reflect the 300' setback for the impact zone, not just the 50' right of way. • Pursue funding for further steps on the amphibian crossing on Monkton Rd. • Advocate for fair and equitable compensation to landowners for easements. • Conditions on the use of condemnation/eminent domain. • Several of those present expressed the concern that we use our capital & credibility wisely. We should be aggressive in going after what is important to and fair for Monkton, but not go so far as to come across as unreasonable. Doing so risks just being written off or ignored.

S. Pilcher encouraged those with thoughts on what the Town should be negotiating for to submit them. The Select Board will consider this input when deciding on what the Town's negotiating position should be.

S. Pilcher moved to continue using Josh Diamond to represent the Town of Monkton at PSB proceedings, and in negotiations with VT Gas. Motion seconded by J. McNerney. Voted and approved.

c. Discussed Response to D. Gould's letter regarding the adoption Unified Planning Document last year. J. Phillips will draft a letter in response.

7. New Business: none

8. Other Business: none

9. Adjournment:

Motion made by S. Pilcher to adjourn at 9:38 PM; seconded by J. McNerney. Voted and approved.

Minutes submitted by J. McNerney

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