

Monkton Select Board Meeting Minutes - Final
January 13, 2014 (approved 1/20/14)
Monkton Town Hall

1. Call to Order: Chair S. Pilcher called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM.
2. Select Board (SB) Members Present: John McNerney (7:40 PM arrival), Roger Parker, Jr., John Phillips, Stephen Pilcher

SB Member Absent: Anne Layn

Others Present: Jennifer Baker, Sam Burr, David Hurlburt, Michael Hurlburt, Jane Palmer, Nate Palmer, Maren Vasatka, and Bill Joos

3. Announcements: 1) Peter Norris sent a letter asking about the town's general plans related to property valuation following the court ordered tax appeal settlement; the SB took no action, but forwarded the inquiry to the Listers for their consideration. 2) The Vermont Rural Protection Task Force sent a letter seeking financial support of its Dry Hydrant Program. The letter was forwarded to the fire department via B. Joos. 3) S. Pilcher shared a report confirming that Monkton residents recycled 55.74 tons in 2013 at the recycling center on States Prison Hollow Rd.

4. Regular Business:

- a. **Approve Minutes** of Previous Meetings: The SB reviewed the regular meeting minutes of January 6th. **J. Phillips moved to approve the 1/6 minutes as written; R. Parker seconded the motion. Voted and approved.**
- b. The SB reviewed and approved the following **check warrants**:
 - A/P# 31231, 12/31/13, \$41,426.15
 - P/R# 31231, 12/31/13, \$ 1,289.32
- c. The SB made an initial review of the **overweight permit** listed below, but determined that a greater understanding of vehicle weight limits was required. The permit request will receive further consideration at a forthcoming SB meeting.
 - Chamberlain Trucking
- d. **Public Comment**: None

5. Old Business:

- a. Review Appeals to PSB Ruling Re: VT Gas Certificate of Public Good (CPG): Various parties filed three appeals to date to the Public Service Board (PSB) ruling, including one by Monkton residents Jane and Nate Palmer. The Palmer appeal includes a proposal to have gas distribution to the Town of Monkton and the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Vermont Gas Systems (VGS) vacated. S. Pilcher referred the SB to content within the appeals. J. Palmer commented that she does not want to have any legal fight with the town. N. Palmer spoke about several items, most notably that the final pipeline route be 300' away at a minimum

from residences. J. Palmer also commented on the MOU. The Wetlands Protection Act was mentioned as well. The group reviewed various statements made to the PSB, with consideration of the surrounding wetland (to the proposed pipeline) referenced repeatedly. R. Parker urged support to Jane and Nathan Palmer to demand that the pipeline location be minimally 300' from any residence. The SB will discuss its next step with Attorney Josh Diamond. S. Pilcher reiterated that SB has "no problem" with items A, B, or C, as listed in the appeal, but that item D might be more of a challenge, however. M. Hurlburt commented on the proposed Old Stage Rd. pipeline location. M. Hurlburt advised that the PSB agreed with nearby residents, all of whom want to keep the pipeline in the VELCO right-of-way (ROW). Attorney James Dumont is trying to determine if the PSB has issued a final order; if not, it was asked if new landowners would be joining the process. J. Baker commented that VGS would file an appeal to the Palmer's motion. M. Hurlburt asked if the MOU could be amended. ("No," per S. Pilcher). M. Vasatka stated her belief that VGS is maneuvering only to save money.

- b. Review Draft Articles and SB Report: S. Pilcher reported on his efforts related to drafting articles for consideration at Town Meeting: article 5 has been amended; Article 6 is not yet complete, as more numbers are needed. Article 7 (re: the delinquent tax collector) was discussed briefly. The SB agreed to offer the DTC an annual salary of \$3,500.
- c. ANAC Funding: S. Burr appeared. S. Pilcher shared the comments of a Monkton citizen who is seeking to suspend annual contributions to the ANAC fund, given the sharp increase last year in the municipal tax rate. S. Burr provided background information about the ANAC fund's existence and use. S. Burr confirmed that no active applications are before the committee. S. Burr noted that several Monkton farms are interested in conserving their land. S Burr also mentioned that a number of farms with considerable land holdings are in transition. Per S. Burr, ANAC is prepared to reduce its annual funding request (which is now \$.02 on the Grand List, or \$35,808 in 2013, as approved via Article 11 at the 2005 Town Meeting). S. Burr advised that ANAC would welcome the opportunity to discuss ANAC business and finances each year at Town Meeting. For 2014, S. Burr mentioned \$10,000 in funding as a possibility. It was noted that ANAC designated \$20,000 to help conserve Orb Weaver Farm. S. Burr inquired if ANAC funding could be included within Article 6. J. Phillips commented on the necessary language for a new ANAC article. S. Burr spoke about the difficulty of capping the ANAC fund, another suggestion under consideration. The difficulty of capping the fund, S. Burr explained, is that ANAC never knows what it would spend in a given year. ANAC hopes that a reserve fund can be established. S. Pilcher asked if the SB was ready to make a motion. R. Parker expressed concern that any voter approved ANAC funding should be reasonable. **J. McNerney moved to change ANAC's funding mechanism from \$.02 on the Grand List to a set dollar amount. No one seconded the motion, which failed.** The SB will create language for an Article to change ANAC's funding and establish a reserve fund (for consideration at Town Meeting 2014).

- d. Budget Preparation: The SB reviewed the proposed Highway Department budget submitted by Road Commissioner Wayne Preston. The SB focused on HRA coverage, which was allocated at \$2,500 per employee in 2013. **J. Phillips moved to fund the HRA account at \$2,500 per employee, as applied in 2013. R. Parker seconded the motion. Voted and approved.** The SB will discuss the town's long-range health care funding in 2014. R. Parker commented on rental equipment expense. R. Parker referenced the Town of Ferrisburgh's rental and subsequent purchase of an excavator on favorable terms. R. Parker commented on the request for the purchase of a loader. R. Parker visited the town garage and looked over the loader still in use after 23 years; the machine is nearing the end of its useful life. The SB will consider drafting an Article to replace the loader for consideration at Town Meeting 2014. A brief discussion followed concerning Highway Department pay rates. **R. Parker moved to increase Highway Department pay rates by 1.25%. The motion failed for lack of a second.** The SB tabled any further discussion until W. Preston can appear to discuss additional details. The SB expects to resume the discussion next Monday, January 20th.
6. New Business:
- a. Determine Time/Date of Next Meeting: The SB will meet again at Monkton Town Hall on **Monday, January 20, 2014 at 6:00 PM.** *Note the early start time.*
7. Other Business: None
8. Adjournment: **R. Parker moved to adjourn at 9:26 PM; J. McNerney seconded the motion. Voted and approved.**

Minutes submitted by Bill Joos

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