

MONKTON SELECTBOARD MEETING
DATE: Monday May 25, 2020
REMOTE MEETING ONLY – Meeting will be recorded and recording posted
(Approved 6-8-20)

S. Pilcher called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm.

Members Present: Stephen Pilcher, Bill Martin, Paul Low, John McNerney, Marikate Kelley (arrived at 7:42pm)

Members Absent: none

Others Present: Betsy Brown (Recording Secretary), Carolyn Fogg, Renee McGuinness, Tom Steadman, Jaime Schulte, Laura Farrell, Sam Burr

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Selectboard meetings are being recorded and being put on the Town website. The link to access the recordings is here:

<http://monktonvt.com/town-hall/select-board/select-board-recordings/>

A link to the recordings can also be found on the website of NEAT-TV.

<https://neatbristol.com/>

The Town would like to thank Wendy Sue Harper, Robin Hopps & Eric Bessette for putting flowers in front of the War Memorial.

Thank you to Deb Gaynor for taking on the Green Up Day Coordinator position. Green Up Day routes are available for sign up on Saturday at the kiosk at the Park & Ride next to the school.

REGULAR BUSINESS:

APPROVE MINUTES

J. McNerney moved to approve the minutes of May 11, 2020 as written. B. Martin seconded. All voted in favor 4-0-0. (M. Kelley had not arrived yet)

REVIEW AND APPROVE CHECK WARRANTS

The following check warrants were reviewed and approved

AP #00518 \$53,756.57 5/18/2020

J. McNerney moved to approve AP #00518. B. Martin seconded. All voted in favor. Motion passed 4-0-0 (M. Kelley not arrived yet)

PR #00522 \$9,046.25.

J. McNerney moved to approve PR #00522. B. Martin seconded. All voted in favor. Motion passed 4-0-0 (M. Kelley not arrived yet)

REVIEW AND APPROVE OVERWEIGHT PERMITS, ETC.

The following overweight permits were reviewed and signed:

802 Excavating, LLC
All-Star Fuels
Casella Construction
Matt Atkins Property Services
Neat & Wilson, Inc.
Nick Bissonette
North East Freightways/Lax, LLC
R. Parker Enterprises dba Parker Excavating
SJW Docks
Tim Thompson Trucking, LLC
Treadway Hauling & Repair
Green Mountain Feed, Inc.

PUBLIC COMMENT

T. Steadman asked if the payroll warrants were for 1 week or 2 weeks. S. Pilcher noted 2 weeks.

T. Steadman asked about the late charges for the copier. B. Martin noted that Bill Joos is in dispute with the company. The rental charge is being paid and that the late charges are not being paid as they are being disputed.

T. Steadman also asked about the Selectboard's reaction to Carolyn Fogg's comments at the last meeting. He felt that she was ignored. T. Steadman also noted a quote by S. Pilcher in the Addison Independent and found it disturbing. He also noted that the Town has a Conflict of Interest policy and is questioning how impartial S. Pilcher is since he is a financial contributor to the Library Capital Fund.

C. Fogg noted that she emailed the Selectboard 7 days ago asking how much taxpayers would have to pay to cover what is owed. S. Pilcher noted that he had been waiting for some information Naylor and Breen for some construction numbers. S. Pilcher then presented a spreadsheet showing costs. He noted that each \$25,000 of expenses amount to about a penny on the tax rate.

S. Pilcher noted that the Selectboard could do an overturn. The Selectboard members did not indicate that they wanted this on the Agenda so he takes that as there is no interest in doing this.

R. McGuinness does not feel that people are looking to overturn the vote. She feels that C. Fogg is asking for a delay. R. McGuinness also noted that the Town could look at reducing the bond. She feels it is despicable that it appears that the Selectboard doesn't want to hear from people who are asking for a delay.

T. Steadman asked about putting out some sort of feeler about this project being delayed. T. Steadman asked how much the first 3 proposals for a new town hall cost us. S. Pilcher responded that they were design-build quotes and therefore cost us nothing. S. Pilcher explained what the design-build process on those proposals was.

R. McGuinness feels that the Selectboard by not taking an interest in what people think and is offended that the Selectboard does not put that on agenda. She asks what the harm is to ask the question that people would be interested in seeing a reduction. She asked where the compassion is. S. Pilcher noted that the Town is looking at changing delinquent tax policy.

NEW BUSINESS:

INSURANCE CLAIM RE:CRACKED WINDSHIELD

VLCT Pacif recommends that the Town pays for the damage. A stone came off a Town truck and chipped someone's windshield. J. McNerney asked if we were at fault because the load was not tarped. S. Pilcher noted that that was how he understood it. **J. McNerney moved to approve the claim. B. Martin seconded. All voted in favor. Motion passed 4-0-0** (M. Kelley had not arrived yet)

APPOINTMENTS

J. McNerney noted that David Sterrett has expressed interest in the Town Forest Committee. He has a background in land use law. He did participate in a meeting via ZOOM with the committee. Committee members noted after meeting Mr. Sterrett that he would make a good member for the committee. **J. McNerney nominated D. Sterrett to Town Forest Committee. All voted in favor. Motion passed 4-0-0** (M. Kelley had not arrived yet).

S. Pilcher noted that the ACO is asking for \$450.00/month considering that she is on call 24/7. J. McNerney noted that the ACO accepted the terms we were offering prior to being appointed to the position in December, and that the position does not have to be 24/7. J. McNerney noted that the old ACO made attempts to contact to train and hand over materials with no response. S. Pilcher noted that the Town will now advertise for an ACO.

EASEMENTS BETWEEN TOWN OF MONKTON AND MONKTON RIDGE CHURCH ASSN.

M. Kelley arrived. (7:42 pm)

The board reviewed changes to the draft language for shared use of the Church well written by Kevin Brennan. The Selectboard agreed that it looked good and asked that a clean copy with the final language be submitted for approval.

The Selectboard discussed the process for providing the Church an easement on town property for a replacement septic site, should the Church's septic fail. The proposal seemed in order **J. McNerney moved to initiate the process for the granting of an easement of the church for a replacement septic on church property. B. Martin seconded. All voted in favor. Motion passed 5-0-0.**

2020 CONTRACT WITH HOMEWARD BOUND It is the same contract we have used for years with Homeward Bound.

Option #1 is \$450/ year + \$75/stray dog after the 3rd stray dog.

Option #2 is a flat \$600/year

S. Pilcher noted that the ACO deals with very few stray dogs. The contract does not cover impounded dogs.

B. Martin moved to approve option 1 in the Homeward Bound contract for \$450.00. M. Kelley seconded. All voted in favor. Motion passed 5-0-0.

REVIEW DELINQUENT TAX POLICY FOR TEMPORARY CHANGES

2019 there is \$58k of delinquent taxes as of now. B. Joos noted that he feels that most people who are struggling have been able to catch up. What is left are a couple large property owners.

The Board reviewed the current tax delinquent policy. Item #5 spells out interest charges. S. Pilcher proposes waiving the 8% penalty for this year, and perhaps delay by 2 or 3 months the interest payments per month.

M. Kelley noted that the interest rates and penalties are what the State Statute provides. She noted that it might make more sense to deal with it through the Board of Civil Authority. She is open to changing it for this year due to COVID. P. Low noted that he supports S. Pilcher's suggestions. He doesn't feel that we can ignore that there are people that are going to have difficulty this year. He feels that there are a lot of people who do not understand/have the expertise to go through the BCA process.

S. Pilcher noted that the statutes need to be researched a little more to see what the Town can or cannot do. J. McNerney agreed that this is something the Town should consider. J. McNerney noted that the interest rate could be reduced to the Town's cost of borrowing. He also suggested that we should require people to register a request for the waived interest and penalties ahead of the tax due date rather than just not submit. M. Kelley suggested keeping this on the agenda for our next meeting, rather than waiting until fall to discuss again.

ANAC REQUEST RE: FUNDS TO LAYN AND PHILLIPS FARMS

Laura Farrell represented ANAC. She noted that dairy farmers are struggling due to decreased demand, this on top of low milk prices. S. Pilcher noted that the request is for 2 10,000 payments from the ANAC fund to the 2 conventional dairies in Monkton as emergency payments. B. Martin asked if it is equitable if the farms are of different sizes because their losses would be different. She noted that 10,000 could make a difference to both farms.

M. Kelley asked about other dairy farms in Monkton. P. Low asked about any type of farming - why just dairy? L. Farrell noted that there are 3 dairy farms in Monkton. She noted that produce farms are in better shape because of farmers markets, etc.

The 3rd dairy farm in Monkton is operated by someone who does not live in Monkton and operates multiple farms.

J. McNerney is concerned that the request doesn't seem to align with ANAC's charter. J. McNerney asked if the Town decides to do this, they may have to change the charter. B. Martin noted that he is not opposed to it, but is worried about setting precedent. M. Kelley would like to see a legal opinion to see if funds could be spent for this purpose. M. Kelley also would like to see criteria that isn't favoring one farmer over another. J. McNerney suggested taking the Town out of the equation and having someone set up a Go Fund Me Account or similar. S. Pilcher noted that he has a problem with spending money in this way as it is different than what was presented to the voters.

NEW TOWN OFFICES AND LIBRARY STATUS

The town is at the end of the design documents and is going into the construction documents.

The low bid for the Civil work is Vermont Road & Fields, LLC. S. Pilcher noted that there was an issue with that company doing damage to Rotax Road by running multiple overweight trucks over the road during myd season with no overweight permit. He asked the Board if they are OK with this company as a subcontractor.

M. Kelley asked what the budget is for this portion of the project. S. Pilcher noted \$132,000. This bid is the closest. The others are over by quite a bit.

J. McNerney noted that he is opposed to awarding a contract to a company who was caught violating town ordinance and overweight procedures and allegedly has violated state regulations. He strongly objected to rewarding such behavior by awarding them the contract. As far as the remaining three bids, he is confident that our building committee along with Naylor and Breen can make an appropriate selection. P. Low suggested having Naylor & Breen reach out to firms who didn't bid to find out why they didn't bid, etc. He also mentioned the practice followed by many companies of discarding the high and low bids and considering the remining bids in more detail.

S. Pilcher showed a spreadsheet from Naylor & Breen with alternate pricing and value engineering that the building committee went through in an attempt to reduce costs of the project.

The DRB hearing is tomorrow (May 26) for a Conditional Use.

Construction is on track for July 15.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DIRECTOR STATUS RE: COVID-19

S. Pilcher noted that Vermont numbers continue to decline. He noted that he feels Gov. Scott has done a great job.

OLD BUSINESS:

INFRINGEMENT OF ROW ON JOCKEY LANE

J. McNerney noted he called the Town Attorney last week to discuss next steps but has not yet heard back. S. Pilcher noted that he would like to have Tim Short mark out the right of way.

SALVAGE YARDS IN MONKTON

No action taken

TH 36 ROAD RECLASSIFICATION

No action taken

TOWN CREDIT CARD AND POLICY

No action taken

CLOUD STORAGE AND POLICY

S. Pilcher asked J. Schulte if he had any recommendations for services. J. Schulte noted that Mark Boltz-Robinson has been looking into this. Jaime noted that he will speak with Mark and come up with some options.

OTHER BUSINESS:

S. Pilcher noted that the Town should get a second Zoom account and asked J. Schulte if he would be willing to help schedule the meetings.

DETERMINE TIME/DATE OF NEXT MEETING

June 8th, 2020 7pm. via Zoom

ADJOURNMENT

B. Martin made a motion to adjourn J. McNerney seconded. all voted in favor.
Meeting adjourned 9:11 pm.