

MONKTON SELECTBOARD MEETING  
REMOTE MEETING ONLY  
Monday July 27, 2020  
(Approved 8/10/20)

S. Pilcher called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

**Members Present:** Stephen Pilcher, Marikate Kelley, John McNerney, Paul Low, Bill Martin

**Members Absent:** none

**Others Present:** Betsy Brown (Recording Secretary), Jim Burnett, Teri-Fitz-Gerald, Jay Frater, Jaime Schulte, motoe5pay, Chelsea Smiley, John Parker, Melody Daigle, Peter Huber, Patricia New, Ian Smiley, Whitney Leighton, Megan Browning, Lee K, Cathie Bastiglia, Bob, Bill Joos, 2 unknown callers.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

S. Pilcher announced that the new town hall project received a 1.98% bond rate. Groundbreaking is August 10. Ceremonial groundbreaking on Aug 6 at 6:30

He also announced that the Monkton Town Democratic Committee is having its caucus on Aug 5, 2020 at 7pm via Zoom. Zoom ID 802-453-3682 Password 1762 Phone # for call-in attendance 646-558-8656

**REGULAR BUSINESS:**

APPROVE MINUTES July 13th. **J. McNerney moved to approve the minutes of July 13, 2020 as written. B. Martin seconded. Motion passed 5-0-0.**

REVIEW AND APPROVE CHECK WARRANTS

**B. Martin moved to approve payroll warrant P/R #00720 dated 7/20/2020 in the amount of \$9,556.40. J. McNerney seconded. Motion passed 5-0-0.**

**M. Kelley moved to approve accounts Payable warrant A/P #00722 dated 7/22/2020 in the amount of \$22,932.48. B. Martin seconded. Motion passed 5-0-0.**

**M Kelley moved to approve accounts payable warrant A/P #00725, dated 7/25/2020 in the amount of \$9,326.96. Bill Martin seconded.** Discussion ensued. S. Pilcher noted that these are new town hall expenditures. B. Martin asked if

the treasurer puts subcodes on line items so that it is easy to pull out certain expenditures (such as the new town hall). S. Pilcher noted yes. M. Kelley asked if these expenditures were to be rolled into the bond so that the general fund would be reimbursed. S. Pilcher noted yes. **Voted and approved. Motion passed 5-0-0.**

#### REVIEW AND APPROVE OVERWEIGHT PERMITS, ETC.

The following overweight permits were reviewed and signed:

-Green Mountain Landscaping

#### PUBLIC COMMENT

T. Fitz-Gerald asked about procedure as to when to speak about issues that are listed on the agenda. S. Pilcher clarified.

M. Daigle suggested closed captioning for the next meeting, T. Fitz-Gerald noted that she will get info to S. Pilcher on how it works.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

##### CREATION OF A PUBLIC FORUM

S. Pilcher reached out to Town Attorney re: the Selectboard authorizing a Black Lives Matter (BLM) sign on town land. The Town Attorney noted that by doing that the Town has created a “public forum”. S. Pilcher suggests that there are 3 questions:

- 1) Do we want a public forum?
- 2) Is the Selectboard authorized to create a public forum?
- 3) If we want a public forum, is that area between the library and town hall the place you want the public forum?

S. Pilcher asked the Board members about their feelings on Question 1 - Do we want a public forum? If no, then the Black Lives Matter sign would come down and the All Lives Matter sign would not be allowed to go up. J. McNerney noted that it is not clear to him that the Town’s UPD allows for those sorts of signs. His concern is that their decision from the last meeting was made in error because they did not review the UPD beforehand. M. Daigle asked for clarification regarding political signs and when they can be allowed. S. Pilcher noted that policy has been to allow campaign signs 2 week before election and then signs need to be taken down a day after the election. S. Pilcher noted that he feels that the Selectboard’s function is to not be partisan. S. Pilcher feels there is room for this discussion and noted that he does not feel the Selectboard is the place. M. Kelley wants to get back to the first question and she stated that she has mixed feelings on it. On one hand she thinks a lot of good has come out with having the

sign there as that it has created conversation. She notes that she does worry about that small space becoming overrun with signs. B. Martin stated that he voted to not allow the sign at the original meeting because it would be opening the door to people requesting many, many signs. T. Fitz-Gerald noted that she lives right across from the green. She stated that there is potential for lots of signs on that small green. J. Burnett noted that All Lives Matter is not racial at all. It seems to him that if there is going to be a public forum, then anything can be displayed. S. Pilcher noted that he feels that this is something that should be decided by the Town at Town Meeting. J. McNerney noted that his concern is that he feels that the Selectboard does not have the authority to create one because the Selectboard does not have the authority to override the UPD. J. Schulte noted that Section E, "signs erected by the state or town" could involve a message like BLM, but the Town or Selectboard would have to erect the sign. P. Low agreed with what J. McNerney had to say. P. Low feels that a public forum should not be created and people should just post the signs on their own private properties. M. Daigle appreciated J. Schulte's notes. She wishes that the Selectboard would recognize the uniqueness of this movement. **M. Kelley made a motion to create a "public forum". J. McNerney seconded.** Discussion ensued. J. McNerney stated that he seconded the motion to allow for discussion, but he believes that per the UPD, the BLM and political signs have been allowed on town property by error. J. McNerney questioned how Montpelier can allow BLM be painted on the road and not allow other messages. **A roll call vote was taken**

**JM - nay**

**PL - nay**

**MK- nay**

**BM-nay**

**SP - nay**

**Motion failed 0-5-0.**

On that vote, the permission for a BLM to have on town property has been rescinded.

## **SIGN POLICY**

S. Pilcher shared his understanding Selectboard past practice on signs on town property. Election signs allowed 2 weeks before and taken down the day after the election. Temporary event signs allowed for max 2 weeks. Signs advertising local farms allowed. Other signs by permission of Selectboard.

J. McNerney noted that the Selectboard has no past practice for this type of sign - an issue not directly related to an election - since we have not been approached about posting such signs. M. Kelley noted that the above info and more is already in the UPD and questions the need for an official Selectboard sign policy. J. McNerney suggested having people put owner contact information on any signs posted on town property. S. Pilcher noted that the Planning Commission is re-writing the UPD now and we could request that such a provision be added.

## REQUEST TO POST ALL LIVES MATTER SIGN

Because of the motion under the “public forum” discussion permission for this sign cannot be granted.

## DOG PARK INFORMATIONAL MEETING

C. Bastiglia spoke on behalf of the Dog Park Committee. The Committee would like to host an info session on Aug 15th at Morse Park. She is seeking approval to post information signs - one on Aug 8 at the recycling center and outside of the polling place on August 11th. P. Low recused himself on any discussion as he is part of the Dog Park Committee. S. Pilcher asked about putting an info sign at Morse Park. C. Bastiglia agreed that would be a good idea. **J. McNerney made a motion to approve the sign for the dog park informational meeting in the locations mentioned. B. Martin seconded. Motion passed by a vote of 5-0-0.**

## SURVEY OF LOWER BENNETT ROAD

S. Pilcher noted that what the parcel maps look like and what the road actually looks like on Bennet Rd is inconsistent. The landowner on the SE corner of Bennett & Hollow has expressed that he feels because of this that the town is taking land away from him. S. Pilcher said he feels that it would be beneficial to have a third party do a survey on that lower part of Bennett Road. MK noted that in her experience the tax maps are not meant to be surveys. B. Martin feels that it is a good idea to have a survey done. J. McNerney agrees w/M. Kelley about tax maps but his understanding of S. Pilcher’s proposal is just that the Town should take steps to determine what it should look like, not take the tax map as the final word. P. Low has spoken with the owners as well and feels that the owner may want to have a site visit with the entire Selectboard. J. McNerney noted that if there will be a quorum for the site visit it needs to be warned as a Select Board meeting. S. Pilcher will get quote from Larose Surveying to survey the road and bring it to the Selectboard at next meeting.

## OLD STAGE ROAD TRAFFIC ISSUES

J. McNerney noted that as discussed in previous meetings, there have been ongoing complaints of speeders on the road, and concerns that how the road is laid out contributes to significant safety issues. S. Pilcher, B. Hollwedel and J. McNerney met with Todd from VT Local Roads who agreed that there are issues with the road. Signage recommendations were given. A speed limit change normally would be subject to a road survey. Todd mentioned that because of the width of the road it may be possible to lower the limit without a study. B. Hollwedel also mentioned that he the 2 “caution horseback riding” signs have arrived and he will be contacting the resident who requested them about where to put them up on the road. S. Pilcher noted that the sheriff has been randomizing when patrols are going through.

#### REVIEW DELINQUENT TAX POLICY FOR TEMPORARY CHANGES

No action taken

#### NEW TOWN OFFICES AND LIBRARY STATUS

S. Pilcher gave an update. Aug 10th will be the groundbreaking. Bond rate was locked in. Most permits have been received.

#### EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DIRECTOR STATUS RE: COVID-19

S. Pilcher made note of the mask mandate on Aug 1 from Governor Scott.

#### **OLD BUSINESS:**

##### INFRINGEMENT OF ROW ON JOCKEY LANE

Tim Short is supposed to be sending a quote. J. McNerney will touch base to see if the quote is ready.

##### SALVAGE YARDS IN MONKTON

No action taken

##### TH 36 ROAD RECLASSIFICATION

S. Pilcher noted that this needs to get moving. Especially, for Pond Road.

##### TOWN CREDIT CARD AND POLICY

No action taken

##### CLOUD STORAGE AND POLICY

No action taken

#### **OTHER BUSINESS:**

B. Martin has not approached Hinesburg regarding overweight truck enforcement yet as the Sheriff has been in town twice since the last meeting with the equipment needed to enforce overweight rules. B. Martin will get a written proposal from Hinesburg PD as per cost, timing, etc.

**B. Martin moved to enter Executive Session to review financial data from one of the Town's contractors. P. Low seconded. Voted and approved 5-0-0**  
The Board moved to executive session at 8:35pm.

**M. Kelley made a motion to come out of the executive session. B. Martin seconded. All voted in favor.** The SB came out of the executive session at 8:56 pm.

J. Schulte had a question regarding committees that are meeting in person and asked about the expectation around mask wearing and does that change with the Governor's mandate for Aug 1.

S. Pilcher asked the Board if they would like to consider a special meeting to place a change order to place a performance bond on the town hall project. The consensus was yes. S. Pilcher will announce the date.

M. Kelley noted that she is very pleased with the bond interest rate.

DETERMINE DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Aug 10, 2020 at 7pm via zoom

### **ADJOURNMENT**

**J. McNerney made a motion to adjourn. B. Martin seconded. Voted in favor 5-0-0.** Meeting adjourned at 9:09 pm.