

MONKTON SELECTBOARD MEETING
MINUTES

Tuesday, March 14, 2023
(Approved 3-28-23)

The meeting was called to order by Stephen Pilcher at 7:04 pm.

Members in attendance: Stephen Pilcher (chair), John McNerney, Paul Low, Walter Crandall

Members absent: Marikate Kelley

Others in attendance: Jessica Demeritt (recording secretary), Stan Wilbur, Lauren Parren, David Lynch, Debra Sprague, Callie Brynn, Cale Pelland, Mark Driscoll, Bob Heiser, Jaime Schulte

ANNOUNCEMENTS

none

ANNUAL ORGANIZATION MEETING 7:00-7:15

ELECT CHAIR, VICE-CHAIR, SECRETARY

W. Crandall nominated S. Pilcher for Chair. All voted in favor. P. Low nominated J. McNerney for secretary. All voted in favor. Nominations for Vice Chair were postponed until the next meeting.

SET REGULAR MEETING DAYS, TIMES, PLACE

Meetings will continue on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month at 7pm at the Town Hall.

DESIGNATE NEWSPAPER OF RECORD, AND POSTING LOCATIONS FOR AGENDA AND PUBLIC MEETING NOTICES

The Addison Independent will continue as the newspaper of record. The posting locations for the agenda and public meeting notices will be inside town hall, outside town hall on the bulletin board, and inside the Monkton Post Office.

REVIEW SELECTBOARD PROCEDURES

S Pilcher said this was mostly for new members. He suggested reviewing the personnel policy, the procurement policy, and the conflict of interest policy.

REGULAR BUSINESS:

APPROVE MINUTES

J. McNerney moved to approve the minutes of February 28, 2023 as written. W. Crandall seconded. All voted in favor.

REVIEW AND APPROVE CHECK WARRANTS

J. McNerney moved to approve AP 30314 in the amount of \$17,379.22. P. Low seconded. All voted in favor.
J. McNerney moved to approve AP 30306 in the amount of \$15,931.29. W. Crandall seconded. All voted in favor.
J. McNerney moved to approve AP 30130 in the amount of \$4,394.47. W. Crandall seconded. All voted in favor.
J. McNerney moved to approve PR 30313 in the amount of \$16,328.12. P. Low seconded. All voted in favor.

REVIEW AND APPROVE OVERWEIGHT PERMITS, ETC.

The following overweight permits were reviewed and are approved/pending approval:

NICK BISSONNETTE
ABF FREIGHT SYS.
C.P. SITE CONSTRUCTION
R&J TRUCKING RANDALL FISHER
GAUTHIER TRUCKING CO.
JOHN G. FRENCH & SONS TRUCKING INC
ROSS EXPRESS LLC
K.A. BAGLEY, INC
DOUG COLE, COLE TRUCKING
BIRDSEYE BUILDING COMPANY, INC.
A.C. WRIGHT LLC DBA CLARK-WRIGHT SEPTIC SERVICE
VTUMS VERMONT UTILITY MANAGEMENT SERVICES, LLC
D&F EXCAVATING & PAVING, INC
WATERMAN SITEWORKS, LLC
ABC SUPPLY CO. INC
A DUIE PYLE, INC
MIKE'S FUEL, LLC

PUBLIC COMMENT

D. Lynch was concerned about future fireworks displays next to his home. He has tried to talk to the neighbor, but has had no reply. He spoke with Fire Chief Curtis Layn who said he gives permission for fireworks displays. D. Lynch is concerned that the fireworks are disturbing his animals. It has been going on for three years. He is experiencing a low birth rate in his tiny business. He suggested maybe it could occur on public property instead. P. Low asked, if it has been three years, why bring up his concern now. D. Lynch said he has been observing a pattern over time, but had been hoping it would go away. J. McNerney said his understanding was the decision was up to the fire chief. S. Pilcher said he wasn't sure where the Selectboard could step in, unless it was on public land. D. Lynch said he interpreted a statute to mean that it was up to the Selectboard. There was some discussion on noise regulations. S. Pilcher said the Selectboard's primary responsibilities are for the town's finances. The Selectboard said they would look into the issue through the Vermont League of Cities and Towns.

NEW BUSINESS:

TOWN FOREST UPDATE AND FUNDING

C. Brynn spoke about the federal Community Forest Program grant which is due 3/31/23. The town needs to submit the application. She asked if someone could be authorized to submit the application. She said a lot of work has been done to get it ready. C. Brynn submitted a draft letter of support for the Selectboard to submit as well. M. Driscoll asked how he was unaware of this work? C. Brynn said the Town forest committee was formed 3 years ago. The Committee first approached the current landowner 2 years ago. Serious negotiations with that landowner started about 1 year ago. The Forest Committee found a piece of land they thought might work and there has been a slow process to work toward a sale. She said the last community session was in 2021 which was before a parcel was found. She said the sale agreement was reached in February 2023 with 18 months to close the purchase. M. Driscoll asked if the taxpayers were going to be footing the bill. C. Brynn replied that there are grants in the works. ARPA money may be used. There was a discussion about ARPA funds. The Forest Committee has asked for \$150,000 from the ARPA funds. M. Driscoll asked about using ARPA money for the roads. He wondered if the future town forest would be put before the voters. The S. Pilcher responded no. C. Brynn said this was just the beginning of the process and thanked the visitors for their feedback. There was a discussion about where the proposed town forest land was. C. Brynn wanted to learn where people were learning about the town forest. The visitors were concerned about the costs to the taxpayers and the amount of land being purchased. S. Pilcher spent some time explaining prior purchases the town has made to conserve farmland, such as the Cota Farm. P. Low said there was opportunity for others to come forward with ideas to use ARPA funds that would improve our community. There was some discussion about the road budget. **J. McNerney moved to authorize the town administrator to submit the application for the town forest grants. W. Crandall seconded.** There was discussion about needing to be registered with SAM (System for Award Management). **All voted in favor. J. McNerney moved to authorize the Selectboard Chair to sign the letter in support of the town forest project. W. Crandall seconded. All voted in favor.**

APPROVE TOWN MEETING MINUTES

W. Crandall moved to approve the minutes of Saturday's Town Meeting, March 4, 2023, as written. P. Low seconded. All voted in favor.

APPROVE NEW PAY RATES

P. Low moved to approve the pay rates for 2023. J. McNerney seconded. All voted in favor.

REVIEW ENGINEER RECOMMENDATION OF MOUNTAIN ROAD CULVERT CONTRACTOR

S. Pilcher said three bids were received for the culvert. There was discussion about the bids. **P. Low moved to approve the recommendation of Otter Creek Engineering for Saint Onge to do the culvert. J. McNerney seconded. All voted in favor.**

NATIONAL PRESCRIPTION OPIATE LITIGATION DOCUMENTS

J. McNerney moved to authorize the Selectboard Chair to sign the National Prescription Opiate Litigation documents. W. Crandall seconded. All voted in favor.

LOCAL HAZARD MITIGATION GRANT

There was discussion about what is required for the local hazard mitigation grant.

J. McNerney moved to authorize the chair to accept the BRIC grant (Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities) to help Monkton update the local hazard mitigation plan. P. Low seconded. All voted in favor.

ANNUAL FINANCIAL PLAN - TOWN HIGHWAY TA60

The town must report to the state what the town's highway budget is and that the town spent a minimum of \$300 minimum per mile. Monkton has 52 miles of road.

P. Low moved to approve the Selectboard signing the Annual Financial Plan - Town Highway (19 V.S.A. 306). J. McNerney seconded. All voted in favor.

TREASURER / ASSISTANT TREASURER AD

There was discussion about the ad.

REVIEW LIST OF APPOINTMENTS

There was discussion of appointments.

1859 TOWN HALL STATUS

S. Pilcher said at Town Meeting the voters approved selling the building. This has generated a lot of interest to keep the building for the community. He asked if there was a time table for selling the building. There was discussion about grants and painting the exterior. P. Low said the Selectboard needs to figure out the language for the sale to protect the appearance of the building as dictated by the voters. S. Pilcher said he would reach out to the town lawyer. C. Brynn asked if the building could be sold to a non-profit? The Selectboard said yes. L. Parren said she is concerned that the language for the amendment was unclear and wanted a lawyer look at it. She hoped the community would save it. The historical appearance of the building was discussed. She was grateful that the Selectbaord is noticing the local interest in the building.

PERSONNEL POLICY

M. Kelley has worked on some edits.

OVERWEIGHT POLICY

P. Low said that the state of Vermont does not work very fast in regards to his efforts to clarify Monkton's policy. A discussion ensued about the legality of "No through trucks" vs. restricting overweight permits to trucks with local destinations.

FACILITY USE REQUESTS

none

OLD BUSINESS:

SALVAGE YARDS IN MONKTON

S. Pilcher reached out to the state to learn about any progress.

ARPA FUNDS STATUS / PROCESS

S. Pilcher said maybe there should be another information meeting. There was discussion about the lack of awareness by some Monkton citizens and how best to communicate information to all the people in town. It was observed that if you have a meeting and you want people to come, food can be a good draw.

OTHER BUSINESS:

There was discussion about the lower parking lot at the town hall.

The next meeting will be on Tuesday, March 28, 2023 at 7pm.

P. Low moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:40 pm. All voted in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Jessica Demeritt.