

MONKTON SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, March 11, 2025

DRAFT

The meeting was called to order by Walter Crandall at 7:00 p.m. He noted that the Town Clerk had administered the Oath of Office to all new Selectboard members.

Members in attendance: Walter Crandall, Joe Szarejko, Jessica Demeritt, Sam Peisch, John Dunham

Members absent: none

Others in attendance: Stan Wilbur (town administrator), Tom Steadman, Josh Giard, John McNerney, Randy Charbonneau, Stephen Pilcher, Tom Kenyon, Paul Dicovitsky, Jim Jewell, Renee McGuinness, Mark Boltz-Robinson, Lawrence Pike, Susan Davis, Ivor Hughes, Nathan Palmer, Jane Palmer, Callie Brynn, Debra Sprague

ANNUAL ORGANIZATION MEETING:

ELECT CHAIR, VICE-CHAIR, SECRETARY

J. Szarejko nominated W. Crandall to be chair. S. Peish nominated J. Demeritt to be chair. There was discussion about interest and qualifications. S. Peisch called the vote. **Two votes for W. Crandall. Three votes for J. Demeritt. J. Demeritt was elected as the chair.**

J. Demeritt nominated W. Crandall to serve as Vice Chair. The vote passed 5-0-0. J. Szarejko nominated S. Peisch to serve as Secretary. J. McNerney described his work as Secretary. **The vote passed 5-0-0.**

SET REGULAR MEETING DAYS, TIMES, PLACE

The regular meeting time and day were set to the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month at 7 p.m. at the Town Hall.

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

The Addison Independent was noted as the newspaper of record. Posting locations for agendas and public notices are inside and outside the town hall, and inside the Monkton Post Office. There was discussion about where to have an outdoor posting and possibly arranging for outdoor posting at the fire hall/post office.

HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT LIAISON

W. Crandall nominated J. Szarejko to serve as the highway department liaison. The vote passed 5-0-0.

REVIEW SELECTBOARD PROCEDURES

S. Pilcher noted ethics training, open meeting law, and other procedures including how to run meetings. It was noted that a training on Selectboard

MONKTON SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES

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DRAFT

Essentials was coming up. S. Wilbur noted information in the Selectboard binders. J. Demeritt noted a Model Rules of Procedures for Municipal Boards that could be considered at a future date.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

none

REGULAR BUSINESS:

APPROVE MINUTES

W. Crandall moved to approve the minutes of the February 25, 2025 as written. J. Szarejko seconded. The vote passed 3-0-2. S. Peisch and J. Dunham abstained because they had not attended the meeting.

REVIEW AND APPROVE CHECK WARRANTS

W. Crandall moved to approve AP 50224 in the amount of \$95,089.29. J. Szarejko seconded. W. Crandall noted that a large item was the hardcourt at Morse Park. **The vote passed 5-0-0.**

W. Crandall moved to approve AP 50310 in the amount of \$51,948.56. J. Szarejko seconded. W. Crandall noted that Red Lion Construction, salt and fuel were the larger items. **The vote passed 5-0-0.**

J. Szarejko moved to approve PR 50310 in the amount of \$14,304.86. W. Crandall seconded. The vote passed 5-0-0.

REVIEW AND APPROVE OVERWEIGHT PERMITS, ETC

The following permits were reviewed and approved:

ABF FREIGHT

C DRINKWINE

CARTER HEAVY TRUCK FILINGS

CHAMPLAIN CONSTRUCTION

CHEVALIER DRILLING

CLARK-WRIGHT SEPTIC SERVICE

DON WESTON EXCAVATING

FEDEX FREIGHT

FYLES BROTHERS

GIROUX'S POULTRY FARM

GREEN STATE EXCAVATING

JACKMAN FUELS

LAPETE CONSTRUCTION

M B COUNTRYSIDE

ON SITE SEPTIC

PIKE INDUSTRIES

R K MILES

SWAN SITEWORK, LLC

MONKTON SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, March 11, 2025

DRAFT

T & C TRUCKING

VELCO

WESTON PULPWOOD SALES INC

POULIN GRAIN

S D IRELAND

ELEVATION EXCAVATION SEPTIC SERVICES

MOUNTAINS EDGE EXCAVATION

R&J TRUCKING

RICHMOND HOME SUPPLY INC

There was discussion about the process for overweight permits. I. Hughes commented that farm trucks were traveling on Rotax Road and it may be preferable for them to use Hollow Road due to the natural gas transmission line under the dirt road. R. McGuinness spoke in agreement. T. Kenyon noted that farm trucks were exempt from the overweight permit requirement. J. Giard observed that farm trucks were using less traveled roads rather than main roads.

FACILITY USE REQUEST

W. Crandall noted that weekends are busy and there have been a number of requests. There was discussion about town facilities.

PUBLIC COMMENT

J. McNerney noted that the Selectboard will need to approve the Town Meeting minutes at a future meeting. M. Boltz-Robinson spoke about appointed positions that he has been serving in. He described the Tree Warden position and a Shade Tree Preservation Plan process. He noted emerald ash borer management. He also spoke about the Addison County Communication District or Maple Broadband and the progress being made for internet connectivity.

NEW BUSINESS:

HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT UPDATE

J. Szarejko noted that the road crew has been maintaining trucks, cold patching, repainting the interior of the shop, clearing culverts, hauling sand. He noted that soon grading would begin, and that Shane had been working on grants. J. Jewell asked about the road crew working 8 hour days instead of 10 hour days. He requested that the town hire a road commissioner. T. Kenyon noted that flooded roads were not marked in a timely manner. There was conversation about safety. It was noted that the road crew had been working 10 hour days for many years. J. McNerney noted that S. Lawrence and the road crew have been doing an excellent job. J. Dunham asked if there was a way to make the schedule staggered to spread out coverage. S. Peisch asked about the on call policy. J. McNerney explained some of the process. It was suggested that cameras be installed at the town garage. J. Dunham noted that cameras for watching staff would be bad for morale and therefore counter productive. T. Steadman noted that in his experience no more work is done in a ten hour day than an eight hour

MONKTON SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, March 11, 2025

DRAFT

day. J. Szarejko said that he would reach out to other towns for comparisons regarding staff size, schedule, and camera use.

VTRANS NOTICE OF EXCESSIVE WEIGHTS

J. Szarejko noted that the town does not have an overweight ordinance. It was noted that a policy, which the town has, is not enforceable when tickets are contested. He suggested modeling Middlebury's ordinance. S. Wilbur spoke about the letter from Joe Flynn about the state law preventing the abuse of highways. He said that you cannot drive through Monkton with a heavy load, though you can deliver to a Monkton address. S. Pilcher noted that Vermont Leagues of Cities and Towns states that preventing through truck traffic is not enforceable. He also noted that trucks should be on major thoroughfares. The process for creating an ordinance was described by S. Wilbur. He said he would draft the beginnings of an ordinance for the Selectboard to review. W. Crandall suggested expediting the process by having the sheriff and the road liaison review the draft ordinance prior to the Selectboard.

2025 PAY RATES

W. Crandall moved to approve the 2025 pay rates as submitted by the town treasurer. Seconded by J. Szarejko. The vote passed 5-0-0.

TAX SALE DISCUSSION

S. Wilbur explained that the state passed a law regarding delinquent tax sales requiring towns to offer specific guidance on repayment. He noted that the town would need to contact the town attorney for the proper paperwork. S. Wilbur noted that it was his understanding that at this time a tax sale could proceed only for delinquent taxes from 2023. T. Steadman spoke about the work of the delinquent tax collector and delinquent tax sales. S. Pilcher noted the town's delinquent tax policy and the town's process. J. McNerney noted in his experience as a Selectboard member during thirteen years he had observed the sale of only two or so properties. It was agreed that the Selectboard needed to learn more about delinquent taxes, and Monkton's delinquent tax collector would be invited to speak to them.

VTRANS ANNUAL FINANCIAL PLAN

W. Crandall moved to approve the Annual Financial Plan for submission to VTRANS. J. Szarejko seconded. The vote passed 5-0-0.

VTRANS CERTIFICATION OF COMPLIANCE OF TOWN ROAD AND BRIDGE STANDARDS

W. Crandall moved to approve the VTRANS Certification of Compliance of Town Road and Bridge Standards and Network Inventory with the amendment of the corrected spelling for Monkton. J. Dunham seconded. J. McNerney noted that the spelling needed for the town of Monkton needed to be corrected. The spelling was corrected The vote passed 5-0-0.

MONKTON SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, March 11, 2025

DRAFT

ANAC OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES

no action taken

ITEMS IN THE TOWN RIGHT OF WAY

A person on Barnum Road who had received a letter regarding items improperly stored in the right-of-way asked for more time to remove them due to snow and plowed snow. It was agreed that the deadline to remove items would be April 15 or sooner.

CURBCUT - CASSARINO CEDAR LANE

There was discussion about town regulations for curb cuts. J. Szarejko agreed to look at the curb cut with Shane.

VERMONT GAS SYSTEM

Monkton is an intervenor on Vermont Gas, noted S. Wilbur. I. Hughes noted that The Public Utility Commission is opening up the VT Gas Certificate of Public Good again. He said that in the future, Monkton may wish to intervene. He was requesting to learn what the current gas pressure in the transmission line was for a possible future intervention. I. Hughes expressed concerns about the deviations from the plans regarding the installation of the pipeline and safety. He noted concerns regarding new housing construction in the area of the transmission line. J. Palmer invited anyone wishing for more information on this topic to reach out to her. There was discussion about the discovery process. It was noted that asking questions now could prevent future denials. J. Palmer noted concerns about increases in pressure in the natural gas transmission line. J. Dunham proposed I. Hughes drafting the letter to VT Gas for S. Wilbur. **W. Crandall moved to approve S. Wilbur and I. Hughes to work on language for a letter to VT Gas requesting information. J. Szarejko seconded.** S. Peisch noted that the letter should be copied to the Public Utility Commission (PUC). **The motion was amended to include the PUC being copied on the request for information. The vote passed 5-0-0.** On March 27 there will be a public hearing at the Vergennes Opera House at 6 p.m. on the petition by VT Gas to amend the certificate of public good #7970. J. Palmer noted to arrive early to sign up to speak.

APPOINTMENTS

It was noted that the Town of Monkton advertises appointments before making appointments, and that they would be listed in the Addison Independent on Thursday. J. Szarejko read the list of appointments; they are also listed on the town website. There was a question about conflict of interest when serving in multiple positions. It was noted that the state provides a list of incompatible positions such as a selectboard member may not serve as auditor or treasurer. **W. Crandall moved to approve that incumbents may continue to serve in**

MONKTON SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, March 11, 2025

DRAFT

their positions until their replacements are appointed. J. Szarejko seconded. The vote passed 5-0-0.

OTHER BUSINESS

OLD AIRPORT ROAD MAINTENANCE AGREEMENT

S. Davis explained some of the history of Old Airport Road before and after the purchase of the Town Forest. She suggested that the subcommittee that had been formed last year had made a great deal of progress, and may be helpful for the future. S. Pilcher noted some of the history regarding Old Airport Road being a private road and now being considered to become a class 4 road. He said that there is ongoing work on collecting the deeds of dedication. The road maintenance agreement was approved until February 26, 2026. T. Kenyon noted that he has not signed the road maintenance agreement. He added that he had no input to the process.

OLD AIRPORT ROAD DEEDS OF DEDICATION

no action taken

OLD AIRPORT ROAD CLASS 4 HIGHWAY

no action taken

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

none needed

OTHER BUSINESS:

C. Brynn noted that the Town Forest Committee would be sharing a draft of the Long Term Management Plan online, and taking public input on the draft on March 19 at 7 p.m. and on March 22 at 10 a.m.

The next meeting will be Tuesday, March 25, 2025 at 7 p.m.

W. Crandall moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:15 p.m. The vote passed 5-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Jessica Demeritt