

**Town of Monkton
Selectboard Meeting
August 27th, 2018**

Call to Order: Steve Pilcher called the meeting to order at 7:04pm

Attendance: **Present-** Steve Pilcher, Bill Martin, Anne Layn, John McNerney
 Absent- Roger Parker
 Visitors- David Layn, Kristen Farrell, Rachel Guy, Stanley Bevet,
Mary Brendel, Homer Watts, Curtis Layn, Ryan Patch, John
Howard

Announcements:

- The select board received a letter from Royce Dendler.
- The board received a letter from VT land trust; they will be closing on the purchase of the former Norris berry farm soon.
- VLCT has a town fair coming up on October 3rd - 4th in South Burlington.
- There will be an advertisement for road crew members in today's paper, it should run for two weeks.

Regular Business:

- **Approve Minutes:** The minutes of the August 13th meeting were reviewed. There were some minor changes made. **Bill Martin moved to approve the August 13th meeting minutes as amended. Anne Layn seconded Voted and approved 3-0-1** with John McNerney abstaining.
- **Review and approve check warrants-**
[Insert check warrant info here]
It was noted that sick pay for one employee was not paid out according to our revised policy. The sick day policy on the web site had not been updated. It has since been updated on the website. The board discussed this topic. It was decided that the payment that already went out will stand; in the future the new policy will be followed.

New Business:

- **ACO Appointment:** Melanie Peyser has offered to serve as Animal control Officer, but warned that this may be a short-term stint, since she may be moving out of the area. It was noted that there isn't any training available through the state or VLCT for the ACO position. **Anne Layn made a motion to appoint Melanie Peyser as the ACO. Bill Martin seconded the motion. Voted and approved 4-0-0**
- **Waiver of Homestead Declaration penalty:** This waiver of fees for Homestead Declarations submitted late has traditionally been passed by the selectboard. Most other towns waive this penalty as well. **John McNerney made a motion to waive the homestead declaration penalty. Anne Layn seconded the motion. Voted and approved 4-0-0**
- **Agency of Agriculture discussion re: Parks-Hurlburt rd. manure pit:** Ryan Patch from the agency of agriculture came to help those present understand

the current laws regarding the manure pit and farming practices. The following information was part of the discussion between all towns people present.

- Zoning- Local zoning laws cannot control agricultural structures, as they are under regulation of the state department of agriculture. The farm is required by the state to notify the town of construction, which was done with this manure pit construction.
- Local groundwater contamination concerns- All manure pits (waste storage facilities) are required to meet all federal and state regulations. Mr. Patch provided all those present with a copy of the laws and regulations. He reported that all setbacks were met with this situation. There were concerns that the area the pit was built in a floodplain. Mr. Patch noted that there are additional permits and regulations for those areas. A structural engineer from the agency of agriculture designed the manure pit and it met all state and federal requirements. All of these are public document will be made available. The engineer from the state department of agriculture oversees and signs off on all work done. If there concerns by neighboring property owners, the agency of agriculture will conduct groundwater tests for properties next to farms and fields. The property owner needs to call the agency of agriculture and set up the testing.
- Air quality- It was reported that the air quality is fairly poor during the time the pit was being filled. Ms. Guy reports that she went to talk to Mr. Brisson, the farmer who owns the manure pit. Mr. Brisson told her that the plan is to fill the pit in the spring and then it will crust over and there wouldn't be as strong an odor. Ms. Guy asked if that was accurate. Mr. Patch noted that there is a spreading band between December 15th- April 15th; other than that timeframe there is no regulation on when they can fill and spread. It was noted that there are a number of factors that will affect the odor throughout the year; including the percentage of solid waste and the air temperature during filling, etc. Ms. Guy asked if is there a way to use that gas as a fuel. Mr. Patch stated that it is important to note that if a farmer doesn't spread manure, they need to use synthetic fertilizer, which is often mined from other parts of the country and then needs to be trucked here. It is best to use local fertilizer. There are a number of ways that farmers are working to optimize their use of fertilizer; such as injection method, hose dragging, etc. The agency of agriculture is supporting farmers in this learning and financial assistance. Ms. Guy asked if there was any recourse if the air quality continues to be bothersome. Mr. Patch recommended keeping the lines of communication open with the neighbors, however the state of Vermont doesn't have odor regulations; only water quality. Curtis Layn confirmed that Manure pits do crust over, and that this significantly reduces the odor. He stated that the smell comes from the nutrients that the farmer wants in the land. If you smell it, those nutrients are being wasted, so it is in a farmer's interest to contain the odor and encourage the pit to crust over. Mr. Layn explained how many considerations farmers take into account when deciding how and when to fertilizer their fields.

Old Business:

- **Signing the Personal Policy:** The personal policy was adopted on February 12, 2018, but the final version had not been signed. The selectboard members present signed the personal policy.

Other Business:

- John Howard came before the selectboard to discuss the details of where he wants to build a house off an old class 4 road. The class 4 road can become the right of way and extend it to the property. Since it is only serving a single house, the road needs to be brought up to driveway standards. Maintenance of the road will be at the property owner's expense. The board requested that he fill out the curb cut paperwork and submit it to the Selectboard.

Adjournment:

- Bill Martin made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Anne Layn seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:35pm.

The next meeting will be September 10th, 2018 at 7:00pm at the town hall.

Minutes submitted by Bailee Layn-Gordon