

Town of Huntington — Selectboard Meeting

Monday, January 21, 2013—7:00 pm

Town Office Building – Lower Level

APPROVED MINUTES

RECEIVED

DATE

[Handwritten Signature]
 January 5, 2013

Agenda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minutes/Warrants • Public Comment • Highway • Capital Plan Working Session • Town Meeting Articles • Administration & Planning
Selectboard members present	Jim Christiansen (Chair), Dori Barton (Vice-Chair), Doug Graver, Everett Lewis, Roman Livak
Staff/Officials present	Yogi Alger (Road Foreman), Barbara Elliott (Town Administrator), Heidi Racht (Town Clerk)
Others present	Linda Fickbohm, Mark Smith
Call to order	Christiansen called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.
Minutes - MOTION	Livak moved and Barton seconded to approve the draft minutes of 01/07/2013. Passed unanimously.
Warrants	4 warrants were signed as presented.
<i>FOLLOW-UP: Elliott to confirm billing with Fire Chief</i>	Elliott to confirm if the bill for the carbon dioxide detector that is being charged to the Fire Department should be cross-billed to the school, as that is where it was installed. Elliott to confirm that Turbokits for the ATV will be cross-billed to the Rita Cleveland Fund.
Public Comment	Livak requested Elliott send a courtesy reminder to all committees, boards and commissions to post agendas (as a minimum, at the store) and to email them to the Town Clerk or Town Administrator to be uploaded to the Town Website. Minutes should be submitted to the Clerk (with at least the decisions made) in accordance with the Vermont Open Meeting Laws.
	Additional public comment was offered during the Town Meeting Articles discussion.
Highway	<p><u>Truck Replacement</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alger updated the board that Crew had decided that we should have a single axle truck (not a tandem) in order to spread gravel in areas with low wires (Huntington Acres, Huntington Woods, parts of Texas Hill, etc.). • Alger presented quotes from Clark's (for an International), J&B (for an International), and Sheldon Mack (for a Mack). Alger recommends going with the Mack: better service; 84 month extended warranty versus the 60 warranty on the Internationals; heavier front end (20,000 lbs versus 16,000 lbs); more horsepower (365 versus 330). Would be getting a 10 speed standard (which runs about \$12,000 less than the automatic). • The article on the Town Meeting warning will be set at a purchase price amount not to exceed \$162,000 unless Alger is able to get a reduced quote from Mack. <p><u>General Updates</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crew has been trucking in sand; doing truck and equipment maintenance.

<p><i>FOLLOW-UP: Alger to check status of sand budget</i></p> <p><i>FOLLOW-UP: Alger & Elliott to look at revising road posting policy</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have gotten positive feedback on keeping up with the multiple mud-seasons. Have now had 4 mud seasons – which has us \$1,000 over budget on gravel. Alger will check to see if he will be able to cover this from his sand budget. • Alger & Elliott to look at revised road posting policy – including developing an email list of local truckers, sending notices out through Front Porch Forum; publicizing the cost associated with violations in terms of road damage repair; process for the Road Foreman to be able to issue violation notices/fines. <p>Bridge #30 meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting with property owners Melissa Hoffman & Shawn Smith; VTrans Chris Williams & Gary Sweeney; Selectboard member Doug Graver and staff Alger & Elliott went very well. • Elliott drafted letter for Christiansen’s signature confirming the Selectboard’s decision to have the conceptual design for a 20’ bridge (down from the 22’ recommended by VTrans).
<p>Capital Plan</p> <p><i>FOLLOW-UP: Alger to check on radar sign cost</i></p> <p><i>FOLLOW-UP: Elliott to get cc of Barre Capital Plan; add Capital</i></p> <p><i>FOLLOW-UP: Elliott to add Capital Plan to August calendar</i></p> <p><i>FOLLOW-UP: Elliott & Alger to submit final revised plan for Town Report</i></p>	<p>Board reviewed the draft capital plan Elliott & Alger put together. Comments and additional research:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alger will check on the cost of the solar speed radar panels used on Webster Rd. in Shelburne. • Elliott to research how Barre presents their Capital Plan • Going forward, Board will change the timing of the Capital Plan budget to the summer as recommended by Elliott. Board agreed it should be added to the calendar for August. • Elliott to update Capital Plan based on discussion and send revised plan to Lucinda Hill for inclusion in the Annual Town Report.
<p>Town Meeting Articles</p> <p><i>FOLLOW-UP: All: develop talking points for Town Meeting</i></p>	<p>Truck</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the truck article passes, no adjustment will be needed to the general fund budget article. However, if the truck article does not pass, then: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the article for the surplus amount will need to be adjusted from \$46,351 (assuming the \$40,000 surplus targeted for the truck is removed/not passed). The adjusted amount would then need to be \$86,351. ○ We may also want to add a floor amendment to the equipment repair & maintenance line item to account for additional repair costs – especially for a new dump body (\$27,000) • Need to develop Talking Points for the truck for Town Meeting <p>Town Hall</p> <p>Christiansen re-opened public comment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linda Fickbohm supported having decisions regarding the Town Hall be part of Town Meeting, not on the Australian ballot. She shared compelling examples of how important it is for people to take personal responsibility for participating in town governance by attending Town Meeting; and of folks who year-after-year take vacation leave or time off without pay in order to participate in these important local discussions and decisions. Doing so can be a hardship, but there are examples of people who make this sacrifice in order to be part of the Town governance process. She also noted that the additional cost of supporting buildings such as the Town Hall is also supported by people who struggle to pay their bills—but who feel that having these types of resources is vital to our community. Fickbohm also stated that the Committee would like to work closely with the Selectboard, noting that it had been great when Selectboard members had attended meetings. • Mark Smith spoke about the economic benefit that the Town Hall lends to businesses in town (such as his) and his alarm over the Selectboard’s decision to

not fund the Town Hall maintenance and to take the issue to Australian ballot. He feels that disenfranchising the efforts of volunteers is a big mistake. Smith asked the Selectboard to consider what they can do to enhance the work of citizens to restore the building and help move things forward to enhance this community resource. He also thanked the Selectboard for their deliberations.

- **Doug Graver** acknowledged the comments made by both Fickbohm and Smith. He reiterated that he is not 'against the building' but has advocated a plan-full approach that would preserve the building while not putting the burden of it on property taxes. He mentioned his previous idea that the building could be turned over to a 501(c)3 with preservation covenants. Graver also stated that he is not convinced that economic development reduces taxes from evidence he has seen in communities such as Williston. Graver supported the development of an ongoing project plan for municipal building maintenance.
- **Jim Christiansen** advocated utilizing a special Buildings Committee with a one-year mission to evaluate and collect information on all buildings so that we can develop a comprehensive town facilities plan. He noted that with the Union Meeting House, the town has already made a big commitment to a community center. Looking at the complete picture of building maintenance & requirements for the entire town will give us a better foundation for decision making.
- **Dori Barton** strongly advocated that issues related to the Town Hall should be brought to Town Meeting where they have historically been debated and discussed in town and to not have decisions on the Town Hall be made by Australian ballot. In response to the concept of a one-year building committee, she asked that we have a clear vision for how the coming year would play out in terms of Selectboard support for use of the Conservation Fund and/or for supporting other Town Hall grant applications.
 - ALL Selectboard members noted that they will endorse grant application letters of support based on what they heard regarding potential applications such as to the Vermont Arts Council and the Vermont Council of Municipal Projects.

Based on the commitment from fellow Selectboard members to support grant applications, Barton stated that she was in agreement on not having an article at Town Meeting this year on the Town Hall.

- **Roman Livak** proposed an article for this year that would bring the question of the Town Hall and the Old Fire Station to Australian ballot at the following Town Meeting. He stated the essence of the question is: do townspeople want to support these buildings and if so, at what cost. He advocated that the Australian ballot is part of the democratic process and especially makes sense when addressing funds for a building that is discretionary. After considerable discussion, Livak pulled his recommendation for the article calling for Australian ballot.

Town Clerk

- The Selectboard received an email from the Town Clerk requesting reconsideration of her proposed \$10,400 salary increase; and that, since her individual discussions with Selectboard members indicated that the request may not be considered, she further proposed the following article (this was not a petitioned article) be included on the warning: "Will the voters of the Town of Huntington increase the annual salary compensation to reflect the hours worked by the Town Clerk in the amount of \$10,400."
- Selectboard members had previously considered the Town Clerk's request for a \$10,400 salary increase and decided not to include the request in the budget.

<p>MOTION: TOWN CLERK REQUEST FOR ARTICLE FOR SALARY INCREASE</p> <p><i>FOLLOW-UP: Elliott to confer with VLCT</i></p> <p>MOTION: WORDING FOR CLERK SALARY INCREASE ARTICLE</p>	<p>Given that they had already voted to accept the budget at the previous meeting, with the exception of a couple specific open items, they decided not to reopen or revisit budget decisions they had already voted on. Discussion then moved to whether the Selectboard would require the Town Clerk to submit a petition for an article or whether the Selectboard would add the article without requiring the Town Clerk to get a petition signed by 75 registered voters.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Livak moved and Graver seconded that the Selectboard honor the Town Clerk's request to the Selectboard to put her proposed salary increase as an article on the Town Meeting warning. Motion carried with 3 in favor (Lewis, Barton and Graver) and 2 opposed (Christiansen and Livak). • Discussion about the wording of the article included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Concern was expressed that the Town Clerk position is a salaried position, and as such, it would not be appropriate to tie compensation to a specific number of hours worked. ○ The Town Clerk asked the Selectboard how they would respond at Town Meeting in the event they are questioned about their decision not to include her request for the salary increase in their proposed budget. Christiansen noted that it is customary for the Selectboard to hold all discussions related to compensation in Executive Session as these discussions end up being about performance & evaluation, and that the Selectboard keeps Executive Session discussions confidential (in accordance with state statute). Christiansen stated that unless released by Racht to do so, they would not be at liberty to disclose their Executive Session discussion. Racht did not release the Selectboard from the confidentiality of Executive Session. Elliott was asked to follow-up with VLCT regarding the protocol used by the Selectboard. • Livak moved and Lewis seconded to add the following article to the Town Meeting warning: "Shall the voters of the Town of Huntington increase the annual salary of the Town Clerk by the amount of \$10,400?" Passed unanimously. <p><u>Additional Warning Articles</u> Because the actual deadline for submitting petitions for articles for Town meeting was close of business Thursday January 24, the Selectboard agreed that if needed, an emergency meeting would be called for Saturday January 26 at 9:00am in the event petitions for articles were received by the Town Clerk.</p>
<p>Adjournment</p>	<p>Livak moved and Lewis seconded to adjourn the meeting at 10:06 pm. Passed unanimously.</p>
	<p>01/21/13 – Meeting date 01/29/13 – Preliminary draft minutes to Selectboard / Clerk, Treasurer & Auditors 02/04/13 – Final minutes approved by Selectboard 02/05/13 – Approved minutes sent to Town Clerk</p>