

Town of Huntington — Selectboard Meeting

Monday, September 23, 2013—6:30 pm

Town Office Building - downstairs

APPROVED MINUTES

RECEIVED *[Signature]*
DATE October 12, 2013

<p>Agenda</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highway Department: Town Highway 9; FEMA update; paving, signs & general updates • Selectboard / Legislators Round Table Discussion • Minutes (of 09/09) and Warrants • Public Comment • Chittenden Unit for Special Investigations • Administration & Planning: Departments/Committees (Fire Department dry hydrants, Planning Commission request for Municipal Planning Grant approval, Town Hall Committee request for VT Historic Preservation grant approval); Budget calendar & action items; Upcoming events/training; Proposed Zoning Regulation changes; Correspondence; General updates & new business
<p>Selectboard members present:</p>	<p>Jim Christiansen (Chair), Dori Barton (Vice-Chair), Doug Graver, Everett Lewis, Jr., Roman Livak</p>
<p>Staff/Officials present</p>	<p>Yogi Alger (Road Foreman), Barbara Elliott (Town Administrator), Dan Stoddard (Town Treasurer)</p>
<p>Others present</p>	<p>Senator Claire Ayer, Ruth Blodgett (Times Inkt), Senator Christopher Bray, Edmund Booth, Andy Carlo, Representative Rebecca Ellis, Barbara Felitti, Craig Johnson, Rick Shaughnessy, Representative Tom Stevens</p>
<p>Call to order</p>	<p>Christiansen called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.</p>
<p>Highway Department</p>	<p>Town Highway (TH) 9 / Class 4 Road Damage Alger presented an assessment of damage, need for a hydraulic study, repair options, FEMA considerations and recommended solutions. Information included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town does not maintain Class 4 roads and therefore has no records of such maintenance – which is a FEMA requirement. • Residents of other Class 4 roads that have sustained damage have paid for their own road repairs (including Stage Coach Road’s repair following the July 3 storm). Alger believes it would set a very difficult and costly precedent if we started to fund Class 4 repairs or initiate ongoing maintenance. • Estimated repair cost to the bridge on TH9 range from \$34,250 for installation of a used culvert to \$175,000-200,000 for poured concrete headwalls and an I-beam/plank bridge to \$350,000 for a box culvert. Alger does not believe a permit would be issued to allow a stream fording solution. • Alger has requested that Dick Hosking (VTrans) schedule a hydraulic study. <p>Discussion points raised included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Andy Carlo: Asked if there are options for a temporary access solution that could be implemented for the logging operation. Carlo provided estimates on 7’ diameter culverts (stringing 5 together) that would cost about \$6,500. He asked if the State provides money for Class 4 roads and was told by Alger that they don’t. Carlo asked what control the Town would have over what & how work is done on the road if it is thrown up. Alger stated that the residents would still have to follow any permitting requirements. Livak stated that we have road specifications that would be good for the residents to continue. • Possible solutions: a) throw the road up; b) have residents split the cost to

<p><i>Follow-up: Alger to further investigate radar signs</i></p> <p><i>Follow-up: Elliott to address next steps in Bike/Ped Grant</i></p>	<p>repair the road (but keep the road as a Class 4 road); c) have residents split the cost to repair the road and then throw the road up. Barton and Livak both expressed support for the status quo, which is option 'b'.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graver stated that the property owners have the option of asking for property tax abatement when damage devalues their property. For a more permanent modification, they should contact the Listers. <p>General Updates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alger hopes to wrap up July 3 storm recovery work by the end of September. • Elliott distributed copies of the State Law regarding rights & responsibilities of cyclists published by Local Motion. • Elliott distributed sign estimates ranging from \$2195 to \$4,295 for solar LED radar driver feedback signs. Alger will investigate these further. • Elliott reported that the Town was awarded a 2013 Bicycle and Pedestrian Grant in the amount of \$33,000 to study Main Road paving options for the Lower Village. She will be meeting with Peter Keating of CCRPC. There is a 10% match requirement for this grant. • Upcoming workshops: Road Crew will be attending Vermont Local Roads (VLR) workshop on 9/26 in Rutland; Elliott and Alger will be attending VLR / CCRPC workshop on utilizing technology tools for Highway Departments.
<p>Selectboard / Legislator Round Table</p>	<p>Prior to the meeting, the Selectboard distributed a 'laundry list' of issues and concerns on their radar to Senators Ayer & Bray and Representatives Ellis & Stevens. Christiansen thanked the legislators for attending. Discussion included:</p> <p><u>Legislative Opportunities & Challenges</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check in: Selectboard expressed appreciation for the service, support and communication provided by our legislators. In spite of serving 23 towns, our Senators feel connected through emails, front porch forum, stopping by Beaudry's, and through the communication network our 4 legislators have amongst themselves about issues affecting Huntington. • On the docket: Key legislative issues on the horizon are health care, mental health care, and tax reform. • Budget: Not sure if there will be a reduction in federal dollars for roads – but VLCT and the Administration have fought hard to support municipalities. It was noted that the gas tax was more about maintaining the status quo and not thought of as providing increased dollars. <p><u>Regional vs Local Services</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Services: Ayer provided a handout on regionalization of law enforcement. Christiansen noted that daytime coverage for our volunteer fire & rescue is difficult. Ellis noted that creating multi-town Fire Districts & services is an option. Booth asked if Federal dollars are available for this, and Ellis indicated she didn't think so. Essex/Essex Junction and Waterbury/Duxbury are examples of multi-town agreements. Ayer indicated that VLCT may be able to provide models for these types of collaborations. • Criminal Investigations: Discussed the challenge of providing municipal funds for CUSI. • Education: Touched base on Regional Education Districts. <p><u>Taxes</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Property tax & overall tax structure: Property tax base is under extreme and unsustainable pressure. Should VT move to total wealth or consumption tax versus income / property tax? Bray stated that people are craving property tax relief. Stevens noted that there is a lot of discussion about changing the tax system but it is questionable as to whether any changes will be made. It is anticipated that school taxes will go up again by \$0.05. Ellis noted that federal

<p><i>Follow-up: Elliott to forward any traffic count information to VTA</i></p>	<p>budget issues have a huge impact on States – just as the State budget has on municipalities. She also said that the Public Assets Institute is working hard on tax reform. Livak noted the strain our 43 bridges place on the town. Stevens noted that flooding has actually helped federally fund the repair/replacement of bridges. Ayer noted that VTrans is not recommending any cuts for the upcoming budget. Bray noted that the biggest challenge for the State is to control costs. Barton stressed the need for efficiencies, stressing the high cost of repetitive restructuring, using the Agency of Natural Resources as one example. Stevens noted a similar problem in human services. Bray said there is a movement for results based accountability in state government.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PILOT: Questioned whether the per acre reimbursement rate we receive from the State Forest is fair, especially given restrictions on development, logging, etc. Ellis said the Town of Victory had successfully challenged the State on their reimbursements. She recommended we speak with Bill Johnson at the VT Tax Department to get a better sense of what is going on regarding PILOT. <p>Health Care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ayer noted that VLCT will have 1-on-1 meetings with towns and are a great resource. Navigators are available to meet with employees. Stated that the healthconnect.vermont.gov website is a valuable tool. • Barton noted Huntington has a lot of self-employed people, and it seems that under the new system it will be more expensive to get the same level of care & coverage. Felitti noted BCBS had mid-year rate increases and that they will now face a second increase within the same year. • Stevens requested people send the legislators personal experience anecdotes. This is something the legislators really want to see succeed, and they understand that tweaks to the system will be necessary. <p>Infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cell service: Lack of service is a growing economic concern. Graver noted new technology is very promising. Bray serves on the Board of Directors at VT Telecommunications Authority. He spoke with Chris Campbell, head of VTA earlier today and Campbell’s interested in using Huntington as a test case for exploring what creative and appropriate solutions might be available. Bray suggested we forward any Huntington traffic count information to VTA. • Roads & Bridges: It appears increased funding will not be available however VLCT & the administration have fought hard to maintain funding. • Bicyclists: The co-existing of vehicular and bicycle traffic on roadways is a growing concern.
<p><i>Follow-up: Alger & Jeffrey to review dry hydrant plans</i></p>	<p>Fire Department – Dry hydrant on Camel’s Hump Road</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Jeffrey stated that the department is looking to install a dry hydrant at the Taft Bridge on Camels Hump Road. They have a grant with a 50/50 match for the project which is estimated to cost approximately \$3,000. Initial reservations from the property owner have been addressed. The hydrant would primarily serve the school and the farm. The Fire Department’s goal is to do one hydrant per year. • Jeffrey will speak with Alger about the construction. Alger will present the project to the Selectboard for final approval. <p>Town Hall Committee (THC) – Request for VT Historic Preservation Grant Approval</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • THC presented their draft application for a 50/50 match grant from the 2014 VT Historic Preservation grant program. The total project cost would be \$30,125 (match amount of \$15,062.50) to fund the replacement of the Town Hall roof. Funds from the Town Hall Insurance Fund would be used for the 50%

MOTION – THC VT Historic Preservation Grant application

match. Funds were already targeted to replace ½ of the roof this year – and this grant would allow the full roof to be completed for nearly the same amount of Town commitment. It was noted that the estimate for ½ of the roof has increased about \$3,000 since the original estimates a year ago.

- Livak moved and Lewis seconded to approve the Town Hall Committee’s 2014 VT Historic Preservation grant application to repair the roof on the Town Hall building. Passed unanimously.

MOTION – HPC Municipal Planning Grant application

Planning Commission (HPC) –Municipal Planning Grant (MPG) Approval Request

- HPC presented a letter and preliminary draft application for Selectboard consideration to fund technical assistance to rewrite the Zoning & Subdivision Regulations. The grant has no match requirements (as it is for under \$8,000 threshold). HPC requested the Selectboard approve the grant application.
- Livak expressed concern about being presented with an incomplete application to approve. Christiansen stated that it would be good for the HPC to have assistance. He noted that the work would not begin until after the new Town Plan is approved. He asked if CCRPC was the ‘right’ contractor to provide assistance. Barton indicated that it would be up to the HPC to set up and manage the relationship with CCRPC so that it is effective.
- Barton moved & Graver seconded that the Huntington Selectboard authorize Town Administrator Barbara Elliott as the municipal authorizing agent for a 2014 MPG application to be written and submitted by the HPC for an amount not to exceed \$8,000, for the purpose of contracting with CCRPC for assistance in preparing draft revisions to Huntington’s zoning and subdivision regulations that are consistent with a newly adopted Huntington Town Plan. Passed with 4 in favor and 1 opposed (Livak).
- Livak moved and Lewis seconded that the HPC application document be reviewed by the full Selectboard prior to submission and that comments be forwarded to Christiansen who would request final changes prior to signing the grant application. Passed unanimously.

MOTION – HPC Municipal Planning Grant application

Budget Calendar & Action Items

- Elliott recommended the Board utilize the same planning process and calendar as last year, adjusting dates based on holidays. Board concurred. Elliott will send budget letters, schedules, and worksheets to all departments, committees, commissions and boards. Additional Selectboard budget work sessions will be scheduled as needed.

Follow-up: Elliott will review schedule from last year and send notices to all departments

Upcoming Events / Meetings

- 9/26 – Road Crew Workshop – Winter Maintenance
- 10/3 – VLCT Town Fair
- 10/8 – Using the new VT Culverts website; utilizing iPads in public works
- 11/2 – VLCT Fall Selectboard Institute

Correspondence

- Visiting Nurses Association (VNA) – letter received requesting level funding in the amount of \$4,500 for the 2014-2015 fiscal year.
- Champlain Valley Agency on Aging (CVAA) – letter received requesting level funding in the amount of \$1,200 for the 2014-2015 fiscal year.

MOTION – Zoning Amendment Public Hearing

Zoning Amendments – Scheduling of Public Hearing to act on Petition forward by Planning Commission

- Christiansen moved and Barton seconded to schedule the public hearing as

	part of the November 18 th regularly scheduled Selectboard meeting. Passed unanimously.
Public Comment	Blodgett noted that the 'new look' of the Town Office is great. Everyone agreed that they like having the full building, trim and door painted white.
Warrants	3 warrants were signed as presented.
Minutes (8/5 & 8/19) –	<p>The following amendment to the minutes was requested by the Town Hall Committee to be included under the section titled: Public Hearing: Town Hall Committee's Vermont Community Development Program (VCDP) Grant Application</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Linda Fickbohm: Mentioned that several years ago during a discussion about Town building usage, Christiansen had stated that additional space may be needed at some point for Town government and that it would be good if the THC considered that possibility as they develop future plans and proposals. The proposed building changes and the VCDP grant do allow for that consideration in the future.</i> <p>Prior to the meeting, Christiansen reviewed an earlier version of the proposed change and had requested that the comment be clarified. He stated that he was in favor of including the above as an amendment to the minutes.</p>
MOTION – minutes	Livak moved and Graver seconded to approve the draft minutes of 09/09/2013 as written without being amended (<i>ie: without the comment above being inserted as requested by the Town Hall Committee</i>). 1 in favor (Livak) and 4 opposed.
MOTION - minutes	Barton moved and Christiansen seconded to approve the draft minutes of 09/09/2013 as amended (<i>see above</i>). Passed with 3 in favor (Barton, Christiansen, Lewis), 1 Opposed (Graver) and 1 Abstention (Livak).
<i>Follow-up: Elliott to research amending & adopting minutes</i>	Graver requested that the validity/legality of altering or amending minutes prior to adoption be researched by having Elliott contact the Secretary of State. Barton recommended we have a clear policy on draft and approved minutes.
Adjournment	Graver moved and Livak seconded to adjourn the meeting at 9:38 pm. Passed unanimously.
	<p>09/23/13 – Meeting date 10/04/13 – Preliminary draft minutes to Selectboard / Clerk, Treasurer & Auditors 10/07/13 – Final minutes approved by Selectboard 10/10/13– Approved minutes sent to Town Clerk</p>