

Town of Huntington — Selectboard Meeting

Monday, January 06, 2014—6:00 pm

Town Office Building - downstairs

APPROVED MINUTES

RECEIVED

DATE

[Handwritten Signature]
January 21, 2014

<p>Agenda</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green Mt. Audubon Center’s Application for Conservation Funds • Public Comment • Minutes and Warrants • 2014-2015 Budget Working Session • Highway & Administrative Items
<p>Selectboard members present:</p>	<p>Jim Christiansen (Chair), Dori Barton (Vice-Chair), Doug Graver (via Skype & Webex), Everett Lewis, Jr. (until 8:35pm)</p>
<p>Selectboard members absent:</p>	<p>Roman Livak</p>
<p>Staff/Officials present</p>	<p>Barbara Elliott (Town Administrator), Heidi Racht (Town Clerk)</p>
<p>Others present</p>	<p>Ruth Blodgett, Barbara Felitti, Coreen Wixon</p>
<p>Call to order</p>	<p>Christiansen called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.</p>
<p>Green Mt. Audubon Center’s Application for Conservation Funds</p> <p>MOTION: GMAC APPLICATION FOR HCF FUNDS</p>	<p>MOTION: Graver moved and Barton seconded that the Selectboard authorize a one-time grant from the Huntington Conservation Fund (HCF) in the amount of \$1,000, payable to the Green Mountain Audubon Center (GMAC) of Huntington, Vermont, to be used toward the Center’s Beaver Pond Overlook Trail Restoration Project. Passed with 3 of the 4 members present voting in favor (Barton, Graver & Lewis) and 1 of the 4 members present voting against (Christiansen).</p> <p>Discussion points regarding the motion included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graver: noted his support for the Huntington Conservation Commission’s (HCC) recommendation to fund the application, indicating he had changed his mind about the project as a result of public comment on the application. He further noted that the HCC funds will leverage considerably more than the \$1,000 requested by GMAC. Graver noted that the property is open, without requiring permission, to the public at all times. He stated that he could think of only 2 other similar properties in Town: the ski center on Bert White Road (Camels Hump Nordic Ski Association) and the VAST trails. He proposed that the way to address concerns about setting a precedent is not to deny this project, but rather to work with the HCC to refine the criteria. • Christiansen: noted that during the Public Comment, reference was made to the HCF having funded the restoration of the Henry Curtains. He stated that a significant difference in the 2 projects is that the curtains are Town-owned property while the trail is not public property. He expressed concern that funding this project sets the precedent that HCF dollars are available to private property owners for restoration projects. • Barton: recognized Christiansen’s concern about the potential precedent that could be set. She stated that the project does, however, meet the HCF criteria. She noted that this is not just a restoration project; it also focuses on erosion control. She stated that if there is a problem with the current criteria, then the criteria should be fine-tuned for use in evaluating future projects and that the criteria should be viewed as a ‘living document’ that may need to be amended

<p><i>Follow-up: Elliott to research process for amending HCF criteria</i></p>	<p>over time. Barton requested Elliott research the process for amending the HCF criteria.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lewis: expressed support for approving HCF funds for the GMAC project.
<p>Public Comment - TOWN HALL COMMITTEE (THC)</p>	<p>Town Hall Committee (THC) – Barbara Felitti</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Felitti updated the Selectboard on the Vermont Community Development Program (VCDP) \$74,211 grant awarded for Town Hall restoration. The THC will prepare a 1-page summary of the grant conditions and then meet with the Selectboard on February 3 to address any questions. The Town needs to respond to the conditions of the grant by March 1st. In addition to securing the VCDP grant, the THC has received \$28,032 from the Vermont Arts Council and is investigating other funding sources, such as the Vermont Housing and Conservation Fund and the Huntington Conservation Fund for restoration work including roof replacement.
<p>Minutes (12/16)</p>	<p>Graver moved and Lewis seconded to approve the draft minutes of 12/16/2013 as presented. Passed unanimously with 4 members present and voting.</p>
<p>Warrants</p>	<p>4 warrants were signed as presented.</p>
<p>2014-2015 Budget</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Selectboard continued reviewing the Fiscal Year (FY) 2014-2105 General Fund Budget. • <u>Salaries – General Considerations:</u> The amount to budget for individual salaries was discussed. It was stressed by Selectboard members that specific salary amounts included in the budget reflect budgeted amounts only and that actual employee raises are determined based on employee evaluations. The Selectboard analyzed the impact of increased health care costs on the total compensation an employee receives (about 4%), noting that those who do not receive health benefits do not benefit from this increased compensation. The Selectboard compared salaries for similar positions (such as commission/board clerks) and determined that compensation for these positions should be equalized. The Selectboard determined that the AP/Payroll Clerk position should receive VMERS (Vermont Municipal Employees’ Retirement System) benefits, given the average number of hours worked. • <u>Salaries – Town Clerk / Town Treasurer:</u> The Selectboard reviewed data provided by the Article 6 Committee (A6C) comparing the current salaries of our Town Clerk (who receives an annual salary of \$36,115) and our Town Treasurer (who receives an annual salary of \$29,729) to compensation in 5 other towns. These towns were selected by the A6C for analysis based on their proximity/and or comparable size to Huntington. The Selectboard also compared the Clerk and Treasurer salaries to other Huntington Town employee compensation, particularly full-time employees. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ One proposal put forth was for the Selectboard to budget the salary amount for the Town Clerk this year for the same amount voters had approved for the Article 6 vote at Town Meeting last year, and to compensate the Town Treasurer based on a percent increase over the amount proposed in the General Fund budget last year. It was noted that the Town Treasurer’s compensation is currently more than \$6,000 less than the Town Clerk’s compensation. ○ Another proposal put forth was to combine the raises paid to the Clerk and the Treasurer this past year and divide that amount equally between the two positions based on their FY 12-13 compensation (which had been the same for each position). This proposal would grant a new salary of \$32,790 for the Clerk and \$32,790 for the Treasurer. This proposal would reduce the Town Clerk’s salary and increase the Town Treasurer’s salary, but not increase the overall

<p>MOTION: PROPOSED GENERAL FUND BUDGET</p>	<p>salary amount for the combined positions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Clerk indicated to the Selectboard that she had not expected the voters to approve the full increase she requested in Article 6 last year and that, in the best interest of the Town moving forward, she would be fine with having her current salary reduced. She stated she felt the compromise proposal to equalize the Clerk and Treasurer pay by combining the increases from last year and dividing that amount equally between the two positions was fair. Based on this, the Selectboard opted to use an amount of \$32,790 for the annual salary for each position in the current budget proposal. • Graver indicated a need for additional traffic enforcement funds, particularly for the lower village, in order to have an impact on excessive vehicle speed in town. No increase was included for the coming year. • The Selectboard reviewed and incorporated \$65,150 in proposed capital expenses into the FY 2014-2015 General Fund budget, based on input provided by the Buildings & Grounds Committee. • Although a draft budget was passed, the Selectboard indicated they anticipate that planning and modifications may be necessary at their 01/20 meeting. • Town Meeting Articles will be reviewed at the 01/20 Selectboard meeting. <p>Barton moved and Christiansen seconded to present the voters a \$1,525,990 FY 2014-2015 General Fund Budget, pending a final check of the budget worksheet for errors/omissions. Passed unanimously</p>
<p>Administrative Items</p>	<p>Olga Hallock Award Nominations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Racht will advertise a February 3 (5:00pm) deadline for submitting nominations for the Olga Hallock Award. <p>Town Fair Day</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town Fair Day this year will be held the Sunday following Town Meeting (March 9th) in the hopes that we may be able to find volunteers for positions that were not filled in the March 4th Town Meeting Day election.
<p>Adjournment</p>	<p>Graver moved and Christiansen seconded to adjourn the meeting at 10:25 pm. Passed unanimously with three members present and voting.</p>
	<p>01/06/14 – Meeting date 01/17/14 – Preliminary draft minutes to Selectboard / Clerk, Treasurer & Auditors 01/20/14 – Final minutes approved by Selectboard 01/21/14 – Approved minutes sent to Town Clerk</p>