

Town of Pomfret

5218 Pomfret Road
North Pomfret, VT 05053

Draft Minutes of the October 15, 2014 Regular Selectboard Meeting

Present: Mark Warner (Selectboard Member), Michael Reese (Selectboard Member), Phil Dechert (Selectboard Member), Arthur Lewin, Sr. (Road Foreman), Ellen DesMeules (Treasurer), Betsy Siebeck (Library Trustee), Katy Savage (Vermont Standard), Laura Kent (Auditor), Becky Fielder (Town Clerk), Sherman Kent, Bill Cole, Melanie Williams, Emily Grube, Greg Tuthill and John Moore.

1. Call to Order: The Meeting was called to order by Chair Mark Warner at 7:00pm at the Town Offices.
2. Review of Agenda: The Board agreed to add to the Agenda the following:
 - (a) Add telecommunications systems regarding the library and Artistree parking under Other Business;
 - (b) Move Discussion of assistants to Treasurer, Clerk & Selectboard and Health insurance for town employees and officials to following Treasurer's Report; and
 - (c) Move Auditors' Preparations for Town Report to follow Treasurer's Report.
3. Public Comment: none.
4. Treasurer's Report
 - (a) Review and action on warrants for payment: The Board unanimously approved the following warrants for payment: 210, 211, 212 and 213.
 - i. Following discussion, the Board agreed that Mark Warner will discuss with the Constable a check sent for his time spent attending the Vermont Policy Academy. The Board did not approve this payment.
 - (b) Quarterly Budget Review – July 1, 2014 through September 30, 2014: The Treasurer presented a budget narrative (see attached). The Board and members of public discussed various aspects of the first quarter budget and expenditures.
5. Assistants to Treasurer, Clerk & Selectboard: The Board discussed the authority, need and funding for assistants to the Board, Treasurer and Clerk for the current and next fiscal year. The Treasurer will work on estimating tasks and hours needed. Michael Reese will collect the statutes relating to authority. The Treasurer will review available funds. No Board action was taken.
6. Health insurance for town employees and officials: Phil Dechert will research the options and present his review of health insurance coverage at the next meeting when the Board will make a decision before the November 15, 2014 deadline.
7. Auditors' Preparations for Town Report: Auditor Laura Kent presented a memo regarding the preparation of the 2015 Town Report (see attached). The Board discussed the issues raised.

8. Road Foreman's Report

(a) Update on activities

- i. White fog-line painting: The Board discussed the safety information received from a Vermont Agency of Transportation official. No action was taken.
 - ii. Filling in edges along paved roads: The Road Foreman expects to fill in the edges of the road on Monday, October 20th, if weather permits.
 - iii. Cracksealing: The Road Foreman will follow up with the contractor.
 - iv. Culvert replacement at 7090 Pomfret Road: The Pomfret Road will be closed Saturday, October 25th, from 7pm to 7pm (hopefully) with a detour (Dana Road, Kings Highway and Galaxy Hill Road) for traffic traveling south. Stop signs will be posted on each direction and one lane of the road over the culvert will be open until completion.
 - v. Barber Hill Road Bridge: The Road crew hauled out substantial material from the site. The concrete deck will likely be poured by Friday, October 17th. The concrete must cure for 30 days before traffic can cross the bridge.
 - vi. Repair of Bridge #16 on Pomfret Road over Mill Brook: This project will begin after the culvert replacement project at 7090 Pomfret Road.
- (b) Salt quote from Morton: The Road Foreman is awaiting return calls from Morton.
- (c) Discussion of Road Foreman time-management and Missing Road Crew Member: The Road Foreman is working with Rita Seto of Two Rivers Ottauquechee Regional Commission to improve tracking of time, materials and equipment. The Road Foreman has contingency plans for a temporary road crew member for winter highway maintenance.
- (d) Diesel fuel contract: Mark Warner is seeking quotes from at least 3 vendors.
- (e) FEMA projects: The Road Foreman agreed to review collection of the \$60,000 income from FEMA for erosion drainage done on Cloudland Road, Galaxy Hill Road, and off Caper Street.
- (f) Bunker Hill Road: The Road Foreman noted concerns over a pine tree on Bunker Hill Road. The Board discussed other hazardous trees around Town.

9. Unfinished Business

- (a) Emergency Services antenna/repeater: Phil Dechert presented draft easements prepared by Attorney Peter DesMeules on behalf of the Town to be proposed to attorney for Tiana Barcomb.
- (b) Update on Town Hall: roof, clapboards, fire code issues, and long-term capital improvements: Bill Cole installed clapboards on the west end of the Town Hall as well as sealed along the edges of the metal roof to protect the building. Phil Dechert presented a proposed process for long-term capital improvements.
- (c) Dog ordinance: Phil Dechert noted that notice was published in the Vermont Standard within 14 days of the dog ordinance approval, because the newspaper is available on Wednesdays.
- (d) Committee for preparing Local Hazard Mitigation Plan: Michael Reese moved, and Mark Warner seconded, that the Board appoint the committee as proposed (Mark Warner, Phil Dechert, Art Lewin, Kevin Rice, Bruce Martin, Neil Lamson and Preston Bristow) and a representative from the Pomfret School. After discussion, the Board unanimously approved the motion.

- (e) School snowplowing bids: Michael Reese proposed limiting the bids to plowing and using the road crew and bulk-purchased for sand and salt to save money. The Board took no action.

10. New Business

- (a) Process for preparing budget for next fiscal year: The Board passed over this item.
- (b) Consider distribution of Scott Harrington Road Fund: The Board passed over this item.
- (c) Review Correspondence: The Board received the following correspondence:
 - i. Letter from Pam and Shaun Pickett regarding speed limits in South Pomfret; and
 - ii. Email from Melanie Williams regarding parking at Artistree for special events. The Pomfret Zoning Administrator and Road Foreman are communicating with Artistree.

11. Other Business

- (a) Telecommunications for Abbott Memorial Library: Betsy Siebeck expressed concern about changes to library telecommunications without consultation. She noted the library has independent authority over its operations and expenditures.

12. Minutes of prior meetings - consider approval of minutes of August 20, 2014, September 17, 2014 and October 1, 2014: Mark Warner moved, and Phil Dechert seconded, to approve the minutes of August 20, 2014, September 17, 2014 and October 1, 2014 as written. The Board unanimously approved the motion.

13. Public Comment: Melanie Williams requested clarification as to whether the Constable has law enforcement responsibilities. Mark Warner stated he does not have law enforcement duties. Ms. Williams noted her reading of the law suggested that criminal justice training is not required for the Constable.

14. Adjournment: Following motion and second, the Board adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

Date: 10/21/2014

Michael Reese

Budget narrative for first quarter of fiscal year: Sept 30, 2014

First, there is a 3 page summary titled Current year, period 3 – Budget Status report. These comments pertain to that report. There is additional detail available on a report with the same headings, except that it shows as a 12 page report. This 12 page report shows the individual accounts that comprise the totals on the summary report.

The town expenses cover 2/3rds of page 1, ending with the line “total TOWN EXPENDITURES”; beneath that the Highway income and expenses are shown. The lower half of page 2 shows library and cemetery income and expenses. There is a page 3, which reflects the start of putting all town funds into the NEMRC system; this process is not complete (and most of it was started this fall), and will reflect income only when CDs mature and interest is booked.

Income:

Budget Status report shows \$2,150,884.95 as taxes collected; this is the grand total so far, and includes taxes that support the schools as well. Payments made to the schools were \$1,030,232.50, with an additional \$580,000 set aside in a CD for payment to the State on Dec. 1. These school numbers are half the amount due in this fiscal year. The town budget for services was \$804,009 for the fiscal year.

Under highway income “Total Revenues” shows that less than 10% of annual amounts have been received, primarily because State Aid for highways is spread out through the year. This report reflects just one such payment received before Sept. 30.

Expenses:

Of the town expenses, there are only 2 line items that exceed 25% of the budget: Assessments and Voted Appropriations. Assessments are overbudget because the Windsor County tax was higher than anticipated by \$5500. And Voted appropriations are at 100% because they are all paid in the fall rather than slowly over the 12 month budget year.

In the highway section each vehicle is listed individually so that ongoing costs can be tallied separately. We can do this same specific tracking with Emergency Services vehicles or costly equipment, and I will be working with Mark Warner to figure out what items get this kind of attention.

Page 3 shows only partial information because getting all the town’s CD and investments on NEMRC, and tracking renewals and interest received, is an evolving process. As this page tracks revenues, it does not show principal balances.


Ellen DesMeules

Treasurer

Memorandum

To: Pomfret Selectboard:
Mark Warner
Michael Reese
Phil Dechert

From: Laura Kent, on behalf of the Audit Board

Re.: Pomfret Town Report 2014

Date: October 14, 2014

The Auditors for the Town of Pomfret are gearing up for the Town Report. It being a bit of an unusual year, we feel that plenty of advance warning is in order for all of us. Below is a review of what generally are the Selectboard responsibilities and recommendation from the Audit Board for the upcoming report (page numbers references the 2013 town report):

1. Warning for Town Meeting (p. 4-5)
Note: The Warning cannot be completed and signed until after the legal deadline for petitions to be filed by those groups asking the Town for money.
2. Selectboard Report (p. 6). Please keep to one page!
3. Selectboard budget narrative - which should address the issue of long-range planning - especially the reserve funds, etc. (p. 13). This addition was a new and important improvement in 2013. Please keep it.
4. Budget -- no summary needed (p. 14-20)
 - a. The working copy of the budget absolutely should be generated from NEMRC (not a separate, reorganized Excel spreadsheet) and maintained by one person throughout the entire process; ideally this is the treasurer if she is willing.
 - b. Eliminate the summary at the end of the Town Operating Account that was created last year. It is redundant and less detailed than the Comparative Financial Statement that appears just before the Operating Account on page 12 of the 2013 Town Report.
5. Town Highway Equipment (p. 25)
Past valuations have been rather casual. Since these are generally big ticket items and of interest to the taxpayers, a more systematic approach to placing a value on the town highway equipment would be valuable. A look at the amounts for which they are insured could be valuable.
6. Pomfret Capital Improvements Plan for Highway Equipment (p. 27) – and...
7. Pomfret Capital Improvements Plan for Emergency Services Equipment (p. 27)
Note: The auditors would recommend the expansion of the capital improvements plan to include other critical long-range projects/issue that the Town will face, such as a plan for building maintenance, etc.