



Town of Underhill
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SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, March 14, 2024, 6:00 P.M.
Underhill Town Hall

Present:

Selectboard Members: Dan Steinbauer, Bob Stone, Patricia Richards

Town Staff: Brad Holden

Others: Seth Friedman, Paul Yanus

Note: All votes taken are unanimous unless otherwise noted.

1. Call Meeting to Order / Adjustments to Agenda

Dan called the meeting to order at 6:00. Brad added an eclipse update.

2. Opening Public Comment (6:00)

Seth Friedman said he understands why leasing a truck is a smart move on the town's part. But leasing moves away from the community voting on new trucks. He thinks the town should have a policy regarding how leasing will be done. As a citizen he likes voting on truck purchases and there isn't that opportunity for input with leasing.

Patty said when the lease ends after 3 years the selectboard will need to decide whether to keep the truck. If we want to keep it, that goes to the public to vote on it. There will be an opportunity for voters to make a decision at that time.

3. Organization (6:04)

Dan called for nominations for chair. Patty asked if he wanted to continue. Dan said he would be interested in stepping aside. He thinks spreading the position around enriches the town. Patty nominated Bob.

Dan nominated Patty for vice chair.

Bob moved to direct the current chair to cast 1 vote for Bob as chair and Patty as vice chair, Patty seconded and the motion was passed.

The board agreed to the proposed meeting schedule included in the packet, which shows meetings on the second and fourth Thursdays of each month. The dates of the second meetings in November and December may be adjusted. All dates are subject to change.

The board reviewed the rules of procedure that had been included in the packet. The Burlington Free Press has been the town's newspaper of record. Brad said Seven Days is much less expensive, close to half the price. He has to submit things to the Free Press almost a week in advance. Seven Days has a deadline of Monday for the paper that comes out on Wednesday. **Patty moved to change the Town of Underhill's newspaper of record from the Burlington Free Press to Seven Days, Dan seconded and the motion was passed.** Bob suggested getting a stamp made up for correspondence to let people know of the change. Brad suggested it could be in tax bills too. Patty said it could be up to Brad's discretion how to get the word out.

There was discussion about changing the rules of procedure to list the food sharing shed instead of the Underhill Center Post Office as a public posting location, but Bob said he talked to someone at the post office who indicated that they would allow the town to post notices there, so it was agreed to leave the list as is.

4. *Recess for Underhill Center Active Transportation Scoping Study Presentation (6:20)*

Bob moved to recess the meeting until after the Underhill Center Active Transportation Scoping Study Presentation, Dan seconded and the motion was passed at 6:20.

Selectboard members went upstairs to attend the scoping study presentation. Lucy Gibson of Toole Design explained that the scoping study is being funded by the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission on behalf of the town. It is looking at alternatives for walking and biking in Underhill Center. Nothing will be built as a result of this study. It will provide plans and cost estimates that could be used to try to get grants for construction. This is a chance to get input from people who would be affected. She reviewed benefits of a project and reasons why it is needed and described the area to be studied. She described design criteria to be considered. She showed one possible idea involving sidewalk in the village and a shared use path outside the village.

Community members brought up concerns including impacts to property owners of having sidewalk close to their homes, the utility of sidewalk vs. multi-use path, and safety issues that currently exist for pedestrians and cyclists. Brad asked people to express any additional thoughts in writing and send them to the town, to Sai Sarepalli of the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission or to Lucy Gibson of Toole Design.

Patty asked about next steps. Lucy said the next step would be to try to look at solutions. Toole Engineering would come up with different options then bring drawings and visualizations back to the community to weigh in. Following that they would try to come up with a preferred alternative.

5. *Executive Session to Discuss Attorney-Client Communications (7:27)*

Bob called the selectboard back to order at 7:27.

Bob moved to go into executive session as per 1 V.S.A. Section 313 (a) (1) (F) to discuss attorney-client communications made for the purpose of providing professional legal services to the body, Patty seconded and the motion was passed at 7:27.

Bob moved to come out of executive session, Patty seconded and the motion was passed at 8:12.

Patty moved to appoint Brad Holden to participate in the scheduled mediation in the case Demarest vs. the Town of Underhill, Dan seconded and the motion was passed.

6. *Consider Renewing Digital Speed Control Sign Traffic Suite Annual Subscription*

Bob moved and Patty seconded to renew the annual subscription to Traffic Suite for the digital speed control sign. Brad said we have 2 speed signs that do not use Traffic Suite. The speed sign we move around is connected to his computer. That enables him to collect the data and generate reports. He thinks it is useful. It is in our budget. It costs \$1500 for the year. If we didn't resubscribe we would not get data from the sign. Dan said there was a lot of support of the speed sign. Speeding is a prime concern in town. He thinks we should renew the subscription. **The motion was passed.**

7. *Discuss Potential Dates and Procedure for Special Town Meeting*

Brad suggested June 11 as a date for a special town meeting for election of the two newly voter created selectboard positions. Dan said he thinks it would be advisable for Sherri to write something for Front Porch Forum about the special meeting. He had had the impression that this board would appoint people. But the selectboard appoints someone to fill a vacancy only when the vacancy was initiated by someone on the selectboard. We didn't create this vacancy; the voters did. Immediately after the vote we had a selectboard

of 5 and our quorum is now 3, not 2. To do business, any votes have to be unanimous. People who want to run for the new positions will need to collect signatures on a petition. They will be elected only until the next town meeting. Brad said the warning was not specific about terms; it just created the positions. So we have to go under the assumption that they are each 1 year terms. At the next town meeting we can have an article to state that one will be for 1 year and one will be for 2 years. The idea is to stagger the terms. Bob asked, the maximum term is 3 years? Brad said yes.

Bob moved to schedule a special town meeting on Tuesday, June 11, 2024 for the purpose of electing the two additional voter created members of the selectboard by Australian ballot, Dan seconded and the motion was passed.

8. *Closing Public Comment Period (8:29)*

No members of the public wished to comment.

9. *Board of Liquor Control – Renewal of Second Class Licenses (8:29)*

Bob moved to suspend the selectboard meeting and open the Board of Liquor Control meeting, Patty seconded and the motion was passed at 8:29.

Bob moved to approval renewal of second class liquor licenses for Jacobs and Wells, Dan seconded and the motion was passed.

Bob moved to close the Board of Liquor Control meeting, Dan seconded and the motion was passed at 8:29.

Bob moved to reopen the selectboard meeting, Patty seconded and the motion was passed at 8:30.

10. *Warrants and Minutes*

Bob moved to approve the minutes of February 22, 2024, Patty seconded and the motion was passed.

Dan moved to approve the minutes of March 5, 2024, Patty seconded and the motion was passed.

Bob moved to approve payroll warrants dated March 14, 2024, Dan seconded and the motion was passed.

Bob moved to approve payroll warrants dated February 29, 2024, Patty seconded and the motion was passed.

Bob moved and Dan seconded to approve warrants dated January 15 to February 29, 2024.

Patty said some of the warrants provided do not have 2 signatures as required by town policy. Bob said in the future if there are not 2 signatures the board will not approve them. Patty said we should follow policy. Bob said he will follow up with staff.

The motion was passed.

Patty said of the warrants dated March 7, some are without 2 signatures and some are without any signatures. She thinks they are all legitimate but she wants to reinforce to staff that they have to follow policy.

Bob moved to approve warrants dated March 7, 2024, Dan seconded and the motion was passed.

Bob moved to approve the warrants dated March 14, 2024, Dan seconded and the motion was passed.

11. Member Items, Correspondence, Announcement, Schedule, Dates for Special Meeting

Brad said he got an email from the liaison for Vermont Forests, Parks and Recreation and Vermont Emergency Management involved in planning for the eclipse. He said he is glad to learn the town will be limiting Mountain and Stevensville Roads to local traffic only. Underhill State Park is not among the areas recommended for viewing the eclipse and the gates will remain closed. Summit trails will remain closed as usual for mud season. Supplemental eclipse information may be posted encouraging people to stay out of the backcountry during the eclipse event. Brad said he thinks maybe we should pass this message along on Front Porch Forum. Bob agreed. Bob said we should reach out to residents of Mountain and Stevensville Roads about our plans. Brad said the roads will be closed to all but local traffic starting at Maple Leaf Road. Dan asked if we can also put a notice at the base of the roads to let people know of the closure. Bob suggested that notice could be at the town pond. Brad said he thinks the sheriff's department will be able to have someone in town the day of the eclipse.

12. Executive Session (7:40)

Bob moved to go into executive session under 1 V.S.A. Section 313(a)(3) for the appointment or employment or evaluation of a public officer or employee, Patty seconded and the motion was passed at 8:42.

Bob moved to come out of executive session at 9:12, Patty seconded and the motion was passed.

13. Adjourn (8:03)

Bob moved to adjourn, Dan seconded and the motion was passed at 9:13.

Minutes submitted by Donna Griffiths

Read and approved as submitted/amended:

Dan Steinbauer, Chair

Date Signed

Date Approved