

**Town of Moretown
Office of the SELECT BOARD**

Revised Draft – Notice of unapproved minutes of the 12/7/15 Selectboard meeting

Board members present: Jason Aronowitz, Rae Washburn, Tom Martin, Michelle Beard, John Hoogenboom

Guests included: Mimi Clark, William Northrop of SunCommon, Karen Horn, Jonathan Siegel, Duane Howes, Tracy Brannstrom, Martin Cameron, Carl Wimble, Don LaRocca, Deborah Feldman, Deb Orr, Cheryl Brown as board assistant

Tom called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

No one offered public comment tonight

Reports & Communication, Announcements –

Lister appointment – Letter from Cherilyn that she was requested by the listers to ask to be appointed to fill the vacant lister position so there is coverage if needed. The appointment would be until 2016 Town Meeting Day.

Michelle moved; John seconded to appoint Cherilyn Brown to fill the vacant lister position. All were in favor.

Blodgett litigation court date – The next court date is Tuesday, December 15th. Tom plans to attend.

Tom relayed that he spoke again with Ed Case today. Mr. Case is donating a portion of his land for a new access to the Blodgett trail. Tom will be setting up a meeting with Rob Townsend and Calvin Blodgett to walk the area. If everything works out, there will be a site visit and public hearing process before the access can be changed.

FEMA money for bridge – The town received notification from FEMA that they approved the town's appeal to pay actual costs for the bridge replacement. Hopefully the \$280K is received in 2015.

Draft – unapproved minutes of the 12/7/15 selectboard meeting

Sidewalk project email – Vtrans has agreed (during the replacement of bridge #3) to add ADA sidewalks on the little bridge in Moretown village, and deduct a portion of the grant \$ to do the work (\$60,000). The work would be done in 2016, if the town agrees to the terms.

The Selectboard will try and negotiate the amount to be deducted for VTrans doing the work; and/or be sure there are sufficient grant funds to complete the project if \$60K is deducted. The board confirmed that the new sidewalks will go from Hurdle Road to the bridge; and from the other side of the bridge to the 100B Mountain Road intersection.

Demas Road – Kerry Alley from AOT Mapping – emailed that mapping shows the bridge over the Mad River closed to motor vehicles and lists TH #11 as Demas Road, a road which is not up to class III standards. The board clarified to Kerry last week that Demas Road is in fact a class IV road and is TH #10. TH #11 is Lover’s Lane. Cheryl is waiting to hear back from Kerry.

Route 2 river access – Vermont River Conservancy (VRC) – Lydia Menendez from VRC emailed that the signage for the Route 2 access will be ready soon. She also mentioned that VRC would like to apply for a Vermont Watershed Grant which would fund tree plantings at the access. The board signed a letter of support for the grant application, and plan to have a formal dedication of the access to Craig Elwell, Moretown’s Road Foreman from 1988 to his passing in 2010.

Road Maintenance Permit for Showacre trail – Questions raised by Travis Blodgett at an earlier meeting, that work had been done to trail #18 without town approval. Martin went to take a second look at the trail to see if anything had been done since the work done by a resident via the road maintenance permit this summer. Martin said no major work had been done since the last time he visited the road, and nothing was blocked.

The board thanks Travis for his comments. Everything is ok.

Draft – unapproved minutes of the 12/7/15 selectboard meeting

Mad River Valley Town Leadership Meeting – 12/9/15 at Waitsfield Elementary School 6-9 pm. It is possible three board member will attend so the meeting will be warned by the board.

Approval of Minutes:

11/16/15 - The minutes of 11/16/15 were approved via a motion by Michelle and seconded by John.

2016 Highway budget – Martin was in attendance to go over his budget. Martin said basically the highway budget is level funded except for a couple repair items to be considered. Later Martin corrected “level fund” to level fund plus about \$10,000 in salary/benefit changes. The grader needs repair to the turntable and new tires with a total estimate of \$9200; the excavator has track issues estimated at \$19,000.

Other items discussed:

- Consideration for a new truck - The maintenance costs for the 2007 truck are considerable, and Martin thinks the body is bent. Thoughts:
 - Limit the use of the 2007 truck until a new truck is scheduled for purchase in 2017, to eliminate having two payments in one year.
 - Road crew can work on the side dump body to get by for another year.
 - Hire trucks for ditching work etc., and use 2007 just for winter plowing. Martin mentioned safety concerns with the truck.
 - Martin will get the number of hours the 2007 was used last year.
- Martin estimated the 2007 truck to be worth about \$40,000 trade in. What would that number decrease if we waited until next year to trade in the truck? Martin will try and find that out.
- Martin will get solid prices for a new truck; the hours used last year on the 2007; and buy/trade in next year comparison numbers.

The board needs this information before they can make any trade decision.

Draft – unapproved minutes of the 12/7/15 selectboard meeting

- Excavator repair – There are issues with the track drive. The consensus is it's a pump issue. The road crew has been using the machine as is, but the pump could go any time. There are no safety issues associated with the pump failure. The estimated cost for pump/repair is \$19,000.
Discussion included options:
 - Keep running the excavator as is, but it could quit
 - Keep the excavator and rent a machine for projects
 - Make the repair

- Grader repair – There wasn't much discussion on the repair needed to the grader.

Other highway business:

John asked about log trucks running on the roads in this warm weather.

Martin said they shouldn't be running after the road thaws out. He will contact Josh Bell, the trucker for Hallstrom.

2016 town budget in general –

Payroll budgeting - Tom moved to enter into executive session at 7:20 pm for discussion related to pay negotiations, where premature public knowledge would place the town and person involved at a disadvantage; Michelle seconded. All in favor.

Tom moved out of executive session at 7:45 pm; John seconded. All in favor. No action was taken as a result.

Continued budget discussion:

- Pay for one truck at a time via the budget.
- How many years do contractors keep their trucks?
- The fire fighters stipend has not been invoiced.
- Ask Steve Smith in 12/21 to go over the fire department budget

Draft – unapproved minutes of the 12/9/15 selectboard meeting

William Northrop from SunCommon – offered a presentation of the solar array proposed for Howes Road.

Discussion and points of interest included:

- The project started about a year ago
- The project involves one acre and connects to the GMP grid
- 150 kW project; 780 panels, enough to benefit 25-30 members
- Array must be sold before built. Sold for \$1 plus monthly membership fee. Net is 7% saving guaranteed for every \$100 in solar credits on the bill.
- Only Green Mountain Power customers will be able to join this array.
- Application was into the Vt. Public Service Board November 16th.
- Suncommon expects the application to be approved in January of 2016.
- There was no communication with the town until Jonathan Ciappa's letter received 11/18/15.
- Towns have no say in PSB applications other than via a Notice of Appearance.
- Usually SunCommon presents the project to towns prior to the application being submitted to the PSB, but because of GMP's cap announcement the project was rushed along.
- GMP is still taking residential systems until 2017.
- Wetlands review was done in October 2015.
- SunCommon solar team said there are no Current Use issues with this land.
- An adjoining landowner was missed in mailing Jonathan Ciappa's letter. As soon they learned about it, they got the information to that person.
- Project comments from the Selectboard and Planning Commission can be made, as they have automatic party status, but only via a formal process. The comment period is only 30 days, starting from and including November 16th, so time is short if the SB & PC want to make comments.
- SunCommon has never done an array in this area, but they are consistent with other panels in the area.
- Campaigns to sell the panels are held via local event such as "shine & dine". This will happen as soon as the application is approved. People are welcome to contact SunCommon directly too.

Draft –unapproved minutes of the 12/7/15 selectboard meeting

- Concerns were voiced that there should be more public outreach before we get to this stage in the process.

Questions from the Selectboard were asked:

- PSB docket #? William didn't have that information.
- Will adjoining landowners be able to join? Yes if GMP customers.
- The site plan was changed significantly from the one originally proposed, was it sent to all abutters? William didn't know.
- Plan for renewal energy credits (REC's)? Will REC's be sold, so the project won't be providing renewable power? William didn't know.
- Plans for screening? No, but SunCommon listens to comments from those who want screening.
- Site clearing is being done already? Yes, SunCommon believes the application will be approved.
- SunCommon responsible for upkeep? SunCommon uses Peck Electric.
- Decommission plan? Not sure, poles stuck in the ground can be pulled.
- Historic – 13 sites in the area in the State registry, and scenic roads, including Howes Road and the Five Corners of Moretown Common.
- One acre is the wetland and impervious surface threshold. This is a one-acre project. William said that the project has one acre of impervious surface. Addressed?
- Any impervious surface, landscaping plan? William isn't sure.

William will respond by 12/8 to Cheryl on any of the above that he didn't have answers for tonight.

Note: Questions asked tonight were general questions and not related to any Motion to Intervene or proposed Motion to Intervene, which Jason disclosed earlier that he is contemplating as an adjoining landowner.

More general discussion:

- Generally arrays are placed on lands not being used.
- An overview on what SunCommon get paid? William explained that people pay .15 kWh on utility grid; people on array get credited (on GMP statement) .15 kWh plus about .6 per kWh. Kilowatt hours can be banked to use when needed in the winter months etc.

➤ Membership is based on usage by 7% saving regardless.
Draft – unapproved minutes of the 12/7/15 selectboard meeting

- SunCommon is associated with Kendall financing.
- Memberships can be sold.
- Legislation to look at towns having a voice on PSB applications. Some towns have adopted a resolution regarding solar power, but the PSB can do whatever they want. Completely disrespectful to town government.
- The town should request a specific decommission plan.

After the presentation and general discussion amongst the board regarding the proposal, the Selectboard will submit a Notice of Appearance to the PSB.

Jason moved that the Town of Moretown exercise its right to intervene and file a Notice of Appearance to the Vt. Public Service Board and appoint Michelle Beard as the Town's representative in the matter. John seconded. All were in favor. The Notice of Appearance and Certification of Service will be hand delivered to Susan Hudson, clerk PSB on 12/9/15.

More Reports, Communication, Announcements –

Delinquent tax payments – The board received letters from Ken Blessing and Wavell Cowan regarding their tax payments which were received by the town on 11/2/15, being considered late and fees assessed.

At 2015 town meeting, voters chose to have taxes due on Friday, October 30th, and post marks of 10/30/15 would not be accepted. Both the due date and verbiage about the post mark was on the tax bills.

Rae said according to tonight's warrant, on Monday, November 2nd, over \$100K was received in tax payments that are being considered delinquent. How does this compare to last year? Rae thinks because of the changes at town meeting, when tax bills went out we should have made it clear that the taxes are due on 10/30 and post marks are not accepted. He feels people should not be charged a late fee. After discussion, the Selectboard decided to ask Craig Eilers about waiving the collector's fees for property taxes paid on 11/2/15.

The Selectboard does not have the authority to waive / abate late fees.
People do have the right to request abatement via the Board of Civil Authority.
Requests must be in writing.

Draft – unapproved minutes of the 12/7/15 selectboard meeting

OLD BUSINESS:

Town office project – There was discussion that not much is happening with the project, and concerns that the concrete has been left open with all of this rain.

Cheryl will contact Henry and ask for a written report on whether or not leaving the cement uncapped will cause damage now or down the road; and get a status on what is happening with the project overall.

New Business – Nothing tonight

Review Invoices and approve warrants –

A/P warrant # 15062 – check # 17365-17375, approved

P/R warrant # 15061 – check # 17268 and e-check 2057-2066, approved

P/R warrant # 15063 – was not approved

A/P warrant # 15064 – check # 17376-17409, approved

Overload permit for Josh Bell was approved.

Tom moved to adjourn at 10:30 pm; Rae 2nd all in favor. Adjourned