

# TOWN OF HIGHGATE

## Planning Commission

August 18, 2015 @ 6pm

### Approved Minutes

*NOTE: All actions taken are unanimous unless otherwise stated.*

#### I. CALL TO ORDER

Rick Trombley opened up the meeting @ 6:00pm.

Present were: Planning Commission Board Members; Rick Trombley, Woody Rouse, Luc Dupuis, Bruce Ryan, Larry Simmons

Also present were: Heidi Britch-Valenta – Planning & Zoning Administrator; Wendi Dusablon – Clerk; Amanda Holland – NPRC; Paulette Tatro; Shelley Laroche - Treasurer

#### II. TOWN PLAN – FINALIZED COPY FOR REVIEW

The Selectboard has approved this and it has been adopted. A finalized copy is in the PC packets and has also been sent to the State of VT.

#### III. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN / BUDGET / POLICIES

Amanda supplied a copy of the draft CIP in advance that included changes from the last meeting. She also had additional handouts for the board. As part of the adoption process there will be a joint meeting with the Selectboard as well as a public hearing in October. Andy King has supplied some comments and edits with regard to the public works / highway section of the CIP. Andy is hoping to move forward with some purchases using funds already available in the budget. This will include replacing the tandem truck, as well as replacing the one ton with a single axle Silverado. With the trade in they will be able to purchase both with funds already available, and will likely not use all of it. In the CIP these are noted for replacement in 2017, but will happen soon in the FY2016 budget. Paulette had some questions on the inventory grid for the highway department, which Amanda clarified. Larry asked about the Carter Hill Road project. Heidi doesn't see that being worked into the budget without grant funding. Larry also asked about the feasibility of a singular spread sheet, providing a snap shot for each department by year. Shelley will work with Amanda to get some accurate figures on the bridge and transfer station. Paulette would like to have all charts read left to right for continuity. Heidi had some questions regarding the sports court line item, transfer station and B25 on Machia Road. Amanda would like to see us identify one person or entity to keep this process moving. It could be the treasurer, administrator or the Planning Commission. This will want to be laid out in the policy as we prepare to make this an annual process. Heidi would like to have some grant funding numbers plugged into the grids also, such as the ADA grant, PACIF grant, etc. Heidi noted that the town now owns the Jedware property as the result of a bankruptcy proceeding. We don't have any hard numbers on what the cleanup fees will be. Larry added a few typo errors that needed correcting. Heidi added that the town is entering into an agreement with Efficiency Vermont for replacing the street lights, she will forward that info to Amanda. There were also some questions on ratios with regard to the capital expenditures table. Paulette asked if the floor in the fire department has been repaired yet. No, they had come in for an estimate, but no work has been done yet. Soon the arena will have its own well and the cell tower is now erected and moving along nicely, carriers will be added in the near future. With regard to adopting and maintaining the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), once we are comfortable with the draft, the PC will submit the plan to the Selectboard and one public hearing will be held and warned according to statute. Annually this plan will be updated. Some communities have their CIP adopted before the budget is adopted. We will want to have a time table to know how our process will work. This is more of a plan, and we are taking the first years information to use it for budgeting purposes. The CIP will be reviewed annually and adjusted based on our successes or failures with the previous budget. It will be interesting to see how the CIP is received, and the data will become part of the annual town

report. Amanda proposes that by Sept. 30<sup>th</sup> (at the latest) of each year, the department heads give their information to the responsible party (treasurer, administrator or PC). Shelley agrees, and thinks she should be the point person. There were questions on how the finance committee (not yet formed) will fit into this. We don't know yet. Paulette recommends early September for department data to get to Shelley and noted that the Treasurer along with the finance committee will be looking at the impact of the changes each year. We begin budgeting in October / November. It will ultimately be the Selectboard that makes the final decisions on the CIP after the PC is finished with it. Going forward, the review of the CIP by the PC will be quick, as it will only be one year of new data and the verbiage that justifies it. The PC will also be developing any impact fees in the future, there are many pieces of the puzzle that need to fit together. The complete CIP should be ready to present to the Selectboard by the first Selectboard meeting in November, which is November 5<sup>th</sup> this year. With department heads submitting information to Shelley in early September, that gives her two months. The time frame will look like this:

- Sept. 15, 2015      *Planning Comm. meeting with Selectboard*
- Oct. 1, 2015        *Public Hearing on the CIP at the Selectboard Mtg.*
- Nov. 5, 2015        *Planning Comm. presents finished CIP to Selectboard*

Policies will also need to be discussed. The debt management policy can be adopted at a different time, some towns don't have a debt management policy. A letter was included with tax bills with regard to the finance committee. Interested persons should contact Paulette Tatro by September 1<sup>st</sup> at [ptatro78@hotmail.com](mailto:ptatro78@hotmail.com). For the Sept. 15<sup>th</sup> meeting with the Selectboard, we will need to get the draft document to the Selectboard in advance for them to review it. There is a lot in the document and Amanda will prepare a brief overview to summarize why there is a need for this and what the benefits are. We need to make sure all the data in the charts is accurate and makes sense. Amanda will meet with Shelley and share the tables with her. The Selectboard will also need to visualize how this document will assist them in the budgeting process and how it will lay out operating expenditures. The meeting on Sept. 15<sup>th</sup> will be an open meeting, which would allow debate and the public is invited to attend. PC & DRB meetings are audio recorded, the Selectboard meetings are video recorded. Larry noted its important to all be on the same page (Planning Comm. & Selectboard) prior to the public presentation on October 1<sup>st</sup>, so everyone is like minded. Heidi would like to see a list of everything associated with the Capital Improvement Plan that needs to be accomplished over time. We can check a few off the list as we go. It was agreed that until a finance committee is in place, the Planning Commission will be the next step above the department heads for purposes of the CIP.

**IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Motion by Rick Trombley to approve the minutes from *July 21, 2015*, as written. The motion was seconded by Woody Rouse – **APPROVED.**

**V. OTHER BUSINESS**

Rick wanted to discuss A76 standards with regard to paving in a PUD. A76 does not mandate paving, but states it should be paved. A proposal will need to go to the Selectboard to change this in our road standards. We will not have some of the issues we are experiencing now if we change the wording. Unless it is indicated in the decision letter that paving is a requirement, it can't be enforced. It happened on Sandy Acres, and it's happening now on Quarry Lane. The town will not consider taking over a road unless it is paved. The intent of the PC was to have them paved, but it was never put on paper. We could amend the policy to indicate that the town will not consider taking over any roads that are not paved. Heidi briefly explained the Sandy Acres situation. In the case of Quarry Lane, we are not able to enforce Mr. Paquette to pave it, because we cannot produce the documents. The homeowners association would need to put some heat on the developer to have it done. Heidi suggested putting a packet together on this topic prior to having this discussion again. We have many complex situations in Highgate regarding PUDs, other examples are Hoague Drive and Tanglewood Drive.

**VI. UPCOMING EVENTS**

Aug. 14		Property Tax bills were mailed
Sept. 7		Labor Day – Town Offices will be closed
Sept. 3 & 17	7pm	Selectboard meetings for September
Sept. 10	6pm	DRB meeting
Sept. 15	6pm	PC meeting with Selectboard
Oct. 1	7pm	CIP public hearing @ Selectboard mtg.
Oct. 27	by 5pm	Property tax payments are due

**VII. ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Rick Trombley to adjourn the meeting @ 8:37pm. The motion was seconded by Bruce Ryan – **APPROVED**.

Minutes respectfully submitted by:

\_\_\_\_\_, Clerk  
Wendi Dusablon  
Date \_\_\_\_\_

Minutes approved by:

\_\_\_\_\_, PC- Vice Chair  
Woodbury Rouse Jr.  
Date \_\_\_\_\_