

# TOWN OF HIGHGATE Selectboard Meeting

Thursday, April 18, 2019 @ 7pm

## Approved Minutes

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

### **A. Call To Order & Pledge of Allegiance**

The meeting was called to order by Sharon Bousquet, Chair @ 7:01pm, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Highgate Selectboard Members** – Sharon Bousquet, Chair; Joshua LaRocque, Vice-Chair; Bruce Butler; Randy Connelly *absent – Richard Flint*

**Highgate Office Staff** – Wendi Dusablon – Town Clerk / Public Meetings Clerk; Heidi Britch-Valenta – Town Administrator / Planner; Shelley Laroche – Town Treasurer / DTC

**Public / Other** – Philip (Butch) Brosseau; Deb Rouse; James Guilmette; Michael J. Gosselin; Woody Rouse; Vonnie Lamotte; Chris Shepard

### **B. Public Comment(s)**

- Debbie Rouse had questions about the Memorial Day parade and any potential time change. Sharon is a member of the planning committee and said they are going to work with HVFD on timing as to not interfere with their festivities of the day. James Guilmette was a previous Swanton Selectboard member but was not sure about the time of their parade. The planning committee wants to hear from residents and welcomes people to join the committee meetings. There are timing issues for the MVU band and firing squads getting from Highgate to Swanton on time. Reach out to any member of the committee: Keith Ploof, Ty Choiniere, Tom Conley, Sharon Bousquet, Dan Beauregard and Melina Stenta.

### **C. Public Works Update – Butch Brosseau, Public Works Director**

Butch is enjoying his job very much and the department has been extremely busy. He gave an update on progress with St. Onge at the Machia Road bridge. Concrete was poured today and that project looks to be on track. Dirt roads are about 95% complete for being graveled and graded. A huge portion of their gravel budget has been used up. Sweeping on paved roads will be happening when the frost is completely out of the ground so the edges aren't torn up. Sweeping will take longer this year, as there is a lot of sand on the roads from the rough winter we had. Butch spoke to Pike this week about the paving projects. Some will be done early in the season from last years projects that weren't done and they will have to come back for the rest later in the season. The Mill Hill project will be a big one for the crew as the asphalt there is 16"-18" thick. They will do one cut at a time, but it all may need to come out. OT will likely be involved on this project, and Butch will speak to residents about the best time to close the road. The Frontage Road project won't take as long and the road won't have to be closed. The grant we received for Hanna Road states the work has to be done by June 30<sup>th</sup>, and the same for Mill Hill. Butch feels it will take a miracle to get it all done. Bethany at NRPC let Heidi know that the Hanna Road project could be a reduced scope or we could give the grant funding back with no ill will. There was discussion on if subbing out any of the

work was possible. Our match for these grants was our work force. Butch asked for patience from the community and he appreciates the support as well. Sharon thanked Butch, Nick and Luke for all they do and is very grateful to them. Motion by Josh LaRocque for the Public Works Department to begin their summer schedule of four 10-hour days, Monday – Thursday, from May 1<sup>st</sup> – Oct. 1<sup>st</sup>. The motion was seconded by Randy Connelly – **APPROVED**. We can always contact Butch with issues on Fridays and they will also work as necessary in the summer with regard to projects and deadlines. Boy Vanslette is also available if temporary help is needed. Butch spoke to Clark's with regard to replacing our 2010 truck. We are short about \$15,000.00 on the replacement value. Shelley said we put aside \$20,000.00 in the CIP this year, are planning \$100,000.00 this coming cycle and \$50,000.00 in future budget cycles towards replacing this truck. Butch is only specking out tandems and will continue to look around and investigate pricing to start the replacement process. Sharon asked that the department make sure there are common features among the fleet with standard set up, parts and pieces. Chris Shepard asked for an update on the Machia Road slide project as well as the Machia Road bridge. Bores have been done and the area is being monitored for movement. We are just waiting for the data. The bridge is on schedule for completion this construction season with the possible exception of tree planting and reclamation of the area.

**D. Animal Control Officer Update – Vonnie Lamotte**

Dog licenses were due by April 1<sup>st</sup> and Vonnie has been very busy making phone calls to anyone on the list who has not licensed yet. Many have come in to license, so her phone calls are working. As of April 1<sup>st</sup> we were at 664 licensed, and as of today April 18<sup>th</sup> we are at 742 licensed dogs. There are still 150 +/- to go and Vonnie will be issuing fines after May 1<sup>st</sup>. This will be IN ADDITION TO licensing fees. Once the weather turns nicer she will get busier with calls and complaints, but for now things are very good. There was an issue this weekend which was unfortunate and Vonnie got VSP involved. A well check at the residence was done by Vonnie and Kristy with regard to their other animals. Vonnie feels that social media was more involved than was necessary but the issue was dealt with and it is in VSP's hands at this point. The board wants to make sure Vonnie feels safe and supported by law enforcement. Vonnie does feel supported and will reach out any time she needs to. The board thanked her for all she does for our residents and animals.

**E. Town Treasurer Updates – Shelley Laroche**

- Motion by Josh LaRocque to sign the check warrants. The motion was seconded by Randy Connelly – **APPROVED**.
- Motion by Josh LaRocque to sign the annual maintenance agreement for the GIS program \$2,400.00 which is the same price as the last several years. The motion was seconded by Randy Connelly – **APPROVED**.
- Shelley will be sending our final notices for delinquent taxes and hopefully folks come through with payment or arrangements before she involves the attorneys and begins the process of our next tax sale.

**F. Town Clerk Updates – Wendi Dusablon**

- Motion by Randy Connelly to approve the minutes from *April 4, 2019*, as written. The motion was seconded by Bruce Butler – **APPROVED**.
- Vonnie covered the dog licensing update under section “D”. We are currently at 742 license dogs in the Town of Highgate for 2019. Many more to go!

- Motion by Randy Connelly to approve the 2019 catering vendor list and give Wendi approval to sign license requests for the 2019 catering season on behalf of the town and send them off to DLC for final approval. The motion was seconded by Bruce Butler – **APPROVED**.
- Green-Up Day is Saturday, May 4<sup>th</sup>. Bags have not yet arrived but are supposed to be delivered by VTrans on April 22<sup>nd</sup>. Wendi will post when they have arrived, we have had several inquiries already. Wendi shared a safety tip flyer for Green-Up Day which covered topics such as sun protection, finding needles (sharps), and ticks. The flyer has been posted on the website, FaceBook page as well as around town. Household Hazardous Waste Day is also Saturday, May 4<sup>th</sup> from 8am – 2pm at the sand shed location on Transfer Station Road. A list of accepted items is also posted or call the office for more info, 868-5002.
- Missisquoi Valley School District (MVSD) Special Vote – Tuesday, April 30<sup>th</sup> at Highgate Sports Arena 7am – 7pm. Absentee ballots are available now. We will be voting on our permanent board members (6) as well as accepting the amended articles of agreement. Chris Shepard touched on the vote and the articles of agreement and changes that were made. There was an info session on April 15<sup>th</sup> @ 6pm and another coming up on Saturday, April 27<sup>th</sup> @ 10am at MVU. Get out and vote on April 30<sup>th</sup> and attend the info session on April 27<sup>th</sup>. A “no” vote on the amended articles of agreement means we will divert to the state imposed articles.

#### **G. Administrator Items – Heidi Britch-Valenta**

- There is one last step of testing prior to the ADA construction on the flooring in the bathrooms and in the garages. Motion by Josh LaRocque to accept the proposal from KAS for \$716.00. The motion was seconded by Randy Connelly – **APPROVED**. This is covered under the ADA grant.
- Motion by Randy Connelly to move forward with the electric vehicle charging station grant in the amount of \$18,293.00. Heidi is working on a more robust agreement. The motion is seconded by Josh LaRocque – **APPROVED**.
- We are finally able to move forward on the dry hydrant contract at Airoidi’s pond on Hanna Road. The town has a contribution of 25%, which is approximately \$1,200.00, and anticipated to be in-kind labor. The request is for it to happen in this fiscal cycle, but Heidi can request an extension. Motion by Josh LaRocque to approve this. The motion was seconded by Bruce Butler – **APPROVED**.
- The Recreation Commission had hoped to use the RiseVT grant for work on the walking path, but it is not a good time for them to apply for it right now. The library, however, would like to use this towards their gardening program and Heidi will submit it tomorrow.

#### **H. Selectboard Items**

- The video surveillance policy is tabled until the board can meet with Matt Bouchard.
- ADA construction bids (sealed) were due today and we received four:  
Sharon read each bid aloud as they were opened:
  - 1) Kenneth R. Adams, Inc. \$104,700.00
  - 2) Millbrook Building & Remodeling \$92,000.00 w/alternative addition of \$9,890.00
  - 3) Guilmette Handy Man Services \$70,000.00
  - 4) Gosselin Construction & Excavation \$79,705.00

Woody Rouse asked how many of these contractors were local, as he would like to see someone local get the job. The bids presented are from Milton, Essex, Swanton and St. Albans. Mike Gosselin added that he didn’t get all the paperwork and this may be

his own fault. A bid bond was specified but he found out later he needed a performance bond. If that is required he will write a check for the job up front and self-bond if needed. Heidi will check with our attorney to make sure that would be allowed. These bids all need to be forwarded to our architect, Laz Scangas, to make sure everyone has met the requirements of the bid process. Heidi is certain we will have an announcement sometime next week. The Selectboard can warn a special meeting to go over this and make a decision once we hear back from Laz.

- Motion by Josh LaRocque to approve the updated road maintenance policy. The motion was seconded by Randy Connelly – **APPROVED.**
- Sharon would like input with regard to needle drop boxes in our community. It was brought up when FCSO was here recently. There was discussion and lots of questions on different locations, who would maintain / empty it (them), and if other towns have them. Heidi will check with VLCT to see if they have any info or comments on this topic as well. Sharon welcomes everyone’s input on this topic. Now that the snow has melted (finally) this problem of finding needles will likely become an issue again.
- The Planning Commission is looking for participation to assist them with some economic development work. Any business owners, farmers, sap producers, etc. who would like to be involved with the town’s future can contact the town offices for more information. The PC meets the third Tuesday of each month at 6pm.

**I. Upcoming Events**

Apr 30	7am – 7pm	Special Australian Ballot Vote MVSD 7am – 7pm @ Highgate Sports Arena
May 2	6pm	Village Core Master Plan Committee Mtg.
May 2	7pm	Selectboard Mtg.
May 4		Green-Up Day
May 4	8am – 2pm	Household Hazardous Waste Day @ sand shed location
May 6	10:00am	Highgate Infrastructure Econ. Dev. Study Mtg (HIEDS)
May 9	6pm	DRB Mtg.
May 21	6pm	Planning Commission

Motion by Sharon Bousquet to exit the regular meeting @ 8:12pm. The motion was seconded by Josh LaRocque – **APPROVED.**

**J. Executive Session**

Motion by Sharon Bousquet to enter into executive session @ 8:12pm with Heidi Britch-Valenta and St. Albans City Police (Lt. Ben Couture and Dispatcher Michelle Simmons) to discuss contacts, legal and personnel, where premature general public knowledge would place the town and/or the individuals involved at a substantial disadvantage. The motion was seconded by Josh LaRocque – **APPROVED.**

Richard Flint arrived and joined the executive session @ 9:40pm.

Motion by Sharon Bousquet to exit executive session @ 9:50pm. The motion was seconded by Josh LaRocque – **APPROVED.**

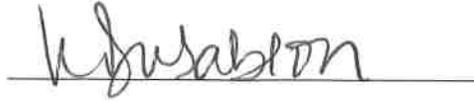
Motion by Bruce Butler to accept the negotiated agreement on the Yates appeal. The motion was seconded by Richard Flint – **APPROVED.** Josh LaRocque and Randy Connelly recused themselves.

Motion by Josh LaRocque to approve the Certificate of Approved Location (COAL) for Ray’s Used Cars & Salvage for a term of one year. The motion was seconded by Randy Connelly – **APPROVED.**

**K. Adjournment**

Motion by Josh LaRocque to adjourn the meeting @ 9:55pm. The motion was seconded by Richard Flint – **APPROVED.**

Minutes respectfully submitted by:



Wendi Dusablon – Town Clerk & Public Meetings Clerk

Minutes approved by:



Sharon Bousquet – Chair, Highgate Selectboard

