

# TOWN OF HIGHGATE

## Selectboard Mtg.

August 20, 2015 @ 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 Jeff Towle, Chair @ 7:00pm, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Highgate Selectboard Members-** Jeff Towle, Chair; Chris Yates, Vice-Chair; Diana O'Hara; Randy Connelly *absent - Paulette Tatro*

**Highgate Office Staff** – Wendi Dusablon - Town Clerk; Heidi Britch-Valenta – Town Admin; Shelley Laroche – Town Treasurer

**Public / Other** – Ben Lowell – Constable; Ty Choiniere; Brian Spears

#### **B. Public Comments**

- Ty Choiniere and Brian Spears were present for a recreation update. They are looking to recruit 4 new members to their board. Interested persons should contact Danielle Pothier @ [dspothier\\_33@hotmail.com](mailto:dspothier_33@hotmail.com), or bring letters of interest to the town clerk's office. The current members of the board that remain are Ty Choiniere, Karen Gagne-Fortin and Danielle Pothier. Brian Spears is a potential member, and they are looking for Highgate residents preferably, but will consider residents from other towns as well. Fall sports (soccer and cross country) are beginning soon. Soccer has 63 children signed up and will start on August 31<sup>st</sup>. Cross country has 18 signed up and will start on September 8<sup>th</sup>. This is their second year running these programs and they will continue to grow. There is some equipment still needed for soccer, and they are working on that. The committee is looking to get one picnic table and one bench to the Highgate Falls park. They are looking for donations, but may need to move one table and one bench from the municipal park to the falls park, and would like permission from the board to do so. Heidi added that the municipal park is well utilized with concerts and bikers so those tables and benches are used often. Chris will see what he can find for pricing on concrete tables and benches and Ty has a contact at SD Ireland. Heidi also noted that the County Courier has a drone that took some great footage at the August 9<sup>th</sup> Summer Sounds Concert. In that video footage from up above, it is clear that the performers are utilizing the area in front of the monument. This was a concern at a meeting earlier this summer. Randy asked about parking for soccer season. Ty said that parents will be asked to park at the school and walk over to the arena, due to the construction.
- Steve Bushey was not able to be here, so Ty and Brian gave a quick update on the arena project. The electrical trench was dug today, so they should be able to power up soon. The installation of the hockey boards is set for Sept. 21<sup>st</sup>, and the concrete is all poured. The siding is scheduled to go up next week and the condensers are in and plumbed. Things over all are coming along well. The well should be dug soon and the location has already been approved. Chevaliers has moved the site off the fence, as requested.
- Ty called Chris Yates the other night, who in turn called Ben Lowell, Constable. There was a lot of shooting going on behind Ty's house, back where the concrete from the arena is being stored. The FCSO was contacted also, but Ben made it there before the kids left. The kids, approximately ages 10-17, were shooting clay pigeons, and it was an unsafe situation back there. Corp. Miles showed up and talked to the kids, advising them this was not a good idea. The area isn't posted yet, but should be and will be soon from all angles around the entire perimeter of the property, visible from the sides including the road and the rail trail.

### C. Town Treasurer – Shelley Laroche

#### 1. Pay bills

Chris asked for clarification on the legal fees, most of which are related to the tax sale on July 31<sup>st</sup> and there are a few related to the Jedware property.

#### 2. Misc.

- Between Heidi, Shelley and a few other people, the HUD funds (\$196,000.00) are in house for the arena project. It was a process and we don't have to worry it expiring any longer! We have owned that grant since 2008, and the funds are now with the town.
- Shelley has been researching electronic card processing, and we will be going with MuniPay. There is a one-time \$85.00 fee for the card reader and free to the town for all of their services. It will be programmed to our needs and we can change things as we go. The convenience fee of 2.45% or \$3.00 (whichever is greater) will be passed on the customer if they are choosing to use this service. This service should be up and running and available to customers in the next 7-10 business days.

### D. Public Works Department

#### 1. Morey Road RFP bids

Andy King, PW Director, is not present tonight, but he did provide an update for the board, which is in their packets. We have received one bid from Scott Goodhue / Goodhue Excavation, Inc. for the Morey Road culvert replacement project. The town is responsible for a 10% match. The bid comes with three alternatives and reads as follows; *We hereby submit this proposal for the removal of a four foot CMP and replacing it with 117" x 79" corrugated metal pipe arch. #1 - (recommended) According to the vendor, aluminum pipe will provide more than two times the service life 117" x 79" high corrugated 10 gauge aluminum pipe arch at 50' long with cradle head walls inlet and outlet \$113,580.00. #2 - 117" wide by 79" high corrugated 10 gauge metal pipe arch at 50' long with cradle head walls inlet and outlet \$112,350.00. #3 - 117" wide by 79" high corrugated 12 gauge metal pipe arch at 50' long with cradle head walls inlet and outlet \$109,200.00. Notes: 1- the above prices are inclusive of traffic maintenance. If we are allowed to close the road the above referenced prices would be reduced by \$20,000.00. 2- If the town is hauling the sand back fill material, each load they haul will be subtracted from the above prices at the rate of \$140.00 per load. 3- If we are allowed to use type 2/type 3 rip rap instead of cradle head wall, the above referenced prices would be reduced by \$10,000.00.* Heidi noted that we will want to stick with the specifications from the study and we also need to consider the bus issues for school children. We will want the road to be closed as little as possible. A weekend closure is something we can discuss. Motion by Jeff Towle to authorize Andy King to communicate with Scott Goodhue from Goodhue Excavation regarding the details of closing the road for this project before the board approves it. Motion was seconded by Chris Yates – **APPROVED.**

#### 2. Misc.

- Andy met with the pavers and he will be receiving bids on Monday. A low response is expected, as only one showed up for the site visit on Aug. 13<sup>th</sup>. Motion by Chris Yates to approve Andy King to expend his paving budget by selecting a bid that fits the best. Motion was seconded by Randy Connelly – **APPROVED.**
- Andy is looking for permission to move forward with the replacement of the two trucks. Chris updated the board on the specifics which include the following; swapping the 2006 Tandem and upgrading to a 2016 International single axle, all set up and ready to plow with all the bells and whistles that we will need including plow lights, a wing plow and poly side boards. The trade is favorable on the Mack at \$64,000.00, with a total net sale price of \$84,576.00. The other truck is a 2006 one ton Chevy dump truck and we are looking to upgrade that to a 2015 Ford F550 with a diesel 6.7, the trade value is \$11,000.00, all set up with a stainless steel v-plow and a 2.5 yard poly caster sander / spreader, which is a drop in, so salt will not eat away at the dump body. Net price will be \$55,319.00, for a total (both trucks) of \$139,895.00. This will be accomplished without moving any money from one reserve fund to another, leaving us \$810.00 in reserve for replacing the next truck. We will be replacing two aging trucks with money that was set aside to replace just one. This will give us a more versatile fleet and hopefully be able to plow more effectively and efficiently. Motion by Chris Yates to trade our 2006 Mack Tandem with Clarks Truck Center for the 2016 International at a net sale price

of \$84,576.00. The motion was seconded by Jeff Towle – **APPROVED**. Ty asked why we are moving back to a single axle truck. Chris answered that we are only using two trucks to haul sand, that the cost is better, maneuverability is better, it doesn't make sense to have another Tandem, two fits well here. The single axle can be changed very quickly from dirt to sand and also will fit into cul-de-sacs better. Motion by Chris Yates to trade the 2006 one ton dump truck for a 2015 Ford F550 through Heritage Ford at a net sale price of \$55,319.00. The motion was seconded by Jeff Towle – **APPROVED**.

- Motion by Jeff Towle to have Champlain Valley Striping stripe the park & ride on Route 78 at a price of \$805.00. The motion was seconded by Diana O'Hara – **APPROVED**. Chris asked that all measurements are clarified prior to striping. CVS is current on all ADA compliance issues and will be using heat paint which has a longer life. Chris agrees that this should be done by professionals the first time, and our crew can touch it up as needed. Ty asked if the fire department had been involved in the planning around the dry hydrant – yes.
- Andy provided a written overview of what has been happening in the department and what's on the agenda for the next week or two.
- On Monday we had four good candidates interview for the position of public works laborer. More on this will be discussed in executive session.

#### **E. Town Administrator – Heidi Britch-Valenta**

##### **1. Sidewalk update**

Our response to VHB was that the proposal from the park and ride to Desorcies does not fit well. We are looking to stay on the south side of Route 78 and connect with what will be the existing sidewalk project off Lamkin Street. In the area of Gore Road, we should perhaps switch to the north side of the road for accessibility to the Historical Society, the Methodist Church and McCuins. There would be one crosswalk on Route 78 in the Gore Road vicinity. VHB is asking for the board's recommendation so they can fine tune the details and signage, then it will go back to AOT. Once we have a more detailed plan, it can be presented to the land owners. The determination of Route 78 being a 3-rod or a 4-rod road is a determination that will need clarification from AOT. The traffic calming issues were well received and are an intricate part of the proposal. Chris would like to pursue the south side up until Gore Road and the north side up to McCuins. Chris added he would like to see one more crosswalk which leads to the walking path. Randy agrees, and noted he also likes the raised medians, not full curbs. He feels the raised medians are effective. The town of Danville is a beautiful example and makes you feel like you are entering a village and respect it. Randy also added that he likes the green space with the sidewalk, versus a full curb. Diana asked about the relocation of the power pole by the school. Swanton Village has been contacted with regard to this.

##### **2. Cell tower update**

The cell tower is up, and we have initiated the lease with SBA. A direct deposit has been set up so the payments will start coming in. Chris asked about the municipal antennas to keep the ball rolling. Chris would like to set up a conference call to get everyone on the same page.

##### **3. Arena construction update**

This was done earlier, under public comment.

##### **4. Jedware bankruptcy**

This is a legal issue for discussion in executive session.

##### **5. Misc.**

- There is now a dedicated daily bus stop in Highgate with GMTA. Pick up is Monday – Friday @ 5:58am at the park & ride location on Route 78. There is no scheduled return stop, it is by request, so you would need to request a drop off in Highgate when you board. Heidi had a photo to share which has been posted. Over time we will need to get a bus shelter and bike racks for that area as well.
- Heidi shared a letter that was sent to all towns with regard to the GIS system.
- Ranger Solar has been meeting with private land owners and they have initiated more than one arrangement. They will be at the Sept. 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting for a presentation. There is no municipal connection to these projects.

**F. Town Clerk – Wendi Dusablon**

**1. Minutes**

Motion by Jeff Towle to approve the minutes from August 6, 2015, as written. The motion was seconded by Diana O'Hara – **APPROVED**.

**2. Misc.**

- Tax bills went out on August 14<sup>th</sup>. The process to get them printed, stuffed and out went very well and we have had a minimal amount of them kick back in the mail to be redirected. The due date is Tuesday, October 27<sup>th</sup> by 5pm and postmarked are accepted.
- We are winding down with licensing dogs, it has gone on longer than expected. To date, we have licensed 826 dogs with just a handful of dog owners left to pursue. Ben Lowell (Constable) has offered to help Vonnie (ACO) with the process. Wendi will send out final notices this week and the next step will be impounding the animals if the owners don't comply with the licensing requirement.

**G. Selectboard items**

**1. Municipal soil sample**

We have received a request from the State of VT to take a soil sample from the Highgate municipal park. The purpose is for an analytical analysis and survey in response to recent general assembly legislation. The soil sample will fit into a glass jar, so very small in size. Motion by Chris Yates that we sign the consent for access to property form to authorize the state to take a soil sample from the town park. The motion was seconded by Randy Connelly – **APPROVED**.

**2. Efficiency VT streetlight upgrade agreement**

This will be a two part process. Part one is for Vermont Electric Co-Op and then another agreement will be drawn up with Swanton Village. Andy King is building a good repore with Duane Couture at Swanton Village and they are also addressing moving the pole on Gore Road and increasing the lighting at the park and ride. Motion by Chris Yates to sign the agreement with Efficiency VT regarding incentives for swapping street lighting in the Vermont Electric Co-Op area. The motion was seconded by Diana O'Hara – **APPROVED**.

**3. Misc.**

- There is one more Summer Sounds concert in the municipal park on August 23<sup>rd</sup>, followed by the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Concert on September 20<sup>th</sup> at the field days site. This will be a fundraising event to construct a band stand in the park. Dick Harper has reached out to the Parks & Recreation committee also. The funds generated will be reinvested in the community that supports them. Chris read aloud from the recent Highgate Happenings Newsletter that Liza recently published.
- Heidi added that Wendi had put a lot of information out there to the public on our FaceBook page and website, both have generated a lot of buzz about everything happening in town. The posts about the cell tower received over 9,000 hits. Its projects like the cell tower that generate revenue and allow us to have a lower tax rate than other towns around us. ABC22 / Fox44 was here earlier this week and aired a segment on the cell tower and what it means to our community. Chris added that if your carrier is not on our tower, call them and tell them you want service here in Highgate. Ty asked for information on the lease amount, which is \$1,250.00 per month and we will also receive a percentage from the carriers as they jump on. There is an increase every year, and it will also be allowed to be used for municipal communication purposes.

**H. Upcoming events**

Sept. 3	7pm	Selectboard Mtg.
Sept. 10	6pm	DRB Mtg.
Sept. 15	6pm	Planning Comm. w/ Selectboard to discuss Capital Budget
Sept. 16	6pm	Arena Fundraising Committee Mtg.
Sept. 17	7pm	Selectboard Mtg.
Oct. 1	7pm	Selectboard Mtg. with Planning Comm. – Capital Budget Presentation

**I. Executive session**

Motion by Jeff Towle to enter into executive session @ 8:06pm to discuss personnel, a lease option and a legal matter. The motion was seconded by Diana O'Hara – **APPROVED.**

Motion by Jeff Towle to exit executive session @ 9:15pm. The motion was seconded by Chris Yates – **APPROVED.**

Motion by Chris Yates to hire Patrick Loyer for the position of Public Works Department Laborer. The motion was seconded by Diana O'Hara – **APPROVED.**

Motion by Chris Yates to sign the lease agreement with Encore Redevelopment. The motion was seconded by Randy Connelly – **APPROVED.**

**J. Adjournment**

Motion by Jeff Towle to adjourn the meeting @ 9:25pm. The motion was seconded by Randy Connelly – **APPROVED.**

Respectfully submitted by,

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Wendi Dusablon, Highgate Town Clerk

Minutes approved by,

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Jeff Towle, Chair – Highgate Selectboard