

TOWN OF HIGHGATE SELECTBOARD MEETING

Thursday, May 18, 2017 @ 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 @ 7:03pm followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Highgate Selectboard Members – Sharon Bousquet, Chair; Josh LaRocque, Vice-Chair (arrived @ 7:22pm); Randy Connelly; Bruce Butler; Steve LaFar;

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

Public / Other – Faith Brashear; Jean Chevalier; Ty Choiniere; Gary Taylor; David Rouse; Michelle Simmons; Joseph Depatie

B. Public Comment(s)

None

C. Treasurer Updates – Shelley Laroche

- Check warrants – Shelley was not present for this meeting but had prepared the check warrants in advance. Motion by Sharon Bousquet to sign the check warrants. The motion was seconded by Bruce Butler – **APPROVED**.

D. Town Clerk Updates – Wendi Dusablon

1. Minutes

Motion by Steve LaFar to approve the minutes from May 4, 2017, as written. The motion was seconded by Bruce Butler – **APPROVED**.

2. Memorial Day Updates – Monday, May 29th

Wendi and Sharon gave an update and a recap of all the activities happening in the village on Monday, May 29th, see the schedule of events below:



Highgate's Memorial Day Celebration

Schedule of Events

Monday, May 29 2017

**activities will take place in the main park, unless otherwise noted.*

Starting at 11:00 am

Highgate Volunteer Fire Department's Annual Chicken BBQ

Price: \$10 for 1/2 a chicken, coleslaw, roll, pickle, baked potato, milk or water

Games In the Park

There will be several game stations set up throughout the main park for children to enjoy.

12:00 pm

Run What You Brung Street Race – registration & sign in

Sign in, line up and pre-race information session begins at the Highgate Methodist Church

12:30 pm

All Parade entries MUST be at the Highgate Arena for parade lineup by this time

Run What You Brung Street Race begins

Participants will start at the Methodist Church and cross the finish line, which will be located just past the Municipal Building

1:00 pm

Annual Memorial Day Parade

Parade route is from the Highgate Arena through the center of town

Commencement Speech to follow in the main park

Following Commencement Ceremony

Pie Eating Contest

This will take place prior to the auction



Highgate Volunteer Fire Department's Annual Auction will take place

Call 868-7722 for auction info on drop off / pick up of items.

3. Kennel Policy Update

This has been updated to change the length of time for holding an animal to two weeks, and also add that the animal be scanned for a microchip prior to rehoming it. The board would also like the ACO and Asst. ACO to each sign the policy as verification that they understand the expectations and protocol.

E. Administrator Items – Heidi Britch-Valenta

1. Project Updates

Bridge 25 Machia Road - This project is moving forward and final plans have been approved by the state. They are now asking for Selectboard approval with the final design letter and final numbers, which are not far off from what we had planned on five years ago. The town is on the hook for 5% of the overall project. The project manager and engineer were here last week for a presentation at the DRB meeting. They are hoping to seal the deal with the land owner of the apartment building on the corner very soon. Hopefully that building will be demolished this fall. Along with that, bidding will likely also start this fall, with construction to begin in the spring of 2018. The current bridge will hopefully be in place through the entire project until the new bridge is complete. Bruce inquired if the town has it's 5% in reserve for our share. Shelley is not here to verify, but we are very close, if not fully covered. It was noted that all the figures are based on estimates and we won't have hard numbers until we go out to bid. The bridge will be built beside the current one, but the corner will look different with the apartment building coming down. All plans for the bridge are in the drop box for the board to review. We did receive a letter from the state regarding a recent inspection of our current bridge. There were some issues found that need attention. We again are asking people to NOT use the bridge if your vehicle is over the posted weight limit of five ton. There is a meeting at the bridge tomorrow morning, May 19, at 9am with AOT to find out what we need to do to keep it usable. Motion by Bruce Butler to approve the State of Vermont's proposal for Bridge 25 on Machia Road. The motion was seconded by Steve LaFar – APPROVED. There was discussion on if AOT would be able to move the timeline up at all. It was noted that nothing can happen until the apartment house is acquired and demolished. Heidi would like to reach out to DMV again regarding enforcement. David Rouse asked about narrowing the entrance to the current bridge to keep heavier traffic off it. Sharon read aloud from the letter we received from the state, which is below.



State of Vermont
Agency of Transportation - Highway Division
Bureau of Asset Management and Performance - Bridge Inspection
One National Life Drive
Montpelier, VT 05601-2003
www.vermont.gov

[phone] 802-271-0641
[fax] 802-248-3566
[toll] 800-453-0191

May 15, 2017

Mrs. Sharon Housquet, Selectboard Chair
Town of Highgate
c/o Ms. Wendy Dusablon, Town Clerk
775 Main St
Highgate Center, VT 05450

RE: Highgate, bridge #83 on TH #4 (Class 2) over Missisquoi River

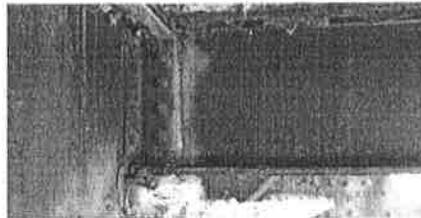
Dear Ms. Housquet:

The Federal National Bridge Inspection Standards require inspection of all publicly owned bridges over water for a length of 24 months cycle. A town (or other) may perform the inspection with at least one member specially trained for this work. The Agency of Transportation provides this inspection in the interest of public safety and in a service to the municipalities with the most shared between the Federal government and the State.

The above referenced structure is a two span thru truss bridge spanning the Missisquoi River. During a recent inspection, performed on April 21, 2017, the following problem(s) were noted which are in need of attention:

The upstream exterior (facing) stringer at abutment #1 (span) has partial connectivity with the structure to the road ramp beam. Only what is left of the damaged stringer is supporting it from stopping.

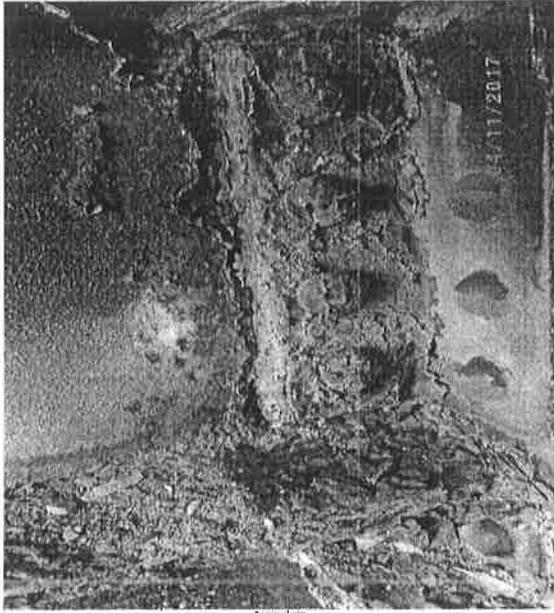
Based on these findings, it is recommended that the structure be repaired and/or shored off from the bridge until it is repaired.



*2014 photo



To: Town of Highgate, Vermont
Re: Highgate, bridge #25 on TH #4 (Class 2) over Missisquoi River
Date: May 18, 2017
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*blurry photo



To: Town of Highgate, Vermont
Re: Highgate, bridge #25 on TH #4 (Class 2) over Missisquoi River
Date: May 18, 2017
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This structure is owned by the town and as such is the responsibility of the town. Failure to comply with the recommendations may compromise public safety, result in additional damage, and/or substantially reduce the service life of the structure.

Even though a bridge is recommended for repair due to deterioration, impact damage, or scour by the State, the decision to properly respond to the recommendations is the responsibility of municipal officials. However, it is in the best interest of the municipality to address these recommendations. A failure to address potential bridge hazards may result in lost liability claims.

Please send **WRITTEN** notification of your intent to comply with your compliance with, or reasons for non-compliance with these recommendations within 60 days from receipt of this letter. We are required by the Federal Highway Administration to report to them when the recommended posting, closure, and/or safety repairs have been implemented. A response form has been provided for your use.

If you have any questions concerning the matter, please contact your local District Transportation Administrator, DTA David Blackmore at 572-6576 or VT's Bridge Management and Inspection Engineer, Pamela M. Thumber at 828-0041. A representative from the Bridge Management and Inspection Unit would be willing to meet with you at the site to discuss the contents of this letter.

Sincerely,

Pamela M. Thumber, P.E.
Bridge Inspection and Budget Program Manager

DMT: MJ
cc: David Blackmore, DTA District #6
Doug Simmons, Project Manager
NBIS Inspection Files via MJ



Fire Department Floor – The site visit was held on May 9th and bids are coming due soon. We have to test the concrete for asbestos before it comes out. We will need to obtain a state construction permit from the Fire Marshall for a commercial upgrade.

Machia Property – There was a site visit today at the Machia property but we were unable to get into the café.

FEMA Transfer Station Project – This was left up in the air. GeoDesign is supposed to come in and chat with us further about it. Phase #1 numbers are in the packet. They are looking to do further work and want to know how the bid process is going to work. Lauren Oates said the town has an option to put it out as sole source bidding and get approval for that and not go through the RFP and interview process. The only other option would be to issue an RFP and look at qualifications. For the sake of the project, it would be Heidi's choice to use the provisions in the purchasing policy to use this company who was involved in the first half. Bruce wanted to make sure we were following our policy, that is his only concern. There was no other discussion. Motion by Josh to accept GeoDesign's work for Phase #1. The Motion was seconded by Randy Connelly – **APPROVED.**

2. Ray's Salvage – Certificate of Approved Location (COAL)

The location on Route 78 across from MVU looks good. It has been cleaned up quite a bit and this was approved at the last meeting. Sharon signed the document.

3. Selectboard Procedures

This has been discussed previously and edits have been made. Motion by Josh LaRocque to accept the Selectboard Procedures. The motion was seconded by Bruce Butler. By voice vote 4 yes (Josh, Bruce, Steve, Sharon) / 1 no (Randy) – **APPROVED.**

4. Xfinity Road Work Request

This request was originally sent to Swanton but is actually a Highgate property. They want to bore under the road. Pat Loyer, Public Works Director, has no issues with it. The property is located on Carter Hill Road. This is a routine request and Heidi would like us to develop a form similar to what is used in Swanton. Josh would like to make sure proper insurance coverage is in place. Bruce asked about the procedure when VT Gas went through. This request is also on file with Dig Safe. Motion by Josh LaRocque to allow this request. The motion was seconded by Randy Connelly – **APPROVED.**

5. Misc.

- Ty Choiniere was present. He would like to help out with mowing at the arena and ball fields while Brian Spears is unable to do it. It averages out to four hours per week and will not increase the budget at all. Ty will take care of it if Brian can't. Randy asked about our hiring policy. It was noted this should be just a temporary situation and Ty is willing to help out. This is only for the arena and ball fields, as the PWD takes care of the town parks. Motion by Randy Connelly to have Ty Choiniere fill in as a sub for Brian Spears as needed for mowing at the arena property fields and grounds. The motion was seconded by Josh LaRocque – **APPROVED.**
- Josh will stop in to see the Laroche family on Durkee Road to get the easement paperwork going.
- Bernard "Wayne" Bushey passed away today. He was a very dedicated Highgate resident and the board sends thoughts and prayers to his family.
- PACIF grant – we received our full request from PACIF with a full 50% for the request at the arena, so MAHA and the town will each have to contribute less than originally thought.
- BBR – The Better Back Roads grant for Mill Hill was also funded. We will have to purchase some concrete drop-ins from Camp Precast. The work will likely happen this fall or next spring.
- Heidi has a few legal issues for discussion in executive session.
- The Smoking Prohibition Ordinance amendment was approved at the last meeting. It was signed by the board.
- As an FYI, Heidi put some information in the packet from VLCT about third party long distance phone call fraud. Randy will look over the documents and let us know if there is anything else he feels we should be doing to protect ourselves.

F. Dispatching Update – Gary Taylor

Chief Gary Taylor from St. Albans PD was present with Michelle Simmons. The cell tower at the arena has space available for dispatch to place their equipment at a height of 96' to increase communication. Chief Taylor is interested in leasing space from the town at a cost of \$100.00 per month, which would be credited to our dispatch bill, a reduction of \$1,200.00 per year. They have been interested in our tower all along, but with staff changes, rescue changes, and no longer dispatching for MVR, they had to reevaluate. They applied for a grant for a container box to hold their equipment at the site. The boxes are not cheap and they were awarded the full grant amount of about \$13,000.00, but still have to pay for the equipment to be placed at and on the tower. He met with Todd Goad at Burlington Communications to discuss the benefits of this. St. Albans Dispatch continues to invest in their systems throughout the entire region. They recognize that they need to charge a fee and in all fairness they have a responsibility to make sure their equipment is state of the art and won't fail. Todd would like to look at the site to see where the 4' pad would be placed in relation to the tower. The town has spent time with SBA prior to this in order to get the green light on this project. We are excited to have this opportunity and increase communication in Highgate and our surrounding communities. It is beneficial to everyone, and Chief Taylor said \$100.00 per month is the going rate for emergency services to acquire space on towers. Our new dispatching contract for 7/1/2017 through 6/30/2018 is \$32,592.70. There was some discussion on how we used to pre-pay dispatching fees to MVR. Rates for the upcoming year were not increased at all. There were questions on how dispatching fees are calculated. Chief Taylor explained it is a 60/40 formula, where the city of St. Albans is responsible for 60%. Once he has a budget to work with, the additional 40% comes from all the stakeholders. Each municipality pays their share of that 40% based on population from the census numbers. David Rouse asked how the dispatching fees are displayed in the town report. It is split up between ambulatory dispatch and fire department dispatch in the town report which accounts for the total. Ty asked to hear how Chief Joe Depatie, HVFD, feels about all of this. Joe wants to improve communication for everyone, and if adding St. Albans Central Dispatch to our cell tower is the answer, and it can save the town some money, he is all for it. The spot on the tower is at 96' which is a very good position. Our current antenna sits on top of the municipal complex. Chief Taylor explained how they continue to improve infrastructure since he came to St. Albans in 2005 and he is happy to show us what they have done for improvements and upgrades. He is committed to continuing the improvements. Michelle Simmons replaced Judy Dunne. Michelle is very familiar and well trained with a competent staff. The Town of Highgate owns the property where the tower is located. We would supply the 4' cement pad and allow them to tie into the electricity at the site. They will invest upwards of \$40,000.00 in equipment to place on the tower and in the climate controlled container at the site. Chief Taylor is asking for at least a 3 year contract, preferably a 5 year contract at the cell tower, considering the investment they will be making. He can get information from Todd Goad on what the contract should look like. The town would draw up the actual agreement. There is a meter socket there already for multiple tenants. The town owns the dirt, SBA owns everything above the ground, so it would be a sub-lease to St. Albans Central Dispatch. This discussion will continue in executive session and Heidi will communicate with Chief Taylor and begin to swap documents. He has not yet ordered the storage container. When we are sure, he will order it for delivery in approximately seven days. The grant for this container will expire this fall. The average electronic equipment life span is 5-7 years, so he feels a 5 year lease is reasonable. This issue will be tabled for now until executive session. The board thanked Chief Taylor and Michelle Simmons for their service to the community.

G. Selectboard Items

1. FEMA Application

This was discussed earlier under section E-1.

2. Misc.

- Simplex Grinnell – We are still trying to be released from this contract. The last inspection they did was not even legal. It will be pricy for us, but worth it to pay for the work and have them hand over the code. Motion by Josh LaRocque to spend the funds to pay off Simplex and move forward with our

new vendor. The motion was seconded by Randy Connelly – **APPROVED**.
In the future we need to remember how we were treated by Simplex.

- iPad Policy – These are ready to be signed by each Selectboard member that utilizes a town issued iPad.
- Public Works Department cell phone reimbursement – This discussion will take place under personnel in executive session.
- Efficiency Vermont – This program will help us in changing over the rest of our street lights to LED. The Swanton Village territory has been done, but not VELCO.

H. Upcoming Events

May 22	5:30pm	Arena Construction Comm. Mtg. @ arena
May 27	9am-3pm	PTKO Yard Sale in the park
May 29		Memorial Day in Highgate
		BBq @ 11, Parade @ 1, Auction to follow
June 1	7pm	Selectboard Mtg.
June 8	6pm	DRB Mtg.
June 20	6pm	Planning Comm. Mtg.

I. Executive Session

Motion by Sharon Bousquet to enter into executive session @ 8:13pm to discuss legal, personnel and contracts, where premature public knowledge would place the town and the individuals involved at a substantial disadvantage. The motion was seconded by Steve LaFar – **APPROVED**.

Motion by Sharon Bousquet to exit executive session @ 9:53pm. The motion was seconded by Bruce Butler – **APPROVED**.

Motion by Josh LaRocque to approve the draft stipulation for the Leduc Construction Environmental Court Appeal. The motion was seconded by Randy Connelly – **APPROVED**.

Motion by Josh LaRocque to approve a stipend of \$10.00 per month toward the cost of personal cell phones for the Public Works Department employees. The motion was seconded by Sharon Bousquet – **APPROVED**.

J. Adjournment

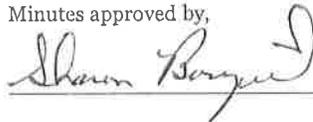
Motion by Josh LaRocque to adjourn the meeting @ 10:00pm. The motion was seconded by Bruce Butler – **APPROVED**.

Respectfully submitted by,



Wendi Dusablon, Highgate Town Clerk

Minutes approved by,



Sharon Bousquet - Chair, Highgate Selectboard