

TOWN OF HIGHGATE

Selectboard Meeting

Thursday, September 6, 2018 @ 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 @ 7:04pm, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Highgate Selectboard Members – Sharon Bousquet, Chair; Josh LaRocque, Vice-Chair (arrived @ 7:38pm) Steve LaFar; Bruce Butler *absent* – *Randy Connolly*

Highgate Office Staff – Wendi Dusablon – Town Clerk & Public Meetings Clerk; Shelley Laroche - Town Treasurer & Delinquent Tax Collector; Heidi Britch-Valenta – Town Administrator

Public / Other: Alice S. Cota; Debbie Rouse; Woody Rouse; Kellie Uzell; Rachel Lamoureaux; Ty Choiniere; Luc Choquette; Jake Visi; Richard J. Noel; Richard Flint; Dick Harper

B. Public Comment

- Sue Cota updated the board that the state has been down on Monument Road recently and trees were removed. She is concerned about the winter and the bus going down there. There will need to be a snow fence installed to prevent drifting into the road.
- Debbie Rouse asked about Casella fees and why we now have to pay for recycling. Sharon noted that more regulations coming down from the state level are making the changes necessary. As of Sept. 1st Casella is charging \$1.50 per 30 gallon container. Further questions should be directed directly to Casella. Heidi added that Michael Casella will be coming to a meeting in the near future. Debbie was also looking for any updates on the bandstand / gazebo possibly being built in the Highgate Falls park. We did not get the grant for this project, so currently we have no funding.
- Ty Choiniere asked about targeted patrols with FCSO and particularly in the Mill Hill area. Richard Flint added that speeding on Gore Road is out of control and he feels FCSO doesn't want to do their jobs so they can just stay in St. Albans. Steve LaFar agrees about the speeding issue, adding that it is everywhere, on all roads in all towns, not just here. Steve would like to have FCSO support but also doesn't want to bash them. Woody Rouse spoke to an incident last week with fourteen ATVs at the gas station and VSP driving right by them.
- Josh Aldrich planned to attend tonight and cannot be here. He has submitted a written request to use the Municipal Park on Sunday, Sept. 9th for a meet and greet / BBQ campaign event. Hours of the event were not indicated on the paperwork. Motion by Steve LaFar to approve this request. The motion was seconded by Josh LaRocque – **APPROVED.**

C. All Arts Council / Summer Sounds – Dick Harper

Dick recapped the 28th season of Summer Sounds in Highgate. We were 6/6 having all this seasons music outside which is somewhat unusual but awesome! He gave some background on the program and how it started and how it has grown. Many towns are

doing concerts on their own now as well. Dick noted how the audience is aging and how the ratio is about 50/50 Highgate residents and out of town visitors for our concerts. He would like to see this through to the 30th anniversary of Summer Sounds, but he would like everyone to start thinking about finding someone to host in the future. Before and during the concerts there is a social event which involves non-profit groups. He is having trouble finding hosts for this. It was mentioned to have HVFD host a concert with the auxiliary. PTKO has a difficult time hosting events when school is not in session. Location-Location-Location He has heard lots of comments about moving the concerts to Highgate Falls, and although no formal survey has been taken, most would like to see it remain in the center of town where it is. There have been suggestions about cutting trees and using flat space for parking. A few have even suggested purchasing the property in the park to extend the park all the way to Mill Hill. Sharon stated that we have had complaints about concerts using the Veterans Memorial. Dick would like to, if HVFD is agreeable, extend the front gable of their BBQ area and use it for concerts. He feels audience members will be lost if we move to another park. He has also talked to Veterans who don't seem to have an issue with the current location. Ty agrees with using the HVFD structure and moving the concerts further back in the park. Dick has been promoting the village core surveys. Heidi noted there are two charrettes coming up on Sept. 19th @ 5:30pm and Sept. 22nd at 10am – both at Highgate Elementary School. To date, 54 surveys have been returned. The board thanked Dick for his many years of service associated with the concert series and for the update this evening.

D. Highgate Recreation Commission

Ty Choiniere was present with Luc Choquette and Jake Visi for a discussion and proposal with regard to lighting at the Highgate Sports Arena facility. Ty spoke to the current lighting conditions at the arena. Luc Choquette works for Green Mountain Electric Supply and is also a Highgate resident. He has a lot of experience at the arena and is very connected to the facility. Jake Visi from Net Zero, Inc. was also present to discuss this proposal. To get the current lighting up to where it needs to be will cost several thousand dollars, and that is really just a band aid. Converting to all LED lighting would be a better option and return on investment. Currently the arena has fluorescent lighting, which rapidly depreciates, has a rapid color shift and will not project as much light. The ballasts have failed and many of the lights are on their way out. The new technology is much superior in terms of life span, 5-6 times longer, and uses up to 50% less energy. From the town's perspective, it will be a much better lit arena. Jake has worked at other facilities in Vermont – Cairnes in South Burlington and Waterbury's arena. Luc shared info and stats on the proposal. Currently we have a delivered luman out of the box at 24,000-26,000 and we have 24 fixtures. Even at new, this does not meet IES standards. They have specked out a 48,000 luman fixture for us with a 5 year warranty and rated for 100,000 hours. The return on investment is there, although not great, the real benefit is having the space well lit and getting rid of the maintenance. LED is where it's at. The price is \$24,000.00 and does not account for the \$4,375.00 rebate. The \$24,000.00 includes a control package which gives added flexibility. The package is actually more light that we will normally need, so the control package is needed. Luc lives locally and will be able to help us commission to change as our needs change. We will be saving on electricity for sure. There is not much salvage value to our old lamps. Bruce asked about energy savings. It is hard to determine exactly with the control package. Having a well lit facility will be worth it as a long term investment. The Recreation Commission is asking the Selectboard for approval to access funds for this project. There are funds available in the arena fundraising account, which has a

balance of \$71,000.00. The Recreation Commission met on Tuesday and they all agree this is a beneficial project and voted to move forward, pending Selectboard approval. Josh agrees this is a good project and meets the purpose of the fundraising account. Motion by Josh LaRocque to approve the request of the Highgate Recreation Commission to use \$24,000.00 from the fundraising account for the lighting project. The motion was seconded by Steve LaFar – **APPROVED**. The ice will be in during the last week of September. This project can take place in early October with no disruption to ice time. There was discussion on our purchasing policy. This meets the criteria of a special service that requires a high degree of professional judgement. Ty also let the board know that the Rec. Commission gave the go ahead on another project in the parking lot to install eight units and increase the lighting in the arena parking lot. This will come out of their budget operational funds. The current lights will likely be turned off and that will also save money. Josh wants to be sure we are not blasting light into nearby homes. Luc will send the cut sheet for the outside lighting project to Josh. Josh would like to see the parking lot well light all night long. Ty updated the board that both soccer and cross country have started. The dehumidifier is installed and operational. Tuesday they will be doing the factory start up and training with members of the Rec. Commission and Rob Sweet. Josh was also invited to attend. The Whitetails Banquet is this weekend and the MAHA Cornhole Tournament is next weekend. The choices for the tractor have been narrowed down to three models. Butch and Ty also want to talk to Richard Flint about his tractor. Cost wise they are all very close and doable within our budget.

E. Treasurer Updates – Shelley Laroche

- **Check Warrants** – This was a large check run, as we have had three weeks between meetings. There were no questions from the board.
- **Misc. Updates** – The auditors were here for three days and are coming back just one more day in September to finish up the fixed asset project. Tax bills are printed and will be mailed out Sept. 14th. Our offices are closed Sept. 14th. Shelley has a long list of pre-payments and she is proud of those who are on a budget and doing well with keeping up with their payments.

F. Town Clerk Updates – Wendi Dusablon

- **Minutes (4 sets)** – *Bruce recused himself from approving the minutes from Aug. 9, Aug. 16 and Aug. 21 as he was not present.* Motion by Josh LaRocque to approve the minutes from August 9, 2018, as written. The motion was seconded by Steve LaFar – **APPROVED**. Motion by Josh LaRocque to approve the minutes from August 21, 2018, as written. The motion was seconded by Steve LaFar – **APPROVED**. Motion by Bruce Butler to approve the minutes from August 27, 2018, as written. The motion was seconded by Sharon Bousquet – **APPROVED**. Motion by Steve LaFar to approve the minutes from August 16, 2018, as written. The motion was seconded by Josh LaRocque – **APPROVED**.
- **General Election Nov. 6** – Wendi shared a sample ballot for the State General Election. Voting will take place on Tuesday, Nov. 6 from 7am – 7pm at Highgate Elementary School in the gymnasium. Absentee ballots will be available soon and can be requested at any time.

G. Administrator Items – Heidi Britch-Valenta

- **FEMA Grant Agreements** – This is for phase one at the transfer station. There are two separate grants, one for the design process and an administrative grant to cover town hours. The match is \$15,000.00 and is already set aside in the CIP.

Motion by Josh LaRocque to allow Heidi to sign both applications. The motion was seconded by Steve LaFar – **APPROVED**. Heidi stated that on a side note, Casella will be here at the October 4th Selectboard meeting.

- **Misc. Updates**

- ~ The Transportation Alternatives Grant is completely focused on road storm water issues, up to \$300,000.00 maximum. They are looking for large projects with no in-kind match. The town would not be doing the work ourselves. This would involve hiring someone to do the work and construction inspection. These are federal funds with a 20% match and the deadline is Oct. 17th. The school already has a grant for their storm water issues. The timeline is tight but very doable. The process would be 2-4 years so matching funds would not be needed immediately. Josh would like to see Carter Hill considered. Richad Noel asked about Hanna Road, but we already have a grant for drainage work there. Jim Smith is coming on Monday to meet with Butch about Tarte Road and Frontage Road so we will put a bug in his ear about Carter Hill and this grant possibility for us. The geological information for the Machia Road project is complete. They want to meet with the committee again, tentative date is Sept. 11th at 9am.

- ~ The state wants to hold a public meeting in Highgate regarding plans at the airport. It is scheduled for Oct. 15th @ 6pm here at the town offices.

- ~ The Traffic Ordinance needs amending to change the speed limit on Tanglewood Drive and Humphrey Road. We also have two new town roads – Meadow Lane and Boone Drive. Heidi will put this before the board at the next meeting to approve.

- ~ 911 Ordinance was approved already. It is retyped and the board signed it.

- ~ Sharon signed off on license paperwork for Butch, Nick and Rob with regard to water testing at the arena.

- ~ A new letter has been prepared for Mr. Tremblay regarding the town taking over Thak Blvd. which was signed.

H. Selectboard Items

- **Misc. Updates** – Josh reported that the PTO clutch burned out on the roadside mower when Butch was on vacation. The first estimate to repair it was \$3,000.00. Richard Noel suggested we bring it to Richard King. That quotes was \$1,300.00 and Josh has approved that amount. We could not find a tractor to use and you can't rent one for less than that. This will give us more time to find what we need and gives resale value to the one we have. Thank you to Richard Noel for helping out with the roadside mowing on Gore Road – we really appreciate it! Pike cannot pave Mill Hill until late November. Josh is afraid to tear into that road if we can't repave it before winter. The dam project delayed the Mill Hill project so Heidi has reached out to the grant folks to see about an extension, as we have a valid reason. This is a big project on Mill Hill with culverts to put in, DIs to move and paving. Richard Noel added that the Gore Road project is coming along nicely. Woody asked if the Public Works Department has hired anyone yet. That will be discussed in executive session later this evening.

I. Upcoming Events

Sept. 13	6pm	DRB Meeting – hearing POSTPONED
Sept. 14		TAX BILLS MAILED – OFFICES ARE CLOSED
Sept. 18	6pm	Planning Comm. Mtg.
Sept. 19	5:30pm	VCMP Charrette @ Highgate Elem. Library
Sept. 20	7pm	Selectboard Mtg.
Sept. 22	10am	VCMP Charrette @ Highgate Elem. Library
Oct. 15	6pm	VT Aviation Public Mtg.

Motion by Sharon Bousquet to exit the regular meeting @ 8:36pm. The motion was seconded by Josh LaRocque – **APPROVED**.

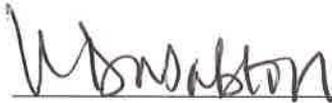
J. Executive Session

Motion by Sharon Bousquet to enter into executive session @ 8:37pm with Heidi Britch-Valenta and Shelley Laroche to discuss personnel and legal, 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**. Motion by Josh LaRocque to exit executive session @ 9:13pm. The motion was seconded by Bruce Butler – **APPROVED**.

K. Adjournment

Motion by Sharon Bousquet to adjourn the meeting @ 9:14pm. The motion was seconded by Josh LaRocque – **APPROVED**.

Minutes respectfully submitted by:



_____ Wendi Dusablon – Town Clerk & Public Meetings Clerk

Minutes approved by:



_____ Joshua LaRocque – Vice Chair, Highgate Selectboard