

# TOWN OF HIGHGATE

## Selectboard Mtg.

February 16, 2017

5:30pm – Selectboard Candidate Forum

7:00pm – Selectboard Meeting

### Approved Minutes

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

#### 5:30pm – Selectboard Candidate Forum

Present were: Michelle Monroe - St. Albans Messenger (moderator); Bruce Butler (candidate); John Patnode (candidate); Sharon Bousquet (candidate); Steve LaFar (candidate); Chris Yates; Wendi Dusablon; Shelley Laroche; Melissa Patnode; John Ferland; Jeff Towle; Brian Rowell; Richard Wilkens; Henry Rainville; Randy Connelly; Elaine Ezerins – St. Albans Messenger;

#### 7:00pm – Selectboard Meeting

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

The meeting was called to order @ 7:01pm by Chris Yates, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Highgate Selectboard Members** – Chris Yates, Chair; Sharon Bousquet, Vice-Chair; Randy Connelly; Bruce Butler; Josh LaRocque (arrived @ 7:18pm)

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

**Public / Other** – John Patnode; Jeff Towle; Brian Rowell; Henry Rainville; Alice (Sue) Cota; Jean Chevalier; Donald Bessette; Keith Ploof; Joseph Depatie; Tim Hardy; Ty Choiniere; Eric Bessette; Elaine Ezerins – St. Albans Messenger; Faith Brashear; Patrick Loyer

##### B. Public Comments

- Sue Cota wanted to know why the letter from the Highgate Concerned Citizens was not included in the town report. The board had discussed it and decided not to include it because HCC is not a committee of the town and there is no town oversight. The board has also not done this for others in the past.

##### C. Tim Hardy, Structural Engineer – Fire Department Floor Report

Tim Hardy was present, as well as Joe Depatie, Fire Chief. This past fall, a section of the fire department floor was dug up and Tim is here to provide a recommendation on how to address the issues. Tim explained that when they dug out the slab, they quickly found the reason for the issues with the floor. Previously there was a church on this site and it appears that instead of digging out the rubble and removing it and brining in decent fill, everything was pushed into the hole. This area was possibly a basement or a crawl space under the church. They found rubble, concrete chunks, glass bottles, and rotten wood. Over time this became a problem, thus the cracking and sink hole forming. As a fix, installing spheres would be nearly impossible due to the amount of rubble present. And pricing would depend on how smoothly the process went. The best solution, according to Tim, would be to remove the material and replace it with compacted structural fill, going down about 6' to get all the debris out. The dirt will fall away from the edges, so he is proposing going around the outside and coming in as close as possible to dig a trench. As the material falls, it will be removed. Using flowable fill, which is a concrete material, the voids will be filled. Once cured, we will then be able to dig out the material so the sides are stable. Structural fill will then be used and a new slab poured. Tim believes the issue is contained to that one area based on how the rest of the slab has performed over the last forty years. Brian Rowell had questions about adding rebar to a 6" pad to save money. It was estimated to be \$60,000.00 to replace the entire fire department floor. Once we agree on a fix, an RFP will need to be put out for the repairs. We just don't know an exact amount at this point. Henry

Rainville asked about the foundation, which best Tim can tell is a 4' frost wall. Henry also asked if the trench drain has been compromised. Joe added that the drains are tipping towards the hole. The overall area in question is approximately 24' x 24'. The only way to be certain the other bays don't have these issues would be to dig them all up. Borings would not even work. Much of the work could be done by town personnel to keep costs down. Joe isn't thrilled about the grate rolling in and feels that is an added issue down the road. The flooring edges at the overhead doors are also breaking up and the angle irons of the doors are rotting out. The floor lasted 40 years without issues, but today's trucks are much heavier. Henry doesn't think that we need to spend big money to fix this, noting that this space may not necessarily be the fire department for the next 40 years. John Patnode asked when we will have the full costs. After running the RFP for a few weeks, it will be 6-8 weeks before we have pricing back. We have a draft RFP created already, which includes a mandatory site visit. Brian would like to see the angle irons included in the RFP. Tim added that his recommendation will fix the problem, but the bigger exercise was determining what the problem was and what caused it. It is not a structural concern, it is an issue of floor performance. It is up to the town now how to proceed. Henry asked Tim for his opinion on energy codes and if angle irons are still popularly used. Typically an overhead door has a galvanized one. Chris would like to include the flooring repaired up to the footing and having the angle irons included as well as using town resources all as part of the RFP. Joe stated these repairs will meet the fire department's needs. Tim doesn't feel the trench drain has been compromised. Tim would also like to make sure to add that there is electrical conduit running through there so that contractors are aware. Tim, Joe and Brian left the meeting to go take another look at the fire department floor and some of the things discussed tonight.

#### **D. Public Works Department – Patrick Loyer**

##### **1. Mill Hill & Lamkin Street clarifications**

There was discussion on the roads surrounding Flat Iron Park. Looking at VTrans maps there are notations that Mill Hill is noted as Main Street near the library. 911 maps show the library, house on the corner and house in the park as all having Mill Hill addresses. Currently, both sides of Flat Iron Park are labeled as Mill Hill and Lamkin Street begins at the intersection. It was decided to leave it alone and make no changes.

##### **2. CSI Maintenance Agreement for HVAC system**

Climate Systems Inc. has sent us an extension on the HVAC system contract. The only change is to add Shelley's name and remove Tom's and to have them notify us before they arrive.

##### **3. FireProTec update fire suppression equipment – MEI alarm system update**

We will need three or four fire added extinguishers for the roadside mower, grader and loader. MEI was here on the 9<sup>th</sup> and there were concerns with the panels and getting access codes from Simplex. We may have to replace some of the equipment in the panels. Pat would like to see a camera over the back door facing the fuel pump as a preventative measure. There are loss preventions grants we can apply for.

##### **4. Misc. updates**

- Chris welcomed Pat to the meeting as our new Public Works Director.
- Pat got pricing on broom bristles: Milton Rental \$689.02 (net, no freight); Fournier's \$661.69 (+ freight); Harvest Equipment \$686.62 (total including freight). Pat will contact Harvest Equipment to purchase from them.
- There are trees in the Municipal Park and Falls Park that need to be removed. Some are around wires. Pat will contact Duane at Swanton Village as necessary with regard to tree removal.
- The PWD has been very busy with snow removal over the past week. The plow blade on Pat's truck was replaced. The single axle truck blew an air can and was at FleetPride for repair. Pat added that they we have a temporary driver right now until the public works laborer job is posted. Each plow route takes several hours and when it snows heavy he asked people to be patient while they work hard to clear the roads. Being down one truck this week didn't help, but they did what they could with the small truck in the interim.
- The new signs for Monument Road will be installed in the spring.

- Pat has prices on tires for the grader. Warren Tire \$1,200.00 each (priced out for four); Marshall Tire \$4,700.00 for four; Pat also checked with Woods, but the pricing was high.
- Pat attended a class at the end of January regarding water quality.
- The department recently purchased a cordless combo kit that will be helpful when they are out on the road repairing / installing road signs.
- Jean Chevalier asked if Pat had been hired as the permanent Public Works Director. Yes, he was offered the position and has accepted. A recommendation was made by the hiring committee and the Selectboard made a motion at the last meeting. Pat has proven himself in his time here.
- Jean also asked about the Fortin Road and the bus turn around near the Conley's house. She also said that the plow stopped plowing at the end of the blacktop and left it there. She is concerned about the safety of the kids and the bus. It was noted that Marshall Ploof is very good about communicating issues to the town and that it has been an awful winter for dirt roads because they did not stay frozen.

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

##### **1. Check Warrants**

The floor grates should be under the public works department, not the fire department. Shelley will fix that. We have not received an invoice for the street lights yet. We won't be billed from Swanton Village until the third light goes up on Monument Road. Sharon asked about the Durkee Road culvert and where those funds come from.

##### **2. Bleacher Purchase Agreement**

Motion by Sharon Bousquet to accept the quote from A+ Athletic Products, LLC for the bleacher contract in the amount of \$75,075.00 paying 25% up front with the funds coming from the arena fundraising account. The motion was seconded by Josh LaRocque – **APPROVED**. The bleachers are set for installation at the arena starting June 5, 2017.

##### **3. Personnel Policy Amendments**

Shelley has recently addressed concerns with the public works department as well as abuse of the overtime policy in prior years. They have come up with a good compromise to propose to the board. They will start to earn OT after an 8 hour work day, not after a 40 hour work week. For example, if they work a 12 hour day they won't lose their OT if they have a Friday vacation day planned or a holiday. Chris read through the other updates, referencing page 3 section 2.1 adding a physical evaluation prior to employment. This will take place at a designated facility, Occupational Health, which is the same place they would go if they are injured. On page 7, sick time was updated to be in compliance with new laws and how it can be used. On page 8 section 4.6 the Columbus Day holiday was added. In the past we have closed the office and taken a vacation day. Most other towns have it as well as our public library and it is a slow business day here. Chris clarified the OT policy in section C for call outs. It currently reads "all full time employees that are called in to work on a Saturday, Sunday or holiday will be paid a minimum of four hours pay and a maximum of actual hours worked at 1.5 times their basic rate of pay". Chris questioned whether vacation time needs to be added to this. Shelley does not think so, as it is noted as worked hours in a previous section. Pat believes everyone is on the same page now. Motion by Josh LaRocque to sign the amended personnel policy. The motion was seconded by Randy Connelly – **APPROVED**.

##### **4. Copier Contract**

Canon Solutions came to us and believes they can save us money on our lease payment for the copier. We currently are in the middle of a five year lease with Symquest. Peter at Symquest said he could lower our payment. The reason it is high is because we terminated a prior lease and some of that was rolled in to this contract. Shelley would like to pay off what we have, so she is proposing we follow through with the final two years of our contract at the lower payment. When the contract is up, we can inquire with Canon Solutions about a new Canon machine. We love the Canon copier and Symquest no longer carries them. Motion by Chris Yates to authorize Shelley Laroche to sign the amended copier contract with Symquest for \$280.06 per month (\$194.56 equipment / \$85.50 service). The motion was seconded by Sharon Bousquet – **APPROVED**. Randy asked for more information on copies and overages. The contract includes 9,000 black and

white pages per month and overages will be billed at .0095 per black and white page.

**5. Public Works Laborer – Job Description Modification**

This has been updated to include the lifting requirement and pre-employment physical. It also references essential job functions, which was not spelled out in the previous version. These changes will protect us from future claims. This new job description will be used for the posting.

**6. Dispatching Services**

Motion by Chris Yates to sign the contract covering 7/1/2017 through 6/30/2018 with St. Albans Central Dispatch at an amount of \$32,592.70. The motion was seconded by Josh LaRocque – **APPROVED**. It was noted that this was level funded from last year. John Patnode asked about the contract value and it being unchanged from last year. Shelley replied that it is broken out in the budget based on call volume between the general fund (ambulance) and the fire department.

**7. Misc.**

Sue Cota gave \$81.00 cash (bottle money) to Josh LaRocque for the arena.

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

**1. Minutes from Feb. 2<sup>nd</sup>**

Motion by Randy Connelly to accept the minutes from *February 2, 2017*, as written. The motion was seconded by Bruce Butler – **APPROVED**.

**2. Town Meeting Day Updates**

Absentee ballots for Town Meeting Day are available now. There are three ballots this year – MVU ballot (yellow); Town ballot (cherry); and Special School Bond Vote ballot (green). Town Reports are available here and at several locations around town. Please call or email Wendi if you'd like a town report or ballots sent to you. We are still waiting on the pdf from the printer. That will be loaded onto the website so people can view the report there as well. We have some new folks that have stepped up and volunteered to work at the polls as well as some familiar faces, so we will be ready to go. Polls are open 7am – 7pm on March 7<sup>th</sup> and the meeting starts at 10am.

**3. ACS / Xerox Contract Renewal**

This has been before the board previously for review and in the drop box. There were some questions from Randy, which have been answered. This is a five year contract for our land records software which is completely digitized. It has worked out very well for us and the researchers love it as well. Josh asked about other companies that do the same type of thing in our area. Wendi spent days with other town clerks that use different software prior to signing on with ACS back in 2012. This contract covers 3/8/2017 through 3/7/2022 for \$350.00 per month and annual microfilm storage of \$1.50 per roll. Motion by Chris Yates to sign the contract with ACS Enterprise Solutions, LLC. The motion was seconded by Sharon Bousquet – **APPROVED**. Wendi noted that the monthly fee to cover the contract is generated from recording fees and is self-supporting. We currently collect \$10.00 per page for recording fees and it is split up \$5.00 general fund / \$1.00 preservation fund / \$4.00 computerization fund.

**4. Certificate of No Appeal or Suit Pending**

On behalf of the Listers, Wendi presented a certificate for signature which had already been signed by the Listers. Chris read it aloud: *We hereby certify that on this date there are not any appeals pending from action of the Listers nor suits pending to recover taxes paid under protest relating to the April 1, 2016 grand list of Highgate Vermont. Given under our hands at Highgate in the County of Franklin, State of Vermont this 9<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2017.* Chris noted that it was signed by Aimee Reynolds and Peter St. Germain, and it also needs to be signed by the Selectboard. Motion by Chris Yates to sign the certificate of no appeal. The motion was seconded by Sharon Bousquet – **APPROVED**.

**5. Liquor License Renewals – The Tyler Place, Inc.**

Motion by Chris Yates to recess the Selectboard meeting and enter into the liquor control board at 8:09pm. The motion was seconded by Randy Connelly – **APPROVED**. Motion by Chris Yates to sign the three liquor license renewal applications (one 1<sup>st</sup> class liquor license and two outside consumption permits) for The Tyler Place, Inc. The motion was seconded by Josh LaRocque – **APPROVED**. Motion by Chris Yates to enter back into the regular Selectboard meeting @ 8:10pm. The motion was seconded by Josh LaRocque – **APPROVED**.

## 6. Appointed Positions

There is a lengthy list of positions that will need to be appointed at the March 16<sup>th</sup> meeting after town meeting. Letters of interest should be submitted to Wendi by close of business day on Tuesday, March 14<sup>th</sup>. The list includes: Delinquent Tax Collector (1); Tree Warden (1); Animal Control Officer (1); Assistant Animal Control Officer (1); Deputy Health Officer (1); NorthWest Regional Planning Commission Rep (2); Transportation Advisory Committee Rep (1); Clean Water Advisory Committee Rep (1); NorthWest Solid Waste District Rep (1); Development Review Board Member (2); Planning Commission Member (1).

## G. Selectboard Items

### 1. Temporary Debris Storage and Reduction Site - TDSRS

This was discussed at the last meeting. Randy gave a recap of the discussion. This will basically give Casella the ability to expand over what they currently are permitted to do and use the Highgate Transfer Station as a collection site in the event of a natural disaster. Motion by Chris Yates to authorize the Town Administrator to sign the TDSRS form for the State of Vermont. The motion was seconded by Sharon Bousquet – **APPROVED**.

### 2. Bleacher Purchase Agreement

This was previously discussed under section E-2.

### 3. Parks & Recreation Grant Application for Park Upgrades

We have \$3,000.00 that was not used for the bike grant and we don't need to use it for the bus shelter. We need a new proposal on what to use these funds for. Ty is working on getting a proposal together for a shuffleboard court. Ty would also like to use some of it to increase lighting around the arena and recreation fields. He will work with Heidi on this.

### 4. Miscellaneous

- Chris stated we are still trying to get Matt Rainville in to sign the letter regarding the easements. He agreed to come in and sign it but wanted to read through them thoroughly so he came in to get a copy and has not been back in yet to sign.
- Chris is working to get the street light changes done in the VT Co-Op Service area. He will get them the specs on what Swanton uses and ask for a proposal from them.
- There is a program available through Efficiency Vermont to look at replacing the fluorescent lighting at the municipal building with LED lighting. This would cost us nothing in the end for the fixtures themselves. We would have costs associated with an electrician. There were 246 light bulb tubes counted during the walk through. There are some external can light fixtures that need to be repaired, and new flat fixture lighting would be added to exterior entrances / exits to improve and increase lighting.
- Household Hazardous Waste Day is scheduled for May 6<sup>th</sup> in Highgate for residents (not businesses). The proposed location is at the Transfer Station property near the sand shed, as it has been in past years. A letter was prepared for Chris to sign and return to Richard A. Backer, HHW Program Coordinator at NWSWD approving the date and location of the event. Motion by Chris Yates to sign the letter and return to Mr. Backer. The motion was seconded by Josh LaRocque – **APPROVED**.
- Ty asked about a gate at the Transfer Station. Casella is looking at pricing and Chris has reached out for pricing also.

## H. Upcoming Events

Jan. 1 – Mar. 31		Dog licensing \$12 / \$16 – prices go up starting April 3 <sup>rd</sup> !!
Feb. 20		Offices CLOSED – Presidents Day
Feb. 21	6pm	Planning Commission Mtg.
Mar. 2	7pm	Pre Town Meeting Info Session / Regular Selectboard Mtg.
Mar. 9	6pm	Development Review Board Mtg.
Mar. 18	10-12	Rabies Clinic @ HVFD

## I. Executive Session

Motion by Chris Yates to enter into executive session @ 8:21pm to discuss contracts, legal and personnel where premature public knowledge would place the town or the individuals involved at a substantial disadvantage. The motion was seconded by Josh LaRocque – **APPROVED**. Motion by Josh LaRocque to exit executive session @ 9:15pm. The motion was seconded by Sharon Bousquet – **APPROVED**.

**J. Adjournment**

Motion by Chris Yates to adjourn the meeting @ 9:16pm. The motion was seconded by Josh LaRocque – **APPROVED.**

Respectfully submitted by,

\_\_\_\_\_ Wendi Dusablon, Highgate Town Clerk

Minutes approved by,

\_\_\_\_\_ Christopher Yates, Chair, Highgate Selectboard