

TOWN OF HIGHGATE

Selectboard Mtg.

December 1, 2016 @ 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 Chair, Chris Yates @ 7:32pm, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Highgate Selectboard Members – Chris Yates, Chair; Sharon Bousquet, Vice-Chair; Randy Connelly; Joshua LaRocque; Bruce Butler

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

Public / Other – Alice S. Cota; John Patnode; Eric Chevalier; George Greenwood; Jean Chevalier; Aimee Reynolds; Peter St. Germain; Andy King; Sandra Stone; Henry Rainville; Sarah Chevalier; David Desorcie

B. Public Comments

- Alice (Sue) Cota would like the board and public works department to look into lighting on Monument Road. She lives at the end which is very dark. Sue will look at the poles and get us the numbers and Andy will also take a ride down there. Sue also had questions about the listers position and if it is advertised. There is a listers position that will be on the ballot in March. Sue would also like the clerk's office hours to be changed and be open at lunch time. Chris Yates encouraged people to communicate with the clerk if there are issues with the office hours. She is an elected official and sets her own hours.

C. Lister Updates

Shirley Fecteau was not able to be here, but Aimee Reynolds and Peter St. Germain were present for updates.

1. 911 System Management

Aimee Reynolds and Peter St. Germain spoke about this issue and Shirley Fecteau was included in the conversation. As a board, they feel that they do not want the responsibility to deal with the stack of E911 forms and what service people are choosing. If residents want someone different to respond, other than AmCare, they can call MVR directly. Some residents have already been doing this. John Patnode asked what the listers are being asked to do. Jean Chevalier stated that they are being asked to give the information to the state and that it would not tie them up that much. Aimee feels it's more than that and that changes in ownership would need to be tracked and reported to the state as people move in and out of Highgate. Jean said that the number of forms submitted speak to what the citizens of Highgate desire. Aimee reiterated that they can call MVR directly. Jean feels they are hired to do a job and this should happen. Aimee explained more about what an E911 coordinator is expected to do and what the job entails. These forms are an outside the box added duty. Peter St. Germain added that the E911 job was given to the listers by a previous town administrator that no longer wanted it. Sandy Stone would like to see the Selectboard appoint someone to do the job. Chris Yates replied that the board has not received a request to take this job away from the listers. Jean would like to see an advisory vote on this topic to see who wants to go with AmCare and who wants to go with MVR. It was pointed out that at town meeting we would only get feedback from those that stay for the entire meeting. Henry Rainville asked about the town's liability with assuming responsibility associated with these forms. That is a big unknown. Aimee concluded the discussion by saying that because of the passion in the community on this topic, the listers do not want this added responsibility.

2. Municipal Properties

Shirley and Peter were part of a committee a few years ago that looked at municipal owned properties. Henry Rainville also brought this up at the last meeting. Chris read through the list of properties. Riverview Lane is an addition to this list. Henry asked if the board would support bringing this to

the voters to give them an option to sell some of these that we could part with. A committee could come to the board with a recommendation. Most of the leg work has already been done. This will have to happen quickly to meet deadlines associated with Town Meeting. Heidi has heard from multiple people that there is a need in our community for senior housing. Residents have to leave town to find alternative housing options when they can no longer stay in their homes. Previously there were senior housing apartments proposed for Gore Road / Cassidy property. The project was approved but the real estate market crashed and the project stalled. Sharon and Josh are interested in being on this committee and Henry has some other people in mind.

D. Town Treasurer Updates – Shelley Laroche

1. Check warrants

Shelley pointed out that the \$592.00 for a radio was moved from the fire department to the public works department.

2. Budgeting

There will be a budgeting meeting Thursday, December 22nd @ 6pm. Wendi will warn this. The library budget is in place, Sharon is working with Joe and the fire department, and Shelley is going to meet with Parks & Rec. on Dec. 6th.

3. Personnel policy

This past week was a holiday (Thanksgiving) and everyone opted to take a vacation day for the day after. Our overtime policy contradicts itself. One line states that OT is paid for anything over 8 hours for a day and the another line says OT is paid only on hours over 40 worked hours, not including holidays. Shelley will put the policy in drop box for the board to look at. Next meeting we can go over it and see what changes need to be made. Chris noted that the federal government has also put a hold on changing to how OT is calculated for salaried employees. Shelley will get more information on the OT issue for our policy before the next meeting to ensure we are following the law.

E. Town Clerk Updates – Wendi Dusablon

1. Minutes

Motion by Chris Yates to approve the minutes from the *executive session* meeting on *November 17, 2016*, as written. The motion was seconded by Sharon Bousquet – **APPROVED**. Motion by Chris Yates to approve the minutes from the *regular Selectboard meeting* on *November 17, 2016*, as amended. The motion was seconded by Randy Connelly – **APPROVED**.

2. Town Meeting 2017 – petitions available and deadlines to meet

Town Meeting 2017

Petitions are available for the following positions,
to be voted on by Australian Ballot on March 7, 2017

Petitions and consent of candidate forms are due to the
Town Clerk by Monday, January 30, 2017 @ 5pm
in order for your name to appear on the ballot

Petitions must be signed by 1% of Highgate resident voters
(a minimum of 21 residents) and notarized

TOWN AGENT	1 year term
MODERATOR	for the ensuing year
SELECTBOARD MEMBER	3 year term
SELECTBOARD MEMBER	2 year term
SELECTBOARD MEMBER	2 years remaining on a 3 year term
LISTER	3 year term
CEMETERY COMMISSIONER	5 year term
TRUSTEE OF TRUST FUNDS	3 year term
LIBRARY TRUSTEE	3 year term

Stop by the Town Clerk's Office to pick up your paperwork,
or contact Wendi by phone or email at
668-4697 x1 wdusablon@highgatevt.org

We have nine positions for the ballot at Town Meeting (see flyer above). Anyone interested in running will need to submit their consent of candidate form as well as a petition signed by 1% of Highgate registered voters (21 minimum) and they are due to Wendi by Monday, January 30, 2017 by 5pm. Also, any petitions for warned articles are due to Wendi by Thursday, January 19, 2017 by 5pm with a minimum of 5% Highgate registered voters (105 minimum).

3. Set dog licensing fees for 2017

Wendi does not see a need to raise fees for 2017. Currently the fees are:

<i>on or before April 1st</i>	<i>\$12.00 spay / neutered</i>	<i>\$16.00 not spay / not neutered</i>
<i>after April 1st</i>	<i>\$20.00 spay / neutered</i>	<i>\$24.00 not spay / not neutered</i>

Motion by Sharon Bousquet to keep the fees at their current rate for 2017. The motion was seconded by Josh LaRocque. Chris brought up the fact that Vonnie is requesting a pay increase for 2017 as our ACO. He wants to be sure that if that is approved we will still be able to cover our expenses. Wendi called around to surrounding towns to see how many dogs they license and how they pay their ACOs. The chart below shows a comparison of Highgate, Sheldon, Swanton and Franklin.

TOWN	# OF DOGS	ACO SALARY
<i>Highgate</i>	<i>850</i>	<i>\$3,900.00 per year + mileage</i>
<i>Sheldon</i>	<i>350</i>	<i>\$15.00 per hour + mileage + \$50.00 per transport</i>
<i>Swanton</i>	<i>686</i>	<i>\$600.00 per month + mileage</i>
<i>Franklin</i>	<i>317</i>	<i>\$500.00 per year + mileage</i>

It was decided to table this issue until we can have Shelley look and see if our expenses will still be covered. Henry asked if funds are put aside to cover legal expenses. Chris said our FCAR contract needs to be paid from the fees also. This will be on the next agenda, as we start licensing dogs all over again on Tuesday, January 3rd.

4. Misc. Updates

- The moderator position is still vacant. We did have a resident come in and inquire. Wendi gave her some literature and asked her to watch past videos from Town Meeting. There are trainings available as well. Wendi did ask her to submit a letter of interest before the holidays if she was interested.
- The Town of Highgate was selected randomly by the Secretary of State's Office for an audit of our General Election results. Wendi and John Ferland brought the election materials to Montpelier on November 23rd. We were one of six towns selected (Alburgh, Highgate, Hartland, Huntington, Rutland Town and Vernon). The audit took place on November 29th @ 10am in Montpelier. The results of the audit were accurate when compared to the tape from our tabulator on election night. Wendi will be going back to Montpelier tomorrow, December 2nd, to pick up our election bins and materials and return them to our vault.

F. Town Administrator Items – Heidi Britch-Valenta

1. 1111 Crosswalk Permit (Route 78)

The plans and request are in the board's packet. These plans are at 60% complete, so not finalized but a good image of where the crosswalk will be. There will also be signage and a flashing beacon that accompanies it. This is part of the Lamkin Street sidewalk project. Each change requires an 1111 permit. The crosswalk will be located on Route 78 on the far end of Flat Iron Park near the Irving Station and goes straight across. If we send in this letter it moves into the right of way phase and then to final plans. Chris read aloud from the letter. Motion by Josh LaRocque to sign the letter. The motion was seconded by Chris Yates – **APPROVED**. Sharon had some questions about sidewalk maintenance. David Desorcie asked if this crosswalk is to get people to the library. And if it is, then why, because the library is looking to relocate. Heidi clarified that this crosswalk will connect everything on the north side of Route 78 to everything on the south side of Route 78.

2. Misc. Updates

- Casella will be in on January 5th to talk about changes in the recycling law. There will be amendments that need to be made to our permits at the transfer station / brush depot that can't wait. One amendment is at the transfer station to be in conformance with the State of Vermont emergency operations plan. The second one is for operation of a categorical storage facility / brush depot. Our current permit at the brush depot states it is just for Highgate residents.

John Patnode asked if the state will cover the expenses associated with the permits and where the material will be coming from. John asked more questions about when Casella was here previously so he could watch the tape of that meeting. Heidi will find out that date for him.

- There was a previous request to change a road name from Riley's Way to Medor Lane. This was looked in to, and it would mean that two other land owners would have to change their 911 numbers also. This was communicated with the applicants and they have withdrawn their request at this time.

G. Selectboard Items

1. Frontage Road Solar – land donation

There are more documents and comments on this in the drop box.

2. Rainville Manure Project – infrastructure system agreement

Wednesday morning, 11/30, they had begun boring under the road and we had not yet received the insurance certificates that were requested. The two certificates were ultimately received in house later that day. Sarah Larose is not the project manager, Matt Rainville (land owner / farmer) is. The last piece to this is the infrastructure catch basins and that we have an agreement between NCRS and Matt Rainville. We will want to look through this document and something needs to be recorded in the land records to run with the property.

3. Misc updates

- Streetlights – We talked previously about putting a public notice on poles so people could see where new lighting is proposed. Chris found nine locations on Lamkin Street and two on Mill Hill. He also drove around the Luke Street area. Monument Road will be looked at as well, per Sue Cota's request. Chris wants to be mindful of light pollution so people can still enjoy the night sky.
- Holiday lights - The fire department would like to put lights on the outside of the building. The only comment from the board was that the whole building be done, not just one side. Motion by Josh LaRocque to have the fire department and public works department put lights on the outside of the municipal building. The motion was seconded by Sharon Bousquet – **APPROVED.**
- Plowing / shoveling - there was a misunderstanding with the library which brought to light an issue with the school parking lot. The PWD takes care of the school parking lot. There are questions about where liability begins and ends. Chris and Andy met with Connie Beyor and Winton Goodrich today to start the conversation. There should be a memo of understanding between the town and school on who should be covering liability. The library has been worked out as well. This last storm lasted a long time, so the library opened before it could be plowed and shoveled. Chris met with the library trustees. The roads are the priority. Same for the municipal offices, they are plowed and shoveled when the roads are done being plowed. The library asked if they need to hire someone else to plow and shovel – no, not at this time.
- Fire department floor – December 6th is the scheduled day to cut the floor. Josh talked to Tim Hardy, engineer, and it makes sense to cut the floor and dig down a couple feet. Drilling will be \$2,300.00. It will be filled in with cold patch afterwards. The trucks should be back in the HVFD bays the same night.

H. Upcoming Events

Dec. 6	6pm	Parks & Rec. Mtg. @ arena office
Dec. 7	6:30pm	Library Trustee Mtg. @ library
Dec. 8	6pm	DRB Mtg.
Dec. 15	7pm	Selectboard Mtg.
Dec. 18	10am-2pm	Santa Day @ Highgate Vol. Fire Dept.
Dec. 23	6-7:30pm	Skate with Santa @ Highgate Sports Arena
Dec. 26		Municipal Offices CLOSED
Jan. 2		Municipal Offices CLOSED

I. Executive Session

Motion by Chris Yates for the Selectboard, Town Administrator and Public Works Director to enter into executive session @ 8:14pm to discuss personnel, real estate and an employee evaluation where premature public knowledge could place the town and the individuals involved at a substantial disadvantage. The motion was seconded by Josh LaRocque – **APPROVED.**

Andy King, PWD, left executive session @ 8:30pm.

Motion by Chris Yates to exit executive session @ 10:00pm. The motion was seconded by Josh LaRocque – **APPROVED**.

J. Adjournment

Motion by Chris Yates to adjourn the meeting @ 10:01pm. The motion was seconded by Randy Connelly – **APPROVED**.

Respectfully submitted by,

_____ Wendi Dusablon, Highgate Town Clerk

Minutes approved by,

_____ Christopher Yates, Chair – Highgate Selectboard