

Mt. Vernon Selectboard Minutes  
December 21, 2020

**Board Members Present:** Sherene Gilman, Paul Crockett, Mac Hardy (Chair)

**Support Staff & Guests Present:** Kerry Casey, Melanie Knox, Ron and Mark (TV Crew)

**Call to Order.** The meeting was called to order by Chairman Hardy at 7:02 pm.

**Additions/Adjustments to Agenda.** Chairman Hardy added agenda item 10e -Discussion of printer location in the office and closing the office due to COVID19 concerns.

**Motion & Discussion on Accepting Minutes from 12/7/2020.**

***ACTION: Selectman Crockett motioned to accept minutes from 12/7/2020 Selectboard Meeting with no changes. Selectman Gilman 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion. Unanimous vote to accept minutes.***

**Introduction to Administrative Assistant to Selectboard.** Chairman Hardy introduced Melanie Knox as the newly hired Administrative Assistant to the Selectboard and gave a brief bio. Melanie will be working Monday from (7-3 or 12-9), Tuesday (7-3) and Wednesday (7-3) and looks forward to serving the citizens of Mt. Vernon.

**Zoom Meeting with Broadband Committee Representatives Regarding Community Survey.** Selectboard met via Zoom with the Broadband Committee representatives to establish communications regarding Broadband with the community via survey and educational campaign which will be available on the Town of Mt. Vernon website as well as the Broadband Committee's website and periodically highlighted in the newsletter. There are also 4 public access computers at the Dr. Shaw Library that can be used to take the survey. 1/3 of Mt. Vernon residents do not have internet capacity, about 35 miles of road. The long-term goal is that all residents have access, while the short-term goal is to make accommodations wherever possible.

***ACTION: Selectman Crockett moved to approve survey using survey monkey. Selectman Gilman 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion: Unanimous vote to approve.***

**Discussion of the Town of Mt. Vernon entering MOA (Memorandum of Association) with the Broadband Committee.**

It was suggested that the Economic Development Committee and the Broadband Committee would be a natural coupling and selectboard discussed making both committees official. Benefits outlined in the presentation included areas of increasing job growth etc. which would be a great fit for the groups working together. Selectman Gilman had questions regarding process for seeking grant monies and suggested this as another reason to make both committees "official". Treasurer Casey suggested that this would need to be approved at Town Meeting and that a line item for grant money would need to be added to the warrant in June to process funds. At some point the Broad Band Committee may ask the community to provide funding. The goal is to have subscribers pay their own way but may need interim funding for planning that could be substantial and may need to create a bond to do the build out. Selectman Crockett stated that if money were needed in FY 22, process would need to start in January, so Broad Band Committee should be included.

***ACTION: Selectman Crockett moved to approve the extension of the MOA as written. Selectman Gilman 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion. Unanimous vote to approve.***

**MMA Risk Management on 2021 WC Renewal Cost Increase.** The fee for worker's compensation through MMA has just about doubled. Treasurer Casey stated that 13% of the increase was due to an increase in salaries. The rest of the increase is due to worker's comp claims. You pay for current workers and future liabilities. Other options have been researched, but MMA continues to be the better deal.

***ACTION: Treasurer Casey is working with MMA to see if comp coverage can be changed to agree with the town's fiscal year as well as options to lower the expense.***

**Eco Maine Recycling Load Update and Contamination Levels in the Recycling Loads.** Mt. Vernon has received a warning regarding contamination levels. Discussion on kind of contamination and need for staff to monitor. Selectman Crockett mentioned that Town of Readfield hired 2 temps to watch over the recycling. Currently 2-3% contamination. However, if levels rise to 6-10%, it will cost taxpayers an additional \$35/ton.

***ACTION: Selectboard will speak with Carol about Transfer Station Committee doing some education and possible article in the newsletter.***

#### **Other Business:**

**Mail slot, crash bar, bulletin board** for entry way into Town Office. Much discussion regarding accommodations to allow citizens to drop mail off safely during shutdown of lobby due to COVID-19 concerns. Back steps are dangerous with a 7" rise. Discussed adding a mail slot and a drop box as well as sealed envelopes for leaving documents inside the front door. A mail slot could be installed on left side of door using Municipal Maintenance funds. Capitol Improvement funds may be available as well. Mail slot should be under \$1,000 so would not require 3 bids. Ben has been hired and paid half of the money to purchase bulletin board supplies. Check on status.

***ACTION: Selectboard will get a quote for installing mail slot and bring back to Selectboard for approval as well as check with Ben for status update on bulletin board installation and discuss at next meeting.***

**Generator** discussion took place. Needs tires so it can be moved outside and started up to assess functionality.

***ACTION: Selectman Crockett will order tires this week for the generator and once put on assess any issues with the generator.***

**Sign Discussion** included Selectman Gilman asking Treasurer Casey for a breakdown of cost of sign. Chairman Hardy was interested in the bottom line, what will it cost the town. Approximately \$1700; \$1100 for sign and \$600 for digging trench for conduit. This money will come from Capitol Improvement Fund. Chairman wanted to be sure Dig Safe will be contacted prior to digging.

***ACTION: Selectman Crockett moved to accept Ben's proposal to install the sign paid for by the grant, slightly amended. Chairman Hardy 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion. Vote was unanimous.***

**Printer Discussion included a discussion on closing the office due to COVID.** Lobby will be closing until January 11<sup>th</sup> or further notice, depending on COVID situation. Signs are being made for the office and Nate will be placing messages for December 24<sup>th</sup> closing as well as COVID closing on the town website. All vendors, including trash, UPS, repairman etc. will not be allowed in lobby for time being. Only essential workers will be allowed to enter. Administrative Assistant will be working with Kevin at Budget Document Technology to get a quote for a 2<sup>nd</sup> printer and report back to Selectboard.

***ACTION: Selectman Gilman moved to close the office to the public on December 24<sup>th</sup> and to reopen the office to the public on Monday, January 11<sup>th</sup>. (Depending on COVID situation). Business will still be conducted, and the mail, UPS, etc. will be left in front door space. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Selectman Crockett. Vote was unanimous.***

**Vote on Budget for Dam.** There have been high expenses with the rebuilding of the Wings Mill area, but still money in reserve. Normally, \$15,000 is added to the budget each year prorated on shore frontage. Currently the draft budget “as is” amounts to \$38,934.

***ACTION: Chairman Hardy moved to approve the draft budget as is. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Selectman Gilman. Vote was unanimous.***

**New Paid Leave discussion.** Much discussion regarding paid leave as it impacts on appointed positions versus elected officials. W2 issues as opposed to W9’s. New contracts will be coming out this year.

***ACTION: Selectboard should revisit this issue at a later date.***

**Donations to Town of Mt. Vernon.** Chairman Hardy gifted a keyboard, mouse, recorder, and refrigerator to the Town of Mt. Vernon.

***ACTION: Selectman Gilman motioned to accept these gifts. Selectman Crockett 2<sup>nd</sup> motion. Vote was unanimous.***

**Motion and Adjourn.**

***ACTION: at 9:07 pm Selectman Gilman motioned to adjourn. Selectman Crockett 2<sup>nd</sup>. Vote was unanimous.***