

# **Mt. Vernon Selectboard Meeting Minutes**

**July 19, 2021**

**1997 North Road, Mt Vernon, ME 04352**

**Board Members Present: Anna Libby, Paul Crockett, Mac Hardy (Chair)**

**Support Staff & Guests: Alice Counts (Administrative Assistant), Ron Lockwood (Ch 7), Tom Ward (Aging in Place), Kerry Casey (Treasurer), Joshua Morse.**

## **Sign Weekly Warrant**

- SB Crockett noted that Dana Dunn and his wife still have Computer Tablets checked out in their names and this equipment needs to be returned to town inventory. SB Hardy will call Jason Beckler.

## **Meeting Called to Order**

- SB Meeting was Called to Order by SB Hardy at 7:00pm

## **Additions and/or Adjustments to the Agenda**

- SB Hardy added Nomination Process MMA Board Election

## **Motion to Accept Minutes for the 07-05-2021 Minutes and Discussion/Adjustments**

- Motion by SB Crockett to accept meeting minutes of 07-05-21, 2nd by SB Libby. Motion Carried, Vote was 3-0. **PASS**

## **MMA Board Election**

- Motion by SB Crockett to vote for all MMA candidates running, 2nd by SB Libby. Motion Carried, Vote was 3-0. **PASS**
- Alice Mailed this on 07-20-21.

## **Vote for Fire Chief**

- Motion by SB Crockett to Appoint Jason Beckler Indefinitely as the new Fire Chief, 2<sup>nd</sup> by SB Libby. Motion Carried, Vote was 3-0. **PASS**
- By State Statute the Fire Chief may employ all municipal firefighters, appoint a deputy and other officers in a municipal fire department and remove them for cause after notice and hearing.

## **Sign Tax Commitment Papers**

- Mil rate will be lowered from 17.5 to 17.
- A vote by RSU 38 is to take place on 07-21-21 regarding new funding coming in from the state. The calculations we are paying 258,587.43/month, was lowered to 202,798.44/month, a reduction of 16,899.87/month. All four towns accept the payment schedule set up for each town. If we drop the tax rate even further there is concern it would raise even higher the following year. The town could mitigate the increase in taxes by leaving the excess in the overage fund. Mac will contact MMA to verify the higher amount can be authorized but pay the lower amount and use the excess amount deposited into the undesignated fund at next year's town meeting to lower that year's taxes.
- Motion by SB Crockett to accept the tax rate calculation as modified tonight to correct the total assessment pending review by the tax assessor to keep the mil rate at 17, 2nd by SB Libby. Total

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assessments were increased to 4,888,001.69. Alice to contact Roger for approval and/or further changes. Select Board members need to come into the Town Office to sign the Commitment Paper.

### **Broadband Meeting – Taken off Calendar**

- Meeting may take place at the Mt Vernon Beach – SB Hardy mentioned that arrangements for events on the Beach should be made either through the Beach Committee or the Select Board.

### **Safety Inspection Notice –**

- We are required to begin Safety inspections of all town buildings/structures in exchange for a 7% discount on MMA Worker's Compensation Insurance. It was determined that SB Hardy and Alice Counts will perform the initial Safety Inspection and then require each department to assign someone to complete monthly inspections thereafter. Spot inspection may be done periodically at the discretion of SB Hardy. Alice Counts sent all Fire Department checklists to Ron Lockwood upon his request during the meeting.

### **MMA question of Access for Right of Way –**

- Joshua Morse brought in all previous emails related to his landlocked property and Right of Way requests. He bought a 10 acre lot where the right of way was not clear. Josh mentioned that John Harriman told him the access used to be via the old school house on the corner of the cemetery, however the school house has long ago been torn down. Josh's lawyer advised him that his best bet would be to measure the nearest access to a road which happens to be off North Road. This best option is across town property next to an unmaintained brush area. This would give Josh access to his property for maintenance of his wood lot. Josh will contact his lawyer for the language necessary to further his case. SB Crockett will then forward the information to MMA for their comments and recommendations. If given the go ahead, this action would need to have town's approval at the next Town Meeting in June 2022. Easement can be limited to certain restrictions. Access by necessity was a term used which need to be further defined.

### **Planning Board and Appeals Board Inconsistencies –**

- CEO Butler discovered inconsistencies on how business is conducted on both the Appeals Board and the Planning Board. The Chairman of each Board should designate someone to mail Abutter Notices and publish Public Hearing notices in the newspaper as well as post at 3 locations around town, such as the Community Center, the Mt Vernon Post Office, the Mt Vernon Town Office, the Mt Vernon Library and/or Flying Pond Variety. These fees are then passed down to the property owner who brought the action, along with any other fees associated with this action. There should be consistency between boards. It appears we got off the track many years ago and we need to realign to the Land Use Ordinances for the Town of Mt Vernon. Alice Counts is currently performing these duties for the Planning Board.

### **The Land Use Ordinances –**

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- The LUO Manual has not been updated for over 2 years. Alice Counts was approved to start this task with the help of SB Crockett. All changes to date will be incorporated into a new version and published upon Select Board's review of the completed project.

### **Receipt of Gifts Clarification –**

- There currently is no policy regarding accepting gifts however it gives the appearance of favoritism and should be avoided.

### **Community Concepts –**

- received a request for letter of support so the org can obtain financial backing from USDA. Their mission is to provide affordable housing for low income persons. Their deadline for this letter is 07-23-21. Motion by SB Crockett that SB Hardy sign the paperwork, 2<sup>nd</sup> by SB Libby. Motion Carried, Vote was 3-0. **PASS**
- Alice Mailed this on 07-20-21

### **Appointments**

- Motion by SB Hardy to appoint Nancy Henika to the Beach committee. 2<sup>nd</sup> by SB Crockett. Motion Carried, Vote was 3-0. **PASS**

### **Trio Software.**

- When can we get everyone on board with Trio? The taxpayers were promised to have everyone migrated to this system over a year ago. This is a liability issue for the Town. Select Board needs to research how many towns are currently using Trio for budgetery. SB Hardy stated "At the very least, the taxpayers are owed an explanation".
- Kerry Casey, Treasurer listed the following as reasons this transition to Trio has not yet taken place.
  - Trio has No documentation, no manual or online help. Trio will email you a tip sheet when you call with a problem.
  - Lack of data validation during data entry. Lets you enter things and then says the warrant doesn't have an account. In calling Trio, they explain I cannot fix it, they 'take the data', 'fix it', then send it back. Fastest turn around is 3 days. Select Board needs to review.
  - Exporting to excel is difficult, the data becomes skewed without any columns or rows. It requires a lot of data manipulation to put data into a useable format.
  - Errors are induced easily, but not fixable by user.
  - Lack of ability to enter details. Memo field only allows 20 characters.
  - Invoice numbers, no way to differentiate multiple areas for one vendor, requiring issuing multiple checks.
  - Not data entry friendly. Most of the data entry screens require clicking, searching, and do not allow for repetitional data entry.
  - Data pulls up by Vendor number instead of name. One either has to know the vendor number or do a search.
  - Not a real accounting package. Need to be able to do bank reconciliation, etc. Accounting firms do NOT recommend Trio for budgetery.

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SB Crockett is on board for the online version of Trio provided the issues mentioned above can be mitigated or corrected. SB Crockett wants to move off of the in house server. SB Crockett agreed to reach out to Nadine Campbell and Allison Witchell. Kerry Casey agreed to work with SB Crockett and Trio to see if they can mitigate the issues.

### **Dump Yard Trash –**

- Can we open up the Yard Trash area via the snowmobile path, to allow 24/7 access and lessen the Transfer Station traffic on the regular trash days? We could rope or chain off that area from the rest of the Transfer Station and use the alternate snowmobile path. SB Crockett said there was too much liability.

### **Select Board Televised Meeting –**

- Audio quality is poor and extremely low. Checked with the Ch 7 Team and was told this is an issue with Spectrum who has been extremely slow to resolving the issue. The Channel 7 Team has a work around with their live streaming and is now on YouTube.com. You can search for Mt Vernon Maine Select Board Meeting and the date.

### **Blake Hill and Cotter Hill Bridge Replacements Decision**

- Estimate is 35,230.00 instead of 200k+. The cost for the 20 ft Box Bridge crossing package is \$35,230.00 and guaranteed for 40 ton with a liability warranty. It includes all pre-cast concrete pieces, on site pouring of concrete footings, guardrail, installation and delivery. Lee Dunn will have further information regarding this improvement and bids regarding the Bridge Improvement and Bean Road tarring project.

### **Aging in Place Candidate for award of 6-month contract recommendation –**

- This contract is fully funded by the Maine Community Foundation grant. Tom Ward presented the committee's recommendation, Laurie Rodrigues, from the 3 out of 4 Licensed Social Worker candidates interviewed. The Aging in Place committee currently serves 76 people, 56 of whom live alone, with the majority being widows. Funding will be thru the first month of next year. The position includes 8 hours a month for 4 months, to start August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021. Laurie currently works for Belgrade Regional Health and is an LCSW. The committee needs to submit a proposal, to expand a similar project to Mt Vernon, Vienna, and Fayette, with funding for 2 years. Motion by SB Crockett to accept the recommendation of the Triage subcommittee, for Laurie Rodrigues, 2nd by SB Libby. Motion Carried, Vote was 3-0. **PASS**

### **Other Business**

- New Town Website. This will take a major effort in manpower and funding to get updated and online. The Town's money would be better spent on purchasing a custom built website which we can maintain through the Admin access and is up and running in 4-6 weeks. This price is approximately \$3k with a yearly maintenance of \$1300 and free technical support. Select Board to take another look at the feasibility of this product and vote next meeting as to whether to bring this before the town at the next Town Meeting in June 2022.

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- Clean the AC Filter in Selectmen's Office. Train Alice Counts or Nancy Dunn on the process so this can be accomplished. SB Crockett cleaned the filter during the meeting with relative ease. Alice will clean the filters in the other office areas.
- Computer and Printer Issues – Nate Savage was able to fix these issues and update drivers.
- Mail Chimp Training. SB Crockett will meet with Alice Counts before the August Newsletter so we can fully implement this process.
- Guest Password at Town Office for Residents Use – There is no reception at all for the Town Residents when they are visiting the Town Office and need connection. The SB will look into the feasibility of doing this but there was some doubt as to whether the Town Office signal was strong enough to be able to offer this feature.
- Delivery of Town's Dividend Check for MMA Worker's Compensation on 07-22-21. This is a non-issue as a face-to-face meeting with MMA was deemed to be unnecessary.
- Note: Transportation Funding Update. This was informational only.
- Fireworks – Noise Ordinance. The SB members took this paperwork home and any comments will be considered at the next SB Meeting.
- Motion by SB Hardy for Kerry Casey to sit in on Executive Session, 2<sup>nd</sup> by SB Libby at 9:05pm. Motion Carried, Vote was 3-0. **PASS**

Motion to go to Executive Session by SB Hardy, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Libby at 9:06pm. Motion Carried, Vote was 3-0. **PASS**

### **Executive Session Pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A. §405(6)(B) Personnel Matters**

#### **Actions/Motions as a Result of Executive Session**

- No Action from Executive Session

#### **Motion to Adjourn**

- Motion by SB Hardy to Adjourn, 2<sup>nd</sup> by SB Libby at 9:24pm. Motion Carried, Vote was 3-0. **PASS**