

Minutes of the February 13, 2012 Meeting of the Board of Selectmen.

Present: Neal Fox, Bill Richards, Joe De Freitas, Delbert Cloud, Alec Hastings, Kevin Dirth, Kristin LaFromboise, Molly LaFromboise, Gwen Timmins, Justin Cassidy, Stephanie Cassidy, Tina Timmins, Geneva Gaiko, Bill Hall, Laura Rubenis, Leslie Silberberg, Eleanor Griffin, Mary Floyd, Ola O'Dell, Lucien Hinkle, Eric Benson, Amy Danley-White for the "Herald of Randolph", and the following members of the Royalton Selectboard: Peggy Ainsworth, Ernie Amsden, and Phil Gates.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by Chairman Neal Fox, the Board first reviewing and approving the weekly payroll and payables. The minutes of the January 23, 2012 meeting of the Board of Selectmen were approved by motion of Joe De Freitas, seconded by Bill Richards and unanimously carried.

Chairman Fox welcomed the seventh grade Whitcomb Jr./Sr. High School students and their advisors, and Alec Hastings introduced the students with the request that they explain the purpose for their visit. Molly LaFromboise, Gwen Timmins, and Justin Cassidy each presented information regarding the class having authored and published a book pertaining to the community's response to the tropical storm Irene disaster. The class has determined that one half of the proceeds realized to date from sale of the book would be donated to the Town's Irene Relief Fund, and the representatives of the class were present to give the Board a check in the amount of \$1,300.00. The Board and the members of the public present applauded this commendable action, and sincere thanks were extended from the Selectboard to the students.

The following items were acknowledged and placed on file: (1) Planning Commission agenda for its meeting of February 15, 2012, and (2) regional planning commission minutes of December 14, 2011. It was agreed by the Board members that matters relevant to the Transportation Advisory Committee (agenda items 3 and 4) would be deferred until arrival of the Town's TAC representative, Eric Benson.

Budget Status Reports for the Town General Fund, the Water Department, and the Wastewater Department were reviewed for the current year in progress. Several line items showing impacts of tropical storm Irene were noted. No action was required or taken.

Pertaining to business of the Water Department, the Board executed documents for renewal of a line of credit with Mascoma Savings Bank, the Note being in the principal amount of \$45,000.00, at an interest rate of 2.25 percent per annum. This note has a maturity date of December 31, 2012. Provision to make this renewal was by motion of Bill Richards, seconded by Joe De Freitas and unanimously carried.

A request for use of the Town Hall was then taken up, this being from Kep Taylor on behalf of the White River Valley Players. The dates requested are for a rehearsal on the evening of March 29th, and a public performance on March 30th. By motion of Joe De Freitas, seconded by Bill Richards and unanimously carried, it was agreed to waive the daily rental fee of \$250.00 for the rehearsal, thus providing that the total fee would be \$400.00 inclusive of heat and cleaning.

Mary Floyd asked if a review would be made of the fee schedule in the near future. The Board members agreed that this would be done, and suggested it would be taken up subsequent to the Annual Town Meeting.

A second request for use of the Town Hall was delivered by Amy Danley-White at this time, the request being from the Bethel Business Association for its annual meeting on April 4, 2012. It was agreed that Neal Fox would negotiate a reasonable fee sufficient to cover overhead. It was also agreed that rental information should be posted in the "Bethel Courier" as was offered.

With the time now being 7:30 PM, Chairman Fox welcomed the representatives from the Royalton Selectboard. At Mr. Fox's request, Delbert Cloud and Phil Gates provided a brief history of the development of the solid waste program from its inception in 1970 to the current time. Cloud also provided an update on the status of the embezzlement issue, a

guilty plea having been submitted to federal court by the defendant; an insurance claim has been filed with the Towns' insurer. Bill Hall suggested the matter should have come to light quicker through reports which could be generated from the software programs that were used. Cloud noted that the matter had been discovered by the Town and that reports confirming suspicions had to be subsequently developed by the software companies using parameters requested by the Town. Laura Rubenis asked for clarification of the employees' responsibilities and to whom they are accountable. Cloud advised that they are employees of the Town of Bethel, and that they are provided with a "full slate" of applicable policies and procedures manuals. Peggy Ainsworth spoke of her wish to see the facility kept to a higher standard of cleanliness; Ola O'Dell concurred with that suggestion. It was agreed that an interim on-site foreman should be hired to oversee the operations and assist in bringing the facility into a more desirable physical condition while plans are being developed for the long-term operation of the program; motion accordingly was made by Ernie Amsden, seconded by Joe De Freitas and unanimously carried. Focus was placed on the fact that the solid waste program has grown extensively over 40+ years, and Cloud encouraged the Boards to look at alternative ways to structure the program which might be much more appropriate given the multitude of managerial, financial, regulatory, and environmental issues which have to be encompassed. He presented the Boards with an initial list of five options which could be evaluated, and it was agreed that a meeting date would be set shortly after Town Meeting to start planning for the future. The Royalton Board departed at 8:50 PM, and the Bethel Board returned to its scheduled business.

Chairman Fox welcomed Eric Benson and asked if he would update the Board on the subject of prioritization of transportation projects in the area. Reference was made to items 3 and 4 of the evening's agenda. It was also noted that some of the projects are driven by recovery from tropical storm Irene. No action on these matters was required or taken by the Board, as the material was informational only.

Delbert Cloud then provided the Board with a status report on the AOT Enhancement Grant for streetscape work on Church Street and North Main Street. The Town's engineer has confirmed that the newly offered grant funding will be necessary to complete the priority portions of the scope of work being developed. Despite the Town's hope of seeing the work start in the construction season of 2012, program officials are certain work can not start until 2013.

Cloud then proceeded to provide an update on the FEMA Hazard Mitigation Buy-out Program, the USDA Emergency Watershed Protection Program, and the FEMA Public Assistance Program. He emphasized the need to start addressing bridge repair and replacement projects which were deferred in the autumn in light of the pressing need to restore other public infrastructure. The last "Irene Recovery" matter discussed was the methodology to disperse funds from the Town's "Irene Relief Fund." An example "application form" was reviewed, this being obtained from the City of Rutland. The form was found to be appropriate in the Board's estimate, and the motion was made by Neal Fox, seconded by Bill Richards and unanimously carried, to have the Manager find out if it would be acceptable to the Rutland officials for Bethel to use this as the basis for its own purposes.

The following communications were received and placed on file: (1) the regional planning commission's February newsletter, (2) a "Summary" of the Community Recovery Meeting held in Sharon on January 17, 2012, (3) a February 10, 2012 note from Louise Ferris-Burt advising that Eleanor Griffin has expressed interest in serving on the Human Services Advisory Committee, (4) a February 8, 2012 letter from Laura Rubenis advising that she has interest in serving on the Planning Commission, and (5) a February 13, 2012 memo from Janice Punger re. Water Department public notices and water quality concerns.

It was also known by the Board that Heidi Nikolaidis has interest in serving on the Human Services Advisory Committee. It was determined that Heidi should be offered an appointment to that committee, motion accordingly being made by Bill Richards, seconded by Joe De Freitas and unanimously carried. Regarding the existing vacancy on the Planning Commission, the Board members agreed that the vacancy should be publicized to provide a broader awareness of the opening before scheduling interviews with applicants as is the custom.

At the request of the Town Clerk, the Board assumed its role as the local Board of Liquor Control Commissioners. A first class license was approved for both Tozier's Restaurant and Cookadoodle Pizza Café; a second class license was approved for Champlain Farms, as well as a license for sale of tobacco products.

With no further business to conduct, the motion to adjourn was made at 10:50 PM by Bill Richards, seconded by Joe De Freitas and unanimously carried.

Neal Fox

Bill Richards

Joe De Freitas