

Minutes of the March 28, 2011 Meeting of the Board of Selectmen.

Present: Neal Fox, Bill Richards, Joe De Freitas, Delbert Cloud, Greg Fedak, Suzie Fedak, Mary Floyd, Geneva Gaiko, Kevin Flynn, Nick Nikolaidis, Heidi Nikolaidis, Louise Ferris-Burt, and Amy Danley-White for the "Herald of Randolph."

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 March 14, 2011 meeting of the Board of Selectmen were approved by motion of Joe De Freitas, seconded by Bill Richards and unanimously carried. A 2nd class liquor license and tobacco license were approved for Locust Creek Store, and a 1st class cabaret license was approved for The Bethel Depot, Inc.

The following minutes were reviewed and placed on file: the Planning Commission minutes of March 16, 2011; the Regional Planning Commission minutes of January 26, February 17, and March 9, 2011; and the Transportation Advisory Commission minutes of January 27 and March 10, 2011.

The Board then reviewed documents pertaining to the existing "Village Center Designation" which had been previously established for promotion of improvements to private properties in the downtown. The designation is now coming up for renewal on the five year cycle, and the Board members concurred that the application for renewal should be submitted to the Agency of Commerce and Community Development, which administers the subject program. The Board asked Delbert Cloud to bring information to the next Board meeting about the criteria used by the State for determining the location of boundaries for such districts.

Delbert Cloud provided the Board with information about the Town's highway signage inventory and the anticipated costs that will have to be borne by the Town to come into compliance with various size and reflectivity requirements under the "Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices." Full compliance is not required until 2018, but Cloud recommended piecemeal replacement of signage annually by certain categories in order to mitigate the cost impact. The subject will be formally addressed at the next budget preparation cycle.

Chairman Fox then welcomed Nick Nikolaidis, and others present, to talk about the Town Hall. The subsequent discussion included a wide range of subject matter. Mary Floyd suggested that the fee structure for rent of the facility might be too high, and Suzie Fedak advised that the Historical Society had in fact lost money at its last "fundraiser" in part because of having to pay the applicable rental fee; she wondered if there should be provision for more flexibility in the fee schedule. The Board members expressed concern over making changes this quickly because there has only been a very brief window of time so far to gain experience about such matters as operating costs and rental demand. Nonetheless, as expressed by Chairman Fox, the rental fees are considered to be of a negotiable nature which can be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the Selectboard; anyone wishing to discuss the fee for a rental should submit a request to the Town Manager, and the matter will be brought to the Board for consideration. Through the course of discussion, several other matters were resolved: (1) Mr. and Mrs. Fedak will continue to install "picture rail" in the conference room and in the foyer, with the Town providing all materials for the purpose; (2) the conference room will also have "chair rail" installed to help protect the walls, (3) there are too many chairs in the conference room, and Delbert Cloud will make provision to set the room up to better advantage; (4) Greg Fedak will be equipped with his own keys for access to all areas of the building since he is helping with custodial tasks; (5) the dishwasher should be hooked up in the kitchen, and (6) better designation should be made for handicap accessibility. Suggestions were also made regarding safety for both vehicles and pedestrians, maintenance of grounds, and protection of the lower windows from snow accumulations.

Town Hall discussion concluded at approximately 7:20 PM, and Chairman Fox welcomed Louise Ferris-Burt, Chair of the Bethel Board of Listers. Ms. Ferris-Burt explained why the Board of Listers still does not agree with the Vermont Department of

Taxes about the proper value for the so-called “coefficient of dispersion” applicable to the Town’s property valuations, even though a modest (lesser) change in the value has been offered by the Department of Taxes in response to the Town’s appeal. In view of the explanation offered by Ms. Ferris-Burt, the motion was made by Bill Richards, seconded by Joe De Freitas and unanimously carried, to proceed with the appeal. Ms. Ferris-Burt will ascertain when a hearing can be scheduled.

Delbert Cloud then acquainted the Board with several requests for use of the Town Hall. These were all found acceptable; the Board requested additional information be made available re. the theatrical program proposed by the School District for a week in August.

Delbert Cloud next updated the Board about several matters relevant to the solid waste program. Advertisement is currently being done to obtain some additional part-time help as would fill present vacancies. Several changes in operations, and the traffic pattern at the facility, will be undertaken as soon as circumstances allow; some of these depend upon State of Vermont regulations that are being developed (as is the case with electronics recycling) and other matters are simply dependent on the weather. The application for a permit to install a water supply at the facility is still being reviewed by the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources.

The following communications were next reviewed and placed on file: notice from the University of Vermont of the forthcoming “Town Officers Education Conferences,” a March 2, 2011 letter from Senator Patrick Leahy re. federal truck-weight regulations in Vermont, and a list of dates associated with litigation in which the Town is a party over the “Old Stage Road to Rochester.”

With no further business to attend, the motion to adjourn was made at 9:32 PM by Bill Richards, this being seconded by Joe De Freitas and unanimously carried.

Neal Fox

Bill Richards

Joe De Freitas