

Minutes of the April 23, 2012 Meeting of the Board of Selectmen.

Present: Neal Fox, Joe De Freitas, Bill Hall, Delbert Cloud, Abbie Sherman, Geneva Gaiko, Mary Floyd, Eleanor Griffin, and Jennifer Marx for the "Herald of Randolph."

With the absence of Chairman Neal Fox, the meeting was called to order at 6:20 PM by acting Chair Joe De Freitas. The Board reviewed and approved the weekly payroll and payables. Bill Hall asked for additional detail to be included in the Selectboard minutes of April 9, 2012, re. the evaluation of matters which should be given greater attention in disaster readiness planning; amended minutes will be provided at the next regular Board meeting. An April 20, 2012 memo from Susan Bartlett of the Governor's Office was noted, this confirming that the cellular communications tower referenced by the Governor at the Legislative Breakfast on March 23, 2012 was, in fact, the tower proposed at the Town Garage property on Sand Hill Road. The Planning Commission minutes of April 18, 2012 were reviewed and placed on file.

With the time now being 6:25 PM, Bill Hall made the motion to adjourn the meeting such that the Board could attend an awards ceremony at the Fire Station wherein the Randolph Lodge of the Patrons of Husbandry were to honor the Fire Department for its work at the time of the Irene flood event. This motion was seconded by Joe De Freitas and thus carried. The meeting was reconvened at the Town Office at 6:55 PM by acting Chair Joe De Freitas. The meeting was initially opened for public comment or inquiry, but with none forthcoming, the Board returned to the order of the agenda.

The minutes of the April 17, 2012 meeting of the Development Review Board were then reviewed and placed on file, as were the regional planning commission's minutes of March 28, 2012.

A separate communication from the regional planning commission entitled "East Central Vermont Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy" (CEDS) was then discussed. Joe De Freitas suggested the Town should comment in support of Item 19 in the "Infrastructure" section re. the need for better communications capabilities in the region.

Notes from Assistant Town Manager Abbie Sherman re. an April 13, 2012 meeting with officials from the Vermont Agency of Transportation re. the planned paving of the Town's class 1 highway were discussed next. Neal Fox arrived during this discussion at 7:05 PM. Several points were agreed upon by the Board members which will be conveyed to the VTrans officials: centerline and edgeline markings would be done with Type 1 tape inlaid with the paving, the space between the edgeline and curbing in the street "bend" by Richardson's and the narrow area by the Depot Restaurant will be cross-hatched to prevent parking, parking will be restricted for one parking space length at the ends of crosswalks, parking spaces will not be marked, sidewalk ramps will be of cast iron/steel, and granite curbing will not be painted.

The Board next reviewed and discussed an April 16, 2012 letter from the Bethel Historical Society pertaining to rental rates for the Town Hall. Delbert Cloud provided the Board with information about carrying costs for the building for the current year. It was agreed that some additional information is needed from the Historical Society, and discussion should be held with members of the Historical Society when further time has passed enabling more information to be available on carrying costs of the building.

Delbert Cloud reported that the family of Leo Griffin has asked if the Town Hall could be used for about two hours at a reduced rate as a gathering place for people attending funeral services on June 2nd. Neal Fox expressed hesitancy to reduce the term of rental and fee; he did agree with Mary Floyd, who suggested the rate schedule should be reviewed by a broader cross-section than just the Selectboard in order to be sure the needs of the community were fully taken into account. Mary Floyd further suggested that the rate could be pro-rated for the family; Bill Hall did not agree with this idea as he believes individual, separate decisions along the way should be avoided. For lack of an approvable alternative, the rental rates remain as originally established.

Mary Floyd then reported on the meeting of the “Bethel Watershed Study Group” which was held on April 17, 2012. She outlined several considerations identified by the Group pertaining to the area watershed, various resources which have been identified to help address matters requiring further attention, and noted additional planned meeting dates and projects to be undertaken, including a potential “Green Up Day” project for the Town’s consideration.

Abbie Sherman then provided a summary of the weekend workshop she had attended re. the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program. Joe De Freitas provided information about the Red Cross Shelter Workshop program he had recently attended. Since both programs do provide a viable and effective format by which citizens can participate in disaster planning and response, Bill Hall encouraged promotion of both programs as the means to incorporate and train citizens interested in helping with the Town’s response capabilities. Hank Lambert’s notes from the meeting at the Town Hall on April 7th were also discussed at this time. Mary Floyd suggested that an additional meeting moderated by Mr. Lambert would be an excellent way to inform people of the two programs.

The Board then took up the next agenda item, this being dissemination of the Town’s Irene Relief Fund. Neal Fox observed that, for the most part, people having suffered the greatest losses had been recipient of the greatest financial assistance from various sources. He indicated his reservations about trying to draw distinctions between applicants, and since there is only a small amount in total available (\$9,987.00) he had even considered the merits of giving every applicant an equal share of the fund. Joe De Freitas wondered if there might be a chance of obtaining additional donations. Bill Hall wondered if any amount should be saved in the event of future applications, and if dividing the available amount equally would be construed as a “cop-out.” Regarding the latter concern, Neal Fox said he didn’t believe so because each applicant did incur a serious plight. After due consideration, motion was made by Bill Hall to divide the existing fund equally among the nine applicants; this motion was seconded by Neal Fox and unanimously carried.

The following communications were then reviewed and placed on file: (1) an April 16, 2012 notice from the Irene Recovery Office re. anticipated availability of funding for the 25% local share of HMGP Buyout costs, (2) an April 11, 2012 notice from the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation re. Nitrogen monitoring at the State’s wastewater treatment plants, and (3) a copy of the Calendar Year 2011 “Consumer Confidence Report” for the Town’s Water Department.

Joe De Freitas asked if any further development has occurred re. communication services at the Town Hall – the Town is awaiting a quote for services from EC Fiber.

Chairman Fox suggested that the Vermont Telecommunications Authority should be asked to inform the Governor’s Office via Susan Bartlett that there is no concern at the Town Garage property over environmental contamination which effects the placement of a communications tower at that location – the delay is due to lack of a contracted service provider (for other reasons) according to the Telecommunications Authority. Delbert Cloud will request such clarification.

With no further business to attend, the motion was made by Bill Hall at 9:08 PM to adjourn to Wednesday, April 25, 2012 at the Bethel Town Office to meet in joint session with the Royalton Selectboard to conduct business associated with the solid waste program; this motion was seconded by Joe De Freitas and unanimously carried.

Neal Fox

Joe De Freitas

Bill Hall