

Minutes of the September 10, 2012 Meeting of the Board of Selectmen.

Present: Neal Fox, Joe De Freitas, Bill Hall, Delbert Cloud, Abbie Sherman, Carl Russell, Geneva Gaiko, Laura Rubenis, Valdis Rubenis, Lisa Campbell, Eleanor Griffin, Fay Ford, Sandra Ford, 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 first order of business was to open the meeting for public questions or input on matters of civic interest. Carl Russell offered thoughts pertaining to use of internet social media and websites. Some new initiatives are being made to try to constructively use the technology available with the hope that an informed citizenry will be a more involved citizenry. Chairman Fox commented that he had heard some people have difficulty attending Selectboard meetings due to the time of day, and he encouraged people to send written communications as an alternative. It was noted that considerable time would be required of Town employees if the Town tried to operate "interactive" internet sites, that time generally not being available.

Laura Rubenis asked when the Town officials would be prepared to offer further rationale re. the "alternate project" use of FEMA funds in lieu of replacing Bridge #49. Chairman Fox advised that this is an agenda item and discussion could be held when that subject is reached.

Amy Danley-White and Lisa Campbell both spoke of the continuing gunfire over the last weekend, particularly on Sunday. Neal Fox suggested that it seems to be less frequent since public discussion has been occurring about it. Lisa Campbell wondered if there might not be an increase forthcoming with the advent of hunting seasons.

With no further matters of public comment forthcoming, the Board took up the order of the agenda. The minutes of the August 27, 2012 Selectboard meeting were approved by motion of Bill Hall, seconded by Joe De Freitas and unanimously carried. The minutes of the Parks and Public Spaces Committee meeting of August 21, 2012 were also reviewed and placed on file.

Delbert Cloud reported on the status of plans for the Church Street – North Main Street "Enhancement Grant" project which will be providing streetscape upgrades. Given the Agency of Transportation's plan to re-pave Church Street in the near future, every effort is being made to complete the streetscape work in advance of that. Conceptual plans are being reviewed by the State of Vermont and the Federal Highway Administration.

Budget Status Reports for the Town General Fund and the "Enterprise Funds" were next reviewed and placed on file. No action was required or taken by the Board on this matter.

Delbert Cloud then gave a brief summary of how the costs associated with tropical storm Irene recovery work were being addressed within the fiscal years 2012, 2013, and 2014, much uncertainty still existing re. final project eligibility under the involved financial assistance programs. The Board members concurred that this is apparently the case all over the State, noting in particular the State's own uncertainty in restoring facilities in Waterbury, Vermont.

Cloud next reported that the Town's application for grant assistance to install a generator at the school, for better equipping that facility as an emergency shelter in times of disaster, has been approved by the Vermont Department of Public Safety. The grant offering will require matching funds, but will still save the Town a considerable amount of money. The Board members concurred that the grant will be helpful to the Town's efforts.

The matter of undertaking "alternate projects" in lieu of using FEMA funds to replace Bridge #49 was next taken up. Carl Russell asked about the intent to use some of the funds to do work on the subject highway to improve safety; the Board confirmed this is part of the intended work. Laura Rubenis expressed concern over using flood recovery

money to do “non-flood related” projects, referencing that many residents impacted by Irene are still looking for any assistance as may be available. Joe De Freitas and Delbert Cloud each replied with the fact that “public assistance” money from FEMA can not be used to provide “individual assistance;” however, if appropriate projects serving a broad based public need are selected as an alternative use of the money, a corresponding amount of tax dollars will not have to be raised in the future for the projects.

The Board then reviewed the “Statistical Analysis” of water sampling done at the former Bethel/Royalton landfill site. This is an on-going monitoring program, the report showing favorable trends continuing in terms of contaminants in the surficial aquifer.

The Board changed the order of the agenda, to take up miscellaneous matters prior to discussion of the water service to customers on Pleasant Street/Watershed Road. It was first noted that mediation for the litigation about the Old Stage Road is scheduled for Thursday, September 13, 2012.

A bill of materials for the design of an informational sign to be placed at the Town Hall was next reviewed, this having been prepared by George Burnham and submitted by Nick Nikolaidis. The Board members considered the design to be appropriate, and would like to see more particulars. It was agreed that discussion should be held with interested parties about where to place the sign, and whether, or not, lighting for both the sign and the flagpole could be incorporated.

A letter complimenting the Town on the downtown flower baskets from Dorrie Kehoe was forwarded to the Board by Heidi Nikolaidis. Several communications from school officials were also received expressing appreciation for the Town crew’s assistance with work at the school athletic fields.

Delbert Cloud shared a notice from the auditing firm Fothergill Segale & Valley, this advising that the firm could not perform an audit of fiscal year 2012 due to its own staffing constraints. It was agreed that this is unfortunate due to the extensive amount of background work an auditing firm has to do to become familiar with a Town’s activities. Nonetheless, an alternate firm will be sought in the immediate future.

It was noted by communication from the Vermont Transportation Board that the Town of Barnard has filed an appeal to the Town of Bethel’s decision to do an “alternate project(s)” in lieu of replacing Bridge #49, this subject having been discussed earlier on the evening’s agenda. A response will be filed by the referenced date.

A September 10, 2012 memo from the Natural Resources Board was then reviewed. It was agreed by the Board members that the Town’s letter in support of the assisted living facility proposed by Gifford Medical Center in Randolph Center should be transmitted to all statutory parties in the subject Act 250 proceeding.

The Board next reviewed information from planning Commission Chair Andrew Delaney re. an application which could be submitted for Municipal Planning Grant funds to help with the next update of the Town Plan. After due consideration, motion was made by Bill Hall, seconded by Joe De Freitas and unanimously carried, to approve the following “Resolution For FY 2013 Municipal Planning Grant”:

**“WHEREAS**, the Municipality of Bethel, Vermont is applying for funding as provided for in the FY 2013 Budget Act and may receive an award of funds under said provisions; and

**WHEREAS**, the Department of Economic, Housing and Community Development may offer a Grant Agreement to this Municipality for said funding; and

**WHEREAS**, the municipality is maintaining its efforts to provide local funds for municipal and regional planning purposes or that the municipality has voted at an annual or special meeting to provide local funds for municipal and regional planning purposes,

**Now, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**

1. That the Legislative Body of this Municipality enters into and agrees to the requirements and obligations of this grant program including a commitment to match funds if the request is over \$8,000 (over \$15,000 for consortia);

2. That the Municipal Planning Commission recommends applying for said Grant;  
*Andrew Delaney (Signature)*

3a. That Neal Fox, Selectboard Chair, who is either the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), as defined by 10 VSA §683(8), or is a Select Board Member, the Town Manager, the City Manager, or the Town Administrator, is hereby designated to serve as the Municipal/Authorizing Official (M/AO) for the Grants Management On-Line System, Intelligrants, and to execute the Grant Agreement and other such Documents as may be necessary to secure these funds.

3b. (Alternate Authorizing Official for redundancy) That Delbert Cloud, Town Manager, who is either the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), as defined by 10 VSA §683(8), or a Select Board Member, is the Town Manager, the City Manager, or the Town Administrator, is hereby designated to serve as the Municipal/ Authorizing Official (M/AO) for the Grants Management On-Line System, Intelligrants, and to execute the Grant Agreement and other such Documents as may be necessary to secure these funds.

3c. That Chris Sargent, Senior Planner, is hereby designated as the Grant Administrator, the person with the overall Administrative responsibility for the Municipal Planning Grant program activities related to the application, and any subsequent Grant Agreement provisions.”

The Board then returned to the 9<sup>th</sup> item on the evening’s agenda, to consider if an alternate water supply should be proposed for certain water system customers on Pleasant Street and Watershed Road. The Board members concurred that Delbert Cloud should propose to the nine customers the exact scenario as was set forth in the list of alternate projects, item 7 of the Town’s list to FEMA.

With no further business to attend, the motion to adjourn was made at 8:22 PM by Bill Hall, seconded by Joe De Freitas and unanimously carried.

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Neal Fox

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Joe De Freitas

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Bill Hall