

Minutes of the November 15, 2012 Meeting of the Board of Selectmen.

Present: Neal Fox, Joe De Freitas, Delbert Cloud, Susan Fedak, Greg Fedak, Lisa Alexander, Gary Alexander, Fire Chief David Aldrighetti, Nick Nikolaidis, Geneva Gaiko, Eleanor Griffin, Marjorie Blanchard, Constable Greg Timmins, and Amy Danley-White for the "Herald of Randolph."

This meeting was held in lieu of the meeting as would have been held on Monday, November 12, 2012, in observance of Veterans Day.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by Chairman Neal Fox, the first order of business being to receive public comment or inquiry regarding any matter of civic interest. Amy Danley-White asked if there is any knowledge of when the communications tower at the Town Garage site will be constructed. Chairman Fox replied that the tower is being built at this time and that electric service has been installed to the site location, and the concrete base has been placed and is curing to attain strength before the above ground structure is set. It is anticipated that the tower structure will be assembled before the month is over; no date certain has been given for placing the facility into service.

Susan Fedak informed the Board that the Historical Society, having provided sale of refreshments for the Vermont Fiddle Orchestra's performance at the Town Hall, is donating the proceeds to the "piano restoration fund." Coupled with donations collected at the event, which the Vermont Fiddle Orchestra is also donating to the fund, she conveyed a check to Chairman Fox in the amount of \$254.00. Ms. Fedak also reported on the Art Show event which she had coordinated at the Town Hall during the autumn season, noting that over 300 people had visited the exhibit. She referenced how this had also contributed to visits at the Historical Society Museum and patronage of Town businesses. Many have encouraged the thought of having another show in the springtime. She provided the Board with a check in the amount of \$269.00 as the Town's portion of proceeds from the show.

Eleanor Griffin expressed concern that the Board may not have reviewed the final form of the Recreation Committee minutes for August and September. Delbert Cloud will confirm if there may be matters of substance which the Board needs to be updated on.

Fire Chief David Aldrighetti requested the Board's permission to hold an open public forum to discuss with citizens the subject of emergency preparedness. He referenced the fact that many people do not realize the extent of preparation done by the Town officials or the Fire Department. Given the Fire Department's role at times of any emergency evacuation or its role as "First Responder," he would like to have the Fire Department host the discussion, but at a time in which the Selectboard members and the Town Manager could all attend. Motion was made by Joe De Freitas, seconded by Neal Fox and thus carried, to grant permission for such a public forum; he suggested that the Saturday following the Red Cross "shelter training" program might be a good time, to be able to get it scheduled before the holidays. Tentatively, it was thus agreed that the forum would be scheduled for Saturday, December 15, 2012 at 9:00 AM at the Town Hall.

Chief Aldrighetti then informed the Board that Power and Telephone Supply Company (44 Hull Street, Randolph, Vermont) had asked its employees to participate in a fund drive held at the one year anniversary of tropical storm Irene, with the proceeds to be donated to the Fire Department Safety and Equipment Fund. He presented the Board with the check he had recently received from the Company, in the amount of \$1,000.00, with the accompanying message, in part: "We can not thank you enough for all you and your Volunteers did during this relief effort, your efforts not only helped your Town, but the towns that were unreachable – Rochester, Stockbridge, Pittsfield, Hancock."

Chairman Fox then recognized Nick Nikolaidis as the first appointment of the evening's agenda. Mr. Nikolaidis informed the Board that the Historical Society will be holding its annual meeting on January 20, 2013 at the Town Hall, and it is planned that a portion of the program will be to hold a public viewing of the painted theater curtain which has

recently been re-installed at the Hall. Chris Hadsel of Curtains Without Borders will be the guest speaker, she having been instrumental in restoration of Bethel's curtain as well as many other curtains in the Northeast. Mr. Nikolaidis concluded with the expression of hope that all Selectboard members and the Town administration could attend.

Chairman Fox then took up the second scheduled appointment of the evening, this being the conduct of a Hearing re. a recently issued "Health Order" submitted to Romaine Potwin/Marjie Blanchard setting forth corrective work needed at a rental property on Camp Brook Road. Ms. Blanchard initially explained that her father is ill, and she is the person to be considered accountable in this matter and any follow-up. She took exception to the inclusion of a letter from a friend of the tenant, suggesting the letter is not objective. Mr. Fox agreed to remove the letter from any submittal to the State Board of Health. Ms. Blanchard proceeded to explain that her intention is to make necessary repairs at the property when they are the landlord's responsibility, but the tenant has not cooperated in allowing workers to do the work. She added that the tenant has not even allowed her (Ms. Blanchard) to inspect the property. She asked if the Board could help in resolving this matter since she is willing to have required work done. Fire Chief David Aldrighetti suggested that the State Fire Marshall would likely assist in the matter, and that Ms. Blanchard should contact that office whenever she is prepared to have repair workers start. It was also acknowledged by the Town Constable that he might assist at such time as well. The Hearing concluded at approximately 6:45 PM and a brief recess was held while Ms. Blanchard provided copies of legal documents validating her authority to act upon these matters to Mr. Fox for his file.

Before returning to the business of the agenda, Joe De Freitas provided further information to the public about the Red Cross Shelter Training program to be held at the Whitcomb High School Library from 9:00 AM to 12:00 on December 8, 2012. He expressed his hope that many people would attend because the Town needs people who have special skills as well as volunteers willing to assist however possible. He added that there would be no obligation created for anyone by attending the training.

Turning then to the order of the agenda, motion was made by Joe De Freitas, seconded by Neal Fox and thus carried, to approve the Selectboard minutes of October 22, 2012 and October 24, 2012. Delbert Cloud provided the Board members with copies of the Town of Barnard's decision not to contest the Bethel Board's action to pursue "Alternate Projects" instead of replacing Bridge #49 on Old Route 12.

The following committee minutes were then reviewed and placed on file: (1) Planning Commission of October 17, 2012, (2) Recreation Committee of October 15, 2012, (3) Local Emergency Planning Committee of October 26, 2012, and (4) Transportation Advisory Committee of October 16, 2012. No action was required or taken by the Board on these items.

The Board then examined plans from the Vermont Agency of Transportation for resurfacing of Vermont State Route 107 from within Stockbridge to the point of intersection with the designated work area for the River Street Bridge replacement project. It was agreed that there did not appear to be any adverse impacts on the interests of the Town of Bethel. Motion was made by Joe De Freitas, seconded by Neal Fox and thus carried, to authorize Neal Fox to accordingly sign the "Project Review Sign Off" on behalf of the Board.

Budget Status Reports for the Town General Fund and the Enterprise Funds were next reviewed. Stemming from this information, Delbert Cloud explained financial needs of the Town associated with the recovery work from "Irene" and purchase of trucks for the Highway Department. Motions were subsequently made by Joe De Freitas, seconded by Neal Fox and thus carried, to approve the following: (1) a sixty day extension of the \$360,000 line of credit taken out for sponsorship of the USDA Emergency Watershed Protection Program and the Hazard Mitigation Home Buy Out Program, (2) a sixty day extension of the line of credit for FEMA and Federal Highway public facility projects, which is now possible to reduce to \$3,500,000.00 in principal, and (3) borrowing in anticipation of three additional annual appropriations to the Highway Equipment Fund in the principal amount of \$225,000.00.

Delbert Cloud explained a request he had received from the local snowmachine club for permission to do some trail improvement work on class 4 Town Highway #9 (Winterberry Lane). The work would consist of cutting some trees, and could not be done unless the involved property owners were to also approve the work. Motion was made by Neal Fox, seconded by Joe De Freitas and thus carried, to approve the request, subject to concurrence by the property owner(s).

Information was then reviewed about an invasive plant known as Black Swallow-wort which has been found in Central Vermont, this information having been submitted by the Windsor County Forester, Jon Bouton. Joe De Freitas suggested that the information should be provided also to the Town's Parks and Public Spaces Committee for its members' awareness.

The Board next considered information submitted by the Economic Development Revolving Loan Fund Committee re. a commercial loan. It was agreed that more information is necessary before the Board can support the placement of the loan; motion was made by Joe De Freitas, seconded by Neal Fox and thus carried, to table the matter until additional information is available.

With no further business to attend, the meeting was adjourned at 8:22 PM by motion of Joe De Freitas, seconded by Neal Fox.

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Neal Fox

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Joe De Freitas

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Bill Hall