



**Town of Berlin
Municipal Office Building
108 Shed Road**

**Berlin, VT. 05602
Regular Select Board Meetings
1st & 3rd Monday of Each Month**

Monday, January 4, 2016

5:30 PM-Budget Work Session

7:00 P.M.-Selectboard Meeting

Selectboard Members: Ture Nelson, Chair; Jeremy Hansen, Vice Chair; Roberta Haskin, Secretary; Brad Towne and Pete Kelley. Present: Dana Hadley, Town Administrator; Diane Isabelle, Town Treasurer. All items are unanimous unless otherwise noted.

APPROVED MINUTES

Budget Work Session

The Board met to continue review of the FY'2017 Budget. Town Administrator Dana Hadley noted that there were two requests received since the last meeting. One was a request from the Recreation Committee for an additional \$300 to cover the cost of one additional month for a porta let for season at the ball field and a request from Bruce Richardson, of the Emergency Management Committee for additional funding in the amount of \$2,672 to cover the cost of a storage shed, two notebook computers, flash drives, safety vests and an allowance for lodging while at training.

The Board discussed the Emergency Management Committee's request. The Board asked if a better option for storage would be to rent a storage unit. Selectboard Member Hansen suggested that there might be available space to store items at the Riverton Fire Station. The Board discussed removing the request for a storage shed, authorizing the purchase of one notebook computer, six flash drives, reducing the additional request to \$887. The total proposed budget for this line is \$2,087 that includes \$1,200 for Emergency Telephones.

The recreation budget was discussed. The request has been amended to \$5,132.86. This amount includes a proposed amount of \$900 to deposit back to the Recreation Department's reserve account. There was discussion and support for the recreation department to purchase some of the suggested items from the reserve fund and not replenish the withdrawal from the reserve fund that was made to purchase materials for the baseball field this fall. This brings the amount requested to \$3,025. After further discussion the Board will fund the recreation department using the Recreation Reserve Account.

Review continued with the revenue budget.

There was discussion regarding the PILOT program that involves state property. The amount received last year was less than expected. There is a question in regard to the agreement that the Town has with the state for the amount of pilot for the state hospital. Miscellaneous revenue includes a revenue of \$125,000 in anticipation of a loan for the six wheel truck requested in the Capital budget.

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Proposed expenditures:

Administration:

The Board discussed the letter received from the Town Clerk asking for salary increases for the Clerk and the Assistant Clerk. The Board discussed that that Clerk's office is not under their jurisdiction. The Board is responsible to set what the total compensation for the clerk's office is. If the wage lines are combined the clerk will have the say how it is to be distributed. A 2% increase is proposed for Town employees. The board agreed to increase the clerk's department wages by 3%. The wages budget was set at \$61,500. The Board asked that amount for the computer in this budget be reinstated in the amount of \$1,350.

Discussion continued with budget review of remaining departments by lines. There was discussion relative to the ambulance contract. The contract expires as of June 30, 2016. The Town will send a letter to advise that the Town wish to extend the contract for another year.

Due to the 7 p.m. hour the Chairman opened the Regular Selectboard meeting with the budget work session to continue after the Regular Meeting.

Selectboard Meeting

Call to Order

Meeting called to order by Chair Nelson.

Changes to Agenda

Town Administrator Hadley asked to add two items. One a discussion of the local options tax and the other Mark Youngstrom of Otter Creek Engineering to discuss the water project. Added after public comment.

Public Comment

None.

Mark Youngstrom- Otter Creek Engineering

Youngstrom began by informing the board that the water system is now serving customers. He provided highlights/key dates of the water system in Berlin from 1994 to the present to explain what has been done. Towne asked how many customers are currently receiving water. There are currently 3. Nelson asked what the plan is for in the spring. Youngstrom explained that Munson Earth Moving will be back once the weather permits and begin the remaining work. There are a few water mains that have not been charged with water at this time. Towne asked when private consumers would be put on the line. Youngstrom answered by explaining it is the responsibility of individuals to connect to the line. The town will pay the fee for each customer's water permit from the state. It will be up to individual customers to make arrangements for the water connection at their property. Towne also asked about connecting to the Hedges system and about overflow. Youngstrom said that when the easements needed are procured the connection will be made, most likely in the spring.

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Treasurers Report

Town Treasurer Isabelle reminded the board about a tax sale on January 19. As discussed at the last meeting, Isabelle looked into what other towns do when a property is not bought through tax sale. Barre Town was the most helpful and explained that they buy the property for the amount of what taxes are owed. They repurpose or resell the property. Montpelier does not have tax sales according to correspondence with them. East Montpelier has a similar provision in place but has not had to use that provision in the amount of time that the person who was talked with has been working for the town so there was no further information.

Approval of Licenses, Permits, Vouchers, and Applications

Hansen moved to approve payroll warrant number 16-14 for December 13, 2015 – December 26, 2015 in the amount of \$46,462.74. Also accounts payable warrant number 16g16 with checks 15805-15834 in the amount of \$32,516.43. Seconded by Towne. Passed unanimously.

Local Options Tax

As town meeting deadlines are approaching, the decision needs to be made about a second hearing and proposals. Nelson asked if a second public hearing should be held and suggested that it should. There was agreement and scheduling was discussed. It has been added to the January 18 meeting from 6pm-7pm. Towne asked if there had been public support/opposition besides from businesses. Responses were discussed. The board continued discussing the local options tax and taxes in general.

Items Regarding PACE Received From Energy Committee Chair

Town Administrator Hadley provided the board with an email that had been sent to him regarding PACE. Hadley talked with Bruce Johnson in Montpelier. Funding for the program is not provided by the Town. East Montpelier has been part of the program for 5 years and they have not had a request to participate in the program. The criteria for a loan makes it difficult to receive one and often it is easier for people to go through their bank. The responsibilities required of the town were discussed and concluded with the board deciding not to include this program on the Town warning.

Proposed Event Ordinance to Replace Amusement Ordinance

Hadley explained that the purpose in rewriting the amusement ordinance is to highlight safety regulations in such a way that applies to the types of events that are being applied more accurately than in the existing ordinance. They discussed the draft provided by Hadley and changes that should be made. Areas of discussion were fees, safety enforcement, and violations.

Town Credit Card Use Policy

The auditors suggested having a policy. A draft of a policy was discussed. There is one town credit card. Wording was added to prevent people from entering the number in an email and there was discussion about how many people should have the ability to make purchases. Hadley will redraft the policy to address other town charge accounts.

Update to Purchasing Policy

The highway division uses purchase order system, and Hadley added a line that explained it is at the discretion of the department to use purchase order system. It is a clarifying addition to the policy. Hansen asked why purchase orders are optional instead of mandatory. There was discussion that it is because it has not been mandatory per policy wording. Discussion continued about adding a dollar amount at which a

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purchase order would be necessary. Nelson asked what the auditor's concern was. Isabelle explained that the auditor thought that, as she read it, everyone was supposed to be using it but it was not read that way by others. Hadley will investigate what other towns' requirements are for purchase orders.

Town Administrator Report

A letter was received from the city of Montpelier advising that they are doing a timber harvest on their property in Berlin.

DRB meeting on January 19, they will be considering two applications. The proposal is to develop property on Junction Road for a warehouse. The property is on a flood plain.

There have been issues in the garage with the floor drain, so Hartigan was called to pump it and it is full of sludge. An environmental agency took a sample and it is not terrible material. Prices are being gathered to find out what it will cost to dispose of the material and to test surrounding area for contamination.

Currently the number is around \$5,800. A decision is not needed immediately, but Hadley wanted the board aware of the issue and process that has been started. There is a possibility of having an oil separator so that some of the material could go into the sewer and the hazardous material separated out for disposal.

Approval of Minute(s) of Previous Meeting(s)- 12/21/15

Hansen moved to approve the minutes of the Monday, December 21, 2015 budget work session and regular selectboard meeting with aforementioned change. Seconded by Towne. Passed 4-0 with 1 abstained.

Round Table

Nelson reminded the board about the luncheon on January 12 with legislators and that the RSVP date is approaching. Nelson is attending that luncheon. Nelson also asked if there was a follow up with Aegis Energy. Hadley responded that there has been and he will request a copy of what has been presented to the public service board.

Kelley asked about pond access and the survey that had been started. The survey is completed and it is currently in the hands of fish and wildlife to decide what is the next step.

Hansen asked if there was an update on the storm water bill. Hadley is still uncertain why there had not been a bill received since 2011.

No executive session.

The board resumed budget session.

For the Select Board:

Bethany A. Towne

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Budget Work session Continuation

Review of proposed expenditures continued. The first section of the budget work session ended with discussion of the Police Budget and continued with the highway department. In general highway the \$10,000 increase for road paving was discussed. Plans are to resurface Fisher Road. The Town will apply to the Agency of Transportation for a paving grant to help with this cost. There was an additional

\$4,000 budgeted for guard rails. The Capital Budget includes a new Police Vehicle and a six wheel highway truck. The Police Vehicle is budgeted at \$35,000 and the highway truck at \$165,000 of which will be partially offset by a loan in the amount of \$125,000.

Motion: Hansen/Towne to adjourn.

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Respectfully Submitted,

Dana Hadley, Town Administrator