

Village of Manchester, Vermont
Draft Minutes of Annual Meeting
July 9, 2018

Trustees, Chairs, Officials and Staff Present: President Brian Knight, Trustees Jim Lewis and Bill Mariano, Clerk/Treasurer and Tax Collector Julia Arvin, Legal Counsel Rob Woolmington, Accountant Ron Smith, Auditor Charles Pufahl, Development Review Board Vice-Chair Craig Powers, Planning Commission Chair Nina Mooney, Assistant Clerk/Treasurer and Secretary Missy Bell-Johnson, Town of Manchester Police Chief Mike Hall

Absent: Trustees Andrea Ross and Tom Deck

President Knight opened the meeting at 7:02 pm and welcomed all in attendance. He mentioned that the meeting was being recorded, asked everyone to turn off their cell phones and encouraged everyone who would be speaking to properly identify themselves for the record.

President Knight continued by saying that this was the annual meeting for the year 2018/2019 and was it the 75th year an annual meeting had been called in the Village of Manchester.

The dedication of the annual report to Alan Mowrey and Adam Cole, the Village Road Crew, was mentioned. President Knight stated that they deeply deserved special recognition for their hard work and dedication in maintaining the Village roads over the past, long and rough, winter.

The meeting continued with the articles to be voted on.

Article 1: To hear and act upon the reports of the Village Officials and the Chair of the Development Review Board and Chair of the Planning Commission.

President Knight mentioned that all reports were published in the Annual Report and asked for questions and/or comments.

Louise Riviuccio commented that the financial reports were lacking explanation.

Craig Powers motioned to approve Article 1 and Richard Moore seconded the motion and so voted.

Article 2: To vote a specific sum of money to defray the expenses of the Village for fiscal year 2018/2019 and vote on appropriations.

Louis Riviuccio mentioned that she was in agreement that the past winter had been a tough one and that it was not unusual that certain line items had gone over budget. She then raised objections to a number of items on the budget and commented that the increases proposed

were unjustified, extravagant and astronomical. She spoke for several minutes listing several line items under the Highway Maintenance section of the budget and requested to know why there was a proposed increase for each item. She also mentioned that the use of salt on the Village roadways was wasteful, and the plowing overzealous.

Richard Moore asked Ms. Riviuccio to pause her questioning and comments so that the trustees could answer some of her questions.

President Knight explained the budget process and noted that the trustees' goal has always been to minimize taxes for the residents. He also mentioned that every item in the Highway budget was reviewed with the road foreman and discussed at length with the trustees. Julia Arvin also commented on the budget process and stated that all meetings pertaining to the budget were open to the public.

Ms. Riviuccio asked why the cracks in the roadways slated for repaving could not be filled in instead.

Richard Moore voiced his appreciation of the road crew's efforts and said the expenses incurred were warranted.

Keld Alstrup questioned the extent of the increase on the overtime budget and mentioned that too much salt was being used.

Ms. Riviuccio asked for a review of the budget to trim expenses.

Richard Moore motioned to pass the budget as proposed in Article 2. Charlie Pufahl seconded the motion. The ayes passed the vote.

Article 3: To set a date on which taxes shall be payable, and to impose a penalty of 8% for delinquencies, and to charge the maximum statutory rate of interest of one-percent (1%) per month on all delinquent taxes for the first three months and one and one-half percent (1.5%) per month thereafter.

Ms. Arvin asked that the due date for taxes be September 14, 2018 and that the deadline for receipt of tax payments be 5:00 pm on that date with government postmarks on the due date not considered as timely payment of taxes.

Keld Alstrup motioned to pass Article 3 as proposed. Craig Powers seconded the motion all voted in favor.

Article 4: To authorize the Trustees to borrow in anticipation of taxes such sums as are necessary to finance the affairs of the Village.

Ms. Arvin elaborated on the need for this request and stated it stems from the fact that the Village fiscal year does not line up with the tax year which can lead for the need to borrow money. She also commented that the normal borrowing procedure involved borrowing from Village accounts and did not necessarily involve a bank loan.

Richard Moore motioned to pass Article 4 as written and Charlie Pufahl seconded the motion and so voted.

Article 5: To elect/re-elect Officers for the ensuing year:

President Knight introduced Nina Mooney as a candidate for trustee and thanked Andreas Ross for her service as trustee. He continued by proposing the following slate of officers for the ensuing year:

President – Brian Knight (1 year term)
Trustee - Jim Lewis (2 year term)
Trustee - Nina Mooney (2 year term)

Julia Arvin – Clerk, Treasurer and Tax Collector (1 year term)

Auditors (all one year terms): Charles Pufahl,
Ariel Rudiakov and Amy Swinarton

Anthony MacLaurin – Bennington County Regional Commission
Representative (1 year term)

Robert Johnston motioned for approval of the slate of officers as presented. Richard Moore seconded the motion and so voted.

Article 6: To transact any other business that may properly come before the meeting.

Craig Powers asked about the status of the solar powered speed sign that was on Route 7A south. Chief Hall explained that the sign was moved because data collected by the sign indicated that drivers were becoming accustomed to a lower rate of speed at this location and the sign could be better used at an alternate location.

Marian Haines asked if the budget reflected a sum to cover retrofitting the street lights for holiday decorations. President Knight answered by saying that this topic had been discussed previously and there are no plans for the Village to participate in holiday lights at this time. He continued by saying that Ms. Haines' appointment with the Planning Commission provided her an opportunity to change the current position on holiday lighting but that he felt the project should be driven by the residents.

Louise Riviuccio asked about the construction of the new traffic island in front of the Equinox Hotel. Trustee Lewis provided the history behind the decision to move the islands, the reasoning for the project and the background of the plan. He also noted that the anticipated result would be safer traffic flow and safer use of the crosswalks in this area.

Ms. Riviuccio asked why the state or the Equinox Hotel was not assisting the Village with the cost of the project. Mr. Lewis mentioned that the Equinox had volunteered to lengthen its driveway in response to the project.

Keld Alstrup reiterated a question from the 2017/18 Annual Meeting about the status of the Oprah House. There were no representatives from the Equinox Hotel available to answer the question.

Mr. Alstrup then asked about the paving of the lower portion of River Road. President Knight provided that the paving in this area may be addressed depending on progress with the other projects during the year.

President Knight asked for any additional comments or questions and none were voiced.

Craig Powers motioned to end the meeting. Richard Moore seconded the motion and so voted.

The meeting ended at 7:47 pm.

All officials present at the meeting and the newly appointed were then sworn in by the Village Counsel, Rob Woolmington.