



Village of Manchester, Vermont

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Regular Meeting

Village of Manchester Board of Trustees

Monday, August 31, 2020 at 4:30 pm

Bennington County Courthouse

45 Union Street, Manchester

In Attendance: President Orland Campbell; Trustees: Jim Lewis, Bill Mariano, Nina Mooney and Brian Maggiotto; Clerk, Treasurer and Tax Collector Donald Brodie, BOT Assistant & Asst. Clerk & Treasurer Missy Johnson

Public: Catherine Bryars Bennington County Regional Commission; Anthony MacLaurin; Marian Haines; Craig Powers; Tom Deck

President Campbell brought the meeting to order at 4:30 pm and started by reviewing general meeting protocol.

Trustee Mooney motioned to approve the Pre Annual Meeting Minutes. Trustee Mariano seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

Trustee Maggiotto motioned to approve the Annual Meeting Minutes and Trustee Mariano seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

Trustee Lewis motioned to approve the Post Annual Meeting Minutes and Trustee Maggiotto seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

Catherine Bryars of the Bennington County Regional Commission (BCRC) provided information Regarding support and a funding match for a Municipal Planning Grant. The grant is being applied for in order to obtain a traffic study of the Seminary Ave./Route 7A and West Road intersection. The grant will utilize the Village Town Center designation to provide a priority status for this grant. The value of the grant, if awarded, is \$15,280 (covering 90% of the cost.) The Village of Manchester's match would be \$1,390 (10% of the cost.) Catherine proposed that she would be the grant administrator. Missy Johnson would serve as the municipal authorizing official and Eric Scott as the alternate authorizing official for the Village. Various questions regarding the grant and the project were posed and answered. President Campbell read the resolution as provided by Ms. Bryars (attached herein.) Trustee Lewis moved to approve the resolution. Trustee Mooney seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

The Board then moved on to discuss current traffic matters and issues at the Seminary Avenue, West Road and Route 7A intersection. A photo of the traffic on Seminary Avenue at noon was provided to the Board and it was mentioned that it took the road crew 45 minutes to get from the intersection to the Village Highway Garage and back to the intersection. President Campbell mentioned that there were circumstances that may have created this traffic “disaster”, including: Prospect Street being closed to through traffic because of the water project, COVID safeguards at BBA, and it being the first day of school for the year. Trustee Mooney mentioned that she witnessed three busses on Franklin/Dillingham around 8:00 am. She mentioned that this road is too narrow, with no shoulder, and no sidewalks. With people speeding and buses using this route to get to the school it is very dangerous for pedestrians to walk in this area. She mentioned the previously approved flashing traffic light that would make the roads one-way at certain times of the day and expressed that this was not going to resolve all of the problems on these streets, but that it was a start. Trustee Lewis expressed his frustration with the traffic problems in this area. Trustee Maggiotto said he witnessed the problem and asked just how much pressure it would put on the intersection to close Franklin and Dillingham off.

President Campbell reiterated the previously mentioned list of factors that may have contributed to the extreme traffic and mentioned that he would like to see a meeting with the BOT and BBA officials. Placing “dips” strategically placed along Franklin and Dillingham was mentioned as a way to keep speed down.

The manner in which the flashing traffic light and one-way traffic on Franklin and Dillingham which was approved at a February, 2020 budget meeting was discussed. President Campbell noted that there was no warning that this vote would be taking place and therefore he questioned the legality it. Trustee Mooney mentioned that the BOT had voted on the matter but that it would still need to be placed for a vote as an ordinance and that vote would be warned. She continued by asking if the BOT wanted to take this matter to the next step and vote on it to make it an ordinance.

Anthony MacLaurin mentioned that BBA had removed all of the signs indicating overflow parking for Equinox Pond was available in the BBA parking area. He mentioned that the parking in this area was causing problems again on the side streets near the pond access and asked if this issue could be discussed with BBA along with the traffic matters. President Campbell mentioned that given the current events it may be difficult to make long term plans for this area.

Trustee Maggiotto agreed with President Campbell regarding the reasons for the traffic issues on Seminary Ave., but stated that only half of the student body is at the school at a given time and that traffic issues would be going on throughout the day as opposed to congestion early in the day and in midafternoon.

Trustee Mooney mentioned that she would like to see some of the BBA Trustees at the meeting with the Village and that in previous issues discussed only with Mark Tashjian were not resolved. President Campbell voiced that he would like to see the discussion start with Mark Tashjian and if the issues are not resolved then discuss same with the BBA Trustees.

A list of issues was formalized for discussion with BBA: Buses, Parking Lights, Greening, Parking Overflow for Equinox Pond and Traffic & Speed.

President Campbell will follow up with BBA to schedule the meeting.

The Board then moved on to the next item on the agenda: The Equinox Opera House. No update on the demolition was available. The road crew was given authority (verbally from Equinox Management) to take down the steps and remove the debris from the right-of-way. President Campbell expressed the need to close the sidewalk in this area as debris is known to fall from the roof. Trustee Mooney said she did not want the sidewalk closed. There was discussion on the ordinance that would apply to a dangerous and unsafe building. Also discussed was the possibility of the Village taking control of the building and then charging the Equinox for the expense of removal. Craig Powers asked the Board to confirm the State of Vermont's involvement because of bats residing in the Opera House. Trustee Maggiotto asked if closing the sidewalk would be a step in the direction of obtaining control of the building.

The Board then moved on to discussion of the organizational discussion and appointments to various offices, boards and committees. Trustee Mariano moved to:

- 1. Re-appoint Jim Lewis as Road Commissioner and Tree Warden for a one year term;**
- 2. To re-appoint Hong Campbell, Peter Campbell, Terry Findeisen, Larry Kolloff to the Design Advisory Committee for one year terms;**
- 3. To appoint Katie Pinkus as a newly appointed member to the Design Advisory Committee for a one year term;**
- 4. To re-appoint Gordon McClellan, for a two year term on the Development Review Board;**
- 5. To appoint Tom Deck as a newly appointment member to the Development Review Board for a period of two years;**
- 6. To re-appoint Marian Haines, Audrey Kolloff and Renee Walker to the Planning Commission for two year appointments;**
- 7. To appoint Rich Heilemann, as a newly appointed member to the Planning Commission for a period of two years.**

Trustee Mooney seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

President Campbell moved to re-appoint Anthony MacLaurin as Bennington County Regional Commission representative. Trustee Mooney seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

Clerk, Treasurer and Tax Collector Donald Brodie asked for a motion to appoint Missy Johnson as assistant clerk & treasurer for a term of one year. President Campbell made the motion. Trustee Mooney seconded the motion and all voted in favor

It was mentioned the Development Review Board was short one appointment. It was agreed that this vacancy would be addressed in the immediate future.

Discussion on village employee compensation and benefits began with President Campbell providing background regarding the approval of staff pay increases and lack of a record of the end

of the budget meeting in which the topic was discussed. Trustee Lewis indicated that the increases were included in the annual budget that was approved on August 10, 2020. Mr. Brodie indicated that it would be best to have the increases mentioned in the minutes. President Campbell opined that rates of compensation for employees is not something that is readily available to all. It was agreed that Julia Arvin, who was serving as treasurer at the time and was at the budget meeting would provide Mr. Brodie the approved wage increases for the staff.

Mr. Brodie then brought up the subject of having the Village of Manchester Grand List (GL) available on the Village website. He provided that providing information that can be found on the GL takes up time and resources that could be better used elsewhere. He continued by saying that he spoke with Town of Manchester representatives about this subject and that while there appears to be some resistance at the Town level, there are staff that support the idea. Questions were posed regarding ramifications of this decision. Trustee Mooney moved to make the Village of Manchester Grand List available on the Village of Manchester website. Trustee Mariano seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

President Campbell provided that he is in the process of getting up to speed in his newly elected role. He recently did a title search at the Town of Manchester Land Records to determine what property the Village owns. Specific discussion regarding the Village Firehouse took place.

Road Commissioner and Tree Warden Jim Lewis mentioned that the next project for the road crew is the paving of Union Street. The paving company is somewhat behind due to the weather up north. He hoped they will be shimming the street next week. He also mentioned that the sidewalk project on Union Street was finished and commented on what a great job was done.

The status and future plans for the Town of Manchester water project on Prospect Street were discussed.

Marian Haines asked questions regarding the curbing project taking place near her home on Main Street and expressed her desire to have the curbing removed from her driveway. Road Commissioner Lewis responded to her questions and it was noted that, other than the current project, there are no plans to work on curbing this year.

There being no further public comments and no further business before the Board of Trustees the meeting ended at 5:49.

Respectfully Submitted,
Missy Johnson, Administrative Assistant to the BOT