

Town of Eden
71 Old Schoolhouse Rd
Eden Mills, VT 05653

Minutes of Regular Meeting, January 12, 2021

The Eden Selectboard met at the Town Office on January 12, 2021. Present: Ricky Morin, Clayton Whittemore, Candy Vear, Freeda Powers, Tracey Morin.

1. Ricky opened the meeting at 6:03pm.
2. Additions and Deletions to the Agenda:
 - a.) Under Other Business: Hunsberger letter of interest/Emergency Manager vacancy
 - b.) Under Other Business: Auditors recommend Selectboard pay increase
 - c.) Under FYI: Information on Act 164 re: Marijuana Regulation
3. Citizens Input: Shawn Hobar called in at 6:15pm to voice his displeasure with a town employee recently knocking on his door early in the morning. Ricky said it was he who was knocking, and apologized for any miscommunication that took place. Ricky went on to explain the reason for his visit was regarding snow being put into the town ROW as well as the residents' personal vehicle being parked very close to the town road ROW, if not in it. Mr. Hobar said he has no place else to park his truck, parking it as close to the tree at that site as possible to get out of the roadway. Regarding the snow, he said, he has no place to move the snow to, so he admits he has been putting it on the other side of the road. Ricky reiterated the town policy, adding that he had left a hard copy of this policy the day he stopped and knocked on the door. He again asked for the resident to stop putting snow in the town roadway. Mr. Hobar confirmed receipt of the hard copy of the policy and said he will do his best not to put snow in the roadway.

The Board received a request from an Eden resident, asking that they consider a question be included on the 2021, Town Meeting day ballot to determine whether or not cultivation of cannabis will be allowed in Eden beginning on June 1, 2022. The Board requested input from the Town Attorney on this topic in order to make informed and prudent decisions going forward. This topic will be revisited at the 1/26/21 meeting.
- 4.) Assessors Assistant: The Board received Kristi Ehlers' letter of resignation from her positions as Auditor and Assessors Assistant, with her last day 1/14/21. Ricky made a motion to accept Kristi's letter of resignation from her positions with the Town. Clayton seconded the motion. The Board voted 2-0. Kristi called in to update the Board on the progress of her replacement, Sarah Hyde. Kristi said Sarah is a quick learner, comfortable with computers and overall will be a good fit for the office. Kristi offered her support via telephone and remote access to assist Sarah in the coming months as the true work of that position kicks in sometime in the summer months. There is no way to train for the "busy season" in the Assessors' Office, which will include walking her through grievances, homestead declarations and more. Russ has taken on more tasks as the transition has transpired, which will make good use of his time here and fulfills more of his role as the Assessor for the Town. He will also be a strong resource for Sarah. Kristi reminded the Board that Sarah will likely need more than one day a week to fulfill her role as the Assessors' Assistant. While she herself

was sometimes able to complete her work in just one day per week, Kristi reminded the Board that Sarah is still learning and the software is not familiar to her the way it is to Kristi. It will be important to give Sarah the time and flexibility she needs to comfortably and successfully take on this position. During the height of the offices' busy months, it is likely that Sarah will need several days per week in the office. Tracey asked if Sarah could also assist with auditing for the time being, until Town Meeting voting can take place. The Board voiced no objection.

5. Sign orders: Five (5) orders were reviewed and signed.

6. Minutes: The Board reviewed the minutes of 12/29/20. Clayton made a motion to approve as written, the minutes of the 12/29/20 meeting. Ricky seconded the motion. The Board voted 2-0.

7. Dog Officer Update: The Board reviewed the most recent time sheet and reports submitted by the Dog Officer. The Board reviewed a document outlining the job description, expectations and responsibilities of the dog officer. Specifically, the Dog Officer Reports should document a full name and address whenever possible. For this purpose, Clayton requested that Freeda reformat the weekly time sheet form to allow adequate space for this information to be entered. The Board, in reviewing the weekly reports, questioned several addresses that appear to be on Rte. 15, which is not in Eden. In order to better oversee the budget impact of this position, the Board agreed to begin a process of reviewing the dog officers' reports at their regular meetings, every second and fourth Tuesday of the month, with payroll for this position being moved to every two weeks. This will give them an opportunity to review and approve the reports that meet the Town Dog Ordinance and Dog Officer position duties. The Board requested that Jayson be asked to attend the 1/26/21 meeting and that until that time, he cease any further work in his role as dog officer, as they keep a sharp eye on the budget in this FY.

8. Morin Salvage Yard Update: Ricky said he recently stopped by the salvage yard with a hard copy of the Selectboards' letter, dated 9/22/2020 to follow up with the owner, Phil Morin. Phil told Ricky at that time the State had recently given him a clean renewal to operate and that he is currently in compliance with vehicle limits. Ricky asked him to send a record of this to the Town Office for the file. Staff indicates that no such evidence has been forthcoming. The Board agreed to give Mr. Morin until the end of January to send something in. Follow up in February.

9. Road Commissioner's Report:

a. FEMA update: A phone call last week with Ricky, Tracey, Freeda and Star, revealed that large projects will be covered at actual expense, not based on preliminary quotes. This is good to know as we look ahead to the three large projects that remain to be done on Paronto, Blakeville and Albany roads. Regarding those three large projects; Ricky said he has a meeting tomorrow with Michie Corps., who have confirmed they are able to provide plans for all three sites. Chris Brunelle, River Management Engineer with the State, has confirmed with Ricky that if the Town can provide design plans that meet the codes & standards and the hydraulic studies (H&H), he will supply permits for the work this year. Once these projects are approved, extensions will need to be requested immediately.

b. Greatwoods LLC (Formerly Green Crow) submitted a written permit renewal request along with proof of insurance. Clayton made a motion to approve the permit for another year. Ricky seconded the motion. The Board voted 2-0. Freeda will notify Nick Brunet, the contact for Greatwoods LLC.

c. Annual Certificate of Hwy Mileage form; there are no changes this year. Clayton made a motion to sign and submit the annual Certificate of Highway Mileage form. Ricky seconded the motion. The Board voted 2-0. Freeda will submit the signed form to the State as required.

d. Update of other activities of Highway Dept.: Ricky said there are no major updates at this time. He continues to document snow in the town ROW when it is an issue. He is pushing to get the designs out to bid on the large bridge projects. Specifically, he would like to get the Blakeville Road project on the schedule for this year as a priority.

10. Ratify Additions and Deletions of 12/29: None.

11. Town Report Update: The Board reviewed draft copies of the dedication and Selectboard report. No changes were made. The Board discussed and declared their selection for the Bullard Award recipient.

12. Town Meeting Update: The Board reviewed a draft of H.48, an act relating to alternative procedure options for 2021. Further discussion around the options for conducting Town Meeting Day 2021 were bolstered by phone calls to Cat Gallagher (Superintendent of LNMUUSD), Dylan LaFlam (LNMUUSD Facilities Manager) and Mark Higley (VT Legislative Rep.). With a strong desire to allow an in-person floor vote, the Board uniformly agreed to delay Town Meeting Day to June 15th, 2021, to be held at the ESC grounds, beginning at 10:00am, if the VT legislature approves the proposed bill H.48. Details will be worked out regarding tent, audio, restroom and other requirements. Adherence to all State COVID-19 guidelines and mandates will be a priority as we work to protect both the health and the rights of Eden residents for this important Vermont tradition to take place. Staff will watch closely as this legislation is finalized and the law is passed and will work together to ensure all pertinent deadlines are met in regards to notices and ballots.

The Board reviewed a draft of the Town Meeting Warning. The Board agreed to include Article #5: Shall the town vote to eliminate the office of Town Auditor and contract with a public accountant, licensed in this State, to perform an annual financial audit of all town funds? 17 V.S.A. § 2651b. The Board agreed to include Article #6: Shall the town vote to elect a Trustee of Public Funds? 24 V.S.A. § 2431. Freeda will add Term Years to the Trustee of Public Funds position. The Board will review the Warning again on 1/26 at which time they anticipate signing the proposed budget and warning.

13. Other Business:

a. The Town is due for an outside audit this year; Freeda will put together an RFP & put it out to three accounting firms by the end of January.

b. The Board reviewed a letter of interest for the open position of Emergency Management Director from Eden resident Jeff Husberger. The Board requested that Mr. Hunsberger be available by phone at the 1/26 meeting.

c. The Board of Auditors submitted their written recommendation of a pay increase for the Selectboard. The increase, to \$1,350 for the Chair and \$1,200 for Members, annually, will be used in the proposed budget numbers for FY22.

14. FYI:

a. Beach Manager and Selectboard positions have been posted. One resident expressed interest in the Selectboard vacancy, but has not followed up since.

15. Adjourn: Clayton made a motion to adjourn. Ricky seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 9:08pm.

Minutes Approved as written on 1/26/2021 by: Ricky Morin, Clayton Whittemore.
Freedra Powers, Town Administrative Assistant