

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

January 25, 2022 Selectboard Meeting

The Eden Selectboard met at the Town Office on January 25, 2022. Present: Ricky Morin, Clayton Whittemore, Jubal Durivage, Candace Vear, Freeda Powers. Also present: John Savage (NHP/Eden Fire Chief) and Brent Lanphear (Asst. Fire Chief), Christopher Donahue (resident & Town Health Officer applicant), Jeff Holmes (Gihon TrakPackers). Joining by phone: Lt. Tara Thomas (VSP).

1. Open Meeting: Ricky opened the meeting at 6:00pm.

To accommodate those present, the Board moved to agenda items #7, #9, #8 then #6:

7. Gihon TrakPackers: Jeff Holmes came before the Board to request use of some Town roads due to trail closures this season. Jeff indicated he has spoken with the land owners in the area and has received no objection from them. The road use requested at this time includes: Clifford Thompson Road-East Hill, White Road, and Square Road. The Board discussed and agreed that safety is a primary focus and signage and reflectors are a must. Specific areas of safety concern noted by the Board were the top of the rise in East Hill Road where road crossing signage will be especially important due to the visibility limitations there and the tight corner by Teddy Mayo's place on East Hill Road. At this corner, the Board requests signage telling riders to KEEP RIGHT and reiterated the importance of staying with the direction of traffic. Safety is the priority, and respecting the local landowners is expected. The Board requested that riders be aware of locals who may be out walking on the roadside or have dogs on leash in the area. The Board asked that any complaints that come to the Town's attention regarding this use of Town roads be handled directly by the Gihon TrakPackers Club. Jeff agreed, and left his contact information with the Town Clerk so that any concerns, questions or complaints, can be directed to him. Jubal made a motion to approve signing the Landowner Permission Form allowing the Gihon TrakPackers Snowmobile Club use of Town Roads as described in the terms and conditions listed: *Clifford Thompson Road-East Hill, White Road, Square Road; with appropriate signage and fielding all phone calls associated with road use* from January 25th to April 15th, 2022. Clayton seconded the motion. The Board voted 3-0.

9. Health Officer: Christopher Donahue, Eden resident, came before the Board to discuss his interest in the open position of Town Health Officer (THO). After introductions were made, Chris highlighted his desire to serve the community in some capacity. He said the position piqued his curiosity and he feels his own background seems to fill the role. Ricky noted that the position is not paid hourly, but rather as a monthly payment of a set amount. Chris said that he had called around to other towns to

see what their Town Health Officers experience and work load were like. He found that some town health officers' primary work comes from rental/housing complaints. The Board confirmed that this would likely be the case in Eden as well, along with a variety of other things as they arise.

Chris indicated that he had already reached out to the State of VT Dept. of Health and requested and received a copy of the Town Health Officer Manual, a booklet that serves as a resource to Town Health Officers and guides them in an outline of their duties. Referencing the book, he asked if the Town of Eden's THO typically did the annual inspection of the local school. The Board clarified that the school is no longer in the Town's prevue and that while it is important that the Town have a THO, the Board's expectation is to address problems that come up in a common sense and cooperative manner first. Rules, regulations and enforcement options found within the State manual are to be used only as a last resort tool and when compliance opportunities have failed or not been met. Follow through is important, the Board said. They requested that in his role, Chris be prepared to offer a monthly report to the Selectboard.

The Board cited a recent memo from the State about changes to the role of THO's regarding complaints or reports of potential animal cruelty. These concerns are no longer handled by THO's and should be referred to a humane officer such as a sheriff, deputy sheriff, constable, police officer, State's Attorney, game warden or VSP.

Jubal made a motion to appoint Christopher Donahue to the open position of Eden Town Health Officer for a three year term. Clayton seconded the motion. The Board voted 3-0. Chris can stop by the Town Office during open hours to complete required paperwork with the Town Clerk. The Board thanked Chris for his interest in the position.

8. North Hyde Park/Eden Fire Dept.: Brent Lanphear and John Savage came before the Board to discuss a proposal to consolidate vehicles at the NHP/Eden fire department. They explained that due to the need to replace Engine 2 (2005) in the same year that Hyde Park needs to, they are proposing replacing theirs this year, one year earlier, to stagger the financial impact. They propose to trade in if possible, Engine 2 and if need be, their 2012 TerraStar rescue vehicle, towards a new mini-pumper. They described the mini-pumper as a F550 with a 300 gallon tank, 1200-1500 per min. pump with foam capabilities that can pump at any fire scene, carry four firefighters as well as needed equipment. They described the current environments that our firefighters find themselves in; more and more homes being built where access is difficult, narrow, steep, unmaintained, etc. Many of these places, larger trucks simply cannot go. This mini-pumper vehicle, would have 4-wheel drive and could make it much easier to many of these sites.

Estimated cost of the mini-pumper would be \$350,000. This cost would be split between the two towns; Eden's portion being \$175,000. A maximum 5 year repayment would be proposed. This cost may be offset by the value of Engine 2 and potentially the additional value of the rescue vehicle. Consideration will be paid to maintaining a fleet capable of carrying adequate equipment and firefighters with the most efficiency and safety in mind. The mini-pumper would likely become the primary response vehicle for the department. Brent and John are requesting the Eden Selectboard consider putting this request to the voters at Town Meeting Day by way of an article on the warning. The Board agreed. An article will be added to the Eden Town Meeting Day Warning asking

voters to authorize borrowing an amount not to exceed \$175,000 with a repayment term of not more than five (5) years to fund the Town's portion (50%) of the purchase of a fire truck for the North Hyde Park/Eden Fire Department.

6. VSP: Lt. Tara Thomas joined by phone to discuss ongoing concerns on Camp Road. Ricky explained the current situation, in which a resident on Camp Road has created a dangerous barrier of snow and ice that interferes with regular winter road maintenance and restricts the normal movement of traffic on a town road. Seeking input, guidance and enforcement from the VSP, Ricky asked if Lt. Thomas would be available to do a site visit with the Eden Highway Department to address concerns. Lt. Thomas agreed to look at her schedule and coordinate with her Sargent at VSP to set a time and day next week to meet with the highway crew for a discussion and to see the issue firsthand. In the meantime, she said, VT State Statute 23 V.S.A. § 1126a regarding depositing snow onto or across certain highways, is backed up with documentation and encouraged photos and any other reporting that can be accomplished safely by Town staff, concerned neighbors or impacted travelers. Further, she explained that any citations made by enforcement officers from the VSP, are followed through with the State's Attorney. This means that any citations handed down by the VSP may or may not result in actionable consequences for the violator, depending on the State's Attorney's office actions.

Returning to the agenda:

2. Additions and Deletions to the Agenda:

- a.) Citizen letter regarding speeding concerns and a loose dog complaint.
- b.) D. Whitcomb letter received re: Sick Time balance.

The Board did not take up these late additions items; they will be part of the warned agenda for the next meeting, Feb. 8th.

3. Citizens Input: None

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

5. Minutes: The Board reviewed the minutes of 1/11/22. Ricky made a motion to approve the minutes of the 1/11/22 meeting as amended. Jubal seconded the motion. The Board voted 3-0.

10. Town Report:

a.) Dedication: The Board agreed to the 2020-2021 Town Report dedication. Their selection will remain nameless until printing of the report.

b.) Bullard Award: The Board agreed to the 2020-2021 Bullard Award recipient. Their selection will remain nameless until Town Meeting Day, March 1st.

c.) Review Selectboard Report: The Board reviewed the draft of the Selectboard Report for the annual Town Report. Freeda will incorporate input from the Board and revise and finalize the Selectboard Report.

d.) Review & Finalize Budget: The Board made their final review and adjustments to the proposed FY22-23 Eden Town Budget. Ricky made a motion to approve the

FY22-23 proposed budgets for municipal of \$531,192.67 (3.22% increase) and the highway of \$573,713.22 (1.31% increase) noting that monies for local appropriations of \$23,000.00 and other appropriations of \$11,531.99 would be decided by separate articles at town meeting. Based on the FY22-23 budget proposals for all, if approved, would result in a 2.11% increase over FY21-22. Clayton seconded the motion. The Board voted 3-0.

11. Road Commissioner's Report:

a.) The Board received and reviewed two excess weight permit requests. Jubal made a motion to accept, to town specifications, excess weight permits for: Bourne's Inc. & Bourne's Propane and Newport Sand & Gravel/Carroll Concrete Co., Inc. Clayton seconded the motion. The Board voted 3-0.

12. Ratify Additions and Deletions of 1/11/22:

- a.) Under #11c) Hillside Trash rate increase notice
- b.) Under #10c) ARPA Funds update

Jubal made a motion to ratify the additions and deletions from 1/11/22, as listed above, #12 (a-b). Clayton seconded the motion. The Board voted 3-0.

13. Other Business:

a.) LRSWMD Appointment; The Board was given the impression that an appointment had been missed in 2021. Candace was able to clarify that this appointment took place in January of 2021 and is in effect for a two year term.

b.) EYSC: Having gained assurance that the school completes background checks on new appointments or new hires within the school system, the Board carried through with their appointment of a resident showing interest in joining the EYSC. Ricky made a motion to appoint Jeff Lewis to the Eden Youth Sports Committee for the remainder of the term; reappointment after Town Meeting day. Jubal seconded the motion. The Board voted 3-0.

14. FYI:

a.) Final County Budget FY22-23: The Board received and reviewed the final numbers for the FY22-23 County Budget. Eden was one of two towns in Lamoille County whose cost decreased based on census numbers. Eden's portion of the county budget is now 2.59% or \$13,772 (a decrease of \$273).

b.) Hillside Trash: Rate increases mean the Town of Eden will pay \$5 more per month and \$5 more per full dumpster pick up at LERA.

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

Minutes Approved as written on 2/8/22 by Clayton Whittemore, Jubal Durivage.
Freedra Powers, Town Administrative Assistant