

TOWN OF ELMORE, VT

Monthly Select Board Meeting

Meeting Minutes – prepared by C. DeVore
Status: Approved

Meeting Date: October 8, 2014

Start Time: 6:29 pm **Adjourn:** 7:41 pm

Meeting Attendees: Robert Burley – ESB Chairman, Whit Hartt-ESB, Caroline DeVore-ESB,
Michel Lacasse-Road Commissioner

A. SPECIAL TOPICS:

1. **Resolution for Sustainable Education Funding Reform in Vermont.** Resolution calls for 2 year Property Tax Cap as a source of education funding while Legislature institutes funding reforms to become less property tax dependent. This is one outgrowth of August state-wide Education Funding meeting attended by Burley & Wepler.
 - a. 70% of Vermont education funding is from Property Taxes
 - b. 10 yr student decline is 10%
 - c. 10 yr total spending increase 33% (\$300M)
 - d. 10 yr per student spending increase 60%
2. **Elmore will continue involvement: Burley & Wepler continue as Elmore representatives.**

ACTION: Select Board unanimously approved.

- All attending towns, school boards and districts state wide are being asked to sign
- Does NOT seek to curtail education spending, only to limit the dependence on Property Tax (currently 70% of total education spending)
 - **Resolution attached.**

B. NEW ITEMS:

1. WATER SYSTEM:

- a. Elmore United Methodist Church (George Twombly & Robert West) requested full exemption of church water rate. Water System Operating Budget has very thin margins. Commissioners presented a temporary 1 year small rate reduction to UMC. Future rates TBD. Agreement pending. Public Water System rates have same legal standing as Property Taxes.
- b. With exception of UMC, water system user payments are current. Cash Flow, Balance and P&L sheets all on plan (with the exception of noted unpaid water bills).

ACTION: The SB recognizes that Public Water Systems must be self-sustaining and recommends the Water Commissioners resolve the matter in compliance with Water System Rules. The system must remain cash positive.

C. CONTINUING ACTIVE ITEMS:

1. Road Commissioner Update – LaCasse

Work Completed:

- a. Minimal grading needed due to wonderful weather, this permitted to complete other much needed projects.
- b. 112 yd's of stay mat put down on Brown Hill
- c. 224 yd's of gravel used on needed areas of EMR
- d. Tallman excavation hired to replace culverts and do ditching entire length of Courchaine Farm Rd and Hosking Farm Rd. Six culverts total
- e. Courchaine Farm Rd resurfaced 165 yd's
- f. Hosking Farm Rd resurfaced 150 yd's
- g. Start stockpiles of materials for mud season.

Equipment status:

- h. The 2000 Ford F-550 sold through a successful bid process. (See Oct 1 minutes) ten bids submitted, high bid Corey Hathaway at \$10,999.00

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- i. 2014 Dodge 5500 purchased September 12, 2014, pearl blue in color, equip aluminum dump body, 4 yd's stainless sander, boss 10 foot v-plow, cost \$76,000.00

Employee Status:

All well.

Upcoming issues:

- a. Hiring out lawn mowing.
- b. Finish priority list.
- c. Finish stock piles and materials.
- d. Update policies
- e. Increasing misuse of Town Garage parking lot. Loss of materials (sand) and drug paraphernalia found on premises.

2. Water System:

- a. Transient pump relay failure 7/20/14. Jon Osborne spent over 80 hours during failure manually filling the pressure tanks.
- b. The installed solenoid/transducer had insufficient low pressure sensitivity. Replaced with new unit 17Sep. No failures since

3. Elmore Planning Commission Update – Hartt

- a. Status: Updated Shoreland zoning approval at ANR. Elmore will become 2nd town in VT to have local authority designation to approve permits (Colchester=1st)
- Changes to Elmore Shoreland zoning complete. There are 2 by-laws that are more strict than State. (i.e., 250' setback line from water at State level. Elmore will continue a 500' setback).

Two Shoreland Districts set: Undeveloped (Elmore Pond, Hardwood Pond) and Developed (Elmore)

Next steps on interim zoning by-laws for Shoreland District: Get preliminary approval from SB and send to Susan Warren, Lakes and Ponds Program for review. Will be returned to town and a Public Hearing required for interim zoning approval.

- b. Status: First 3 sections in review by ESB
 - i. Burley suggested that all Elmore town ponds be included in the zoning coverage
- c. Providing guidance to DRB for Conditional Use guidelines
 - i. LCPC to assist (money available)
 - ii. EPC evaluation of other town's bylaws for suitable guidelines underway.

4. Tax Map Digitization – On schedule, on budget

Project due to complete in November. Caroline to complete reimbursement paperwork with Grant office and follow through to completion.

D. COMPLETED/INACTIVE ITEMS:

- 1. Open Action Item List reviewed by SB.

E. COMPLETED/INACTIVE ITEMS:

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ATTACHMENT: RESOLUTION FOR SUSTAINABLE EDUCATION FUNDING REFORM IN VERMONT:

Education Funding is a State wide priority and needs to be addressed at the State level.

- In the past 10 years the Vermont student population has declined by 10,618 (or 10%)
- In the past 10 years Vermont education spending has increased by \$300 million (or 33%)
- In the past 10 years Vermont per student spending has increased by \$6,537 (or 60%)
- In the past 10 years reliance on education property taxes has increased nearly 7%
- Nearly 70% of Education spending is funded by property taxes.

Vermont has reached its maximum capacity to support education funding through the Statewide Education property tax.

Vermont cannot ignore the current trends and the limitations of our property tax base.

Without responsible funding system reforms, Vermont schools will be forced to undergo arbitrary and detrimental budget cuts that will affect the quality of education in Vermont.

Vermont can achieve a sustainable Education future:

- Create a more diverse education funding system, sharing the costs equally between all our tax resources (income, sales, rooms & meals, and property taxes)
- Simplify the education funding system so it can be understood by the average taxpayer.

Continued reliance on the education property tax will have a material impact on local government's ability to provide vital services (police, fire, roads etc.) to residents.

Therefore be it resolved that Vermont Towns & School Districts support capping Education Property Tax rates at FY2015 levels for the next 2 years, to allow the Legislature to make the necessary funding reforms that will sustain our Education system into the future.

(It is not the intent of this resolution to cap overall education spending).

Be it further resolved on this _____ day of _____ 2014, that the City/Town/ Village/ School District of _____ supports the Vermont legislature as they seek out the necessary reforms to the Education funding system.