TOWN OF CRAFTSBURY
REGULAR SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 15, 2025
7PM | CRAFTSBURY TOWN HALL

Present: Alison Blaney, Jim Jones, Bruce Urie | TOWN CLERK Michelle Warren, Farley Brown, Nicole Jones [DELINQUENT TAX COLLECTOR], Steve Perkins [HIGHWAY DEPT]

Meeting Agenda

Jim called the meeting to order at 6:45 PM

- **Action – Review Delinquent Taxes**

  Attorney agreed to handle tax sale for two properties (only two requiring action) – years delinquent: 2022, 23 and 24. Alison read the correspondence between Town Clerk Warren and the law firm /attorney recommended by someone from Wolcott. Town must forward all info, which Town Clerk did (info and tax bills, deeds and most delinquent amounts by year) and included Tax Collector. Sending the info saves attorney visits; lowers cost. Tax Delinquency Payment Plan: Not everyone who owes for 2024 is on a payment plan. Two properties: one involves a deceased property owner; someone had been paying for 20 years (wasn't on deed; stopped paying). Other has made zero effort to pay. Must update form to show new Town Delinquent Tax Collector. Discussion of payment plan letter: Should also ask attorney to review policy in relationship to new laws, statutes. That way letter is correct; it is better to be done right the first time - spend a little extra to have it reviewed to know it's proper. The only thing changing is the name of new tax collector. Training showed that it's important to have payment plan state: "and must be up to date in current tax year" else the payment plan is voided. Should be clear in policy. Do not want to do tax sale; that's why it is important to include mention of current tax year. QUESTION: Status of software demonstration. Not yet heard back; do they know timeline? Town Clerk will contact again. Pay for service throughout year. Among those owing taxes: some are responsive; some are not; one there has been no contact at all. Some more than three years without payment.

  Action – Alison motioned that anyone with an existing tax payment agreement, who is not current on payment for this tax year, is delinquent and has not followed the agreement and is in default; Bruce seconded. All ayed. Motioned passed. Action – Alison motioned to contact the Municipal Tax Attorney to start tax sale proceedings for anyone who is delinquent and has not paid on the payment agreement as agreed; Bruce seconded. All ayed. Motioned passed.

- **Action – Adjustments / Changes to Agenda**
  - Add Planning Commission Update (Farley Brown) [Jimmy spoke with Ben Cougar and Mike Martin interested in joining planning commission]
  - Eric Polk Will be Meeting Board on Monday, May 5 at 10 am
  - MRGP Annual Report signed and submitted today (Bruce signed) municipal gravel pits
  - letter - Ross Davis resigned from the Planning Commission
  - Flood Plains (copied and available)
- **Action – Approve Select Board Regular Meeting Minutes of April 1; Saplings Grant Close Out Meeting; Saplings Grant Application Meeting**

  Bruce motioned to approve the April 1 Regular Meeting minutes; Alison seconded. All ayed. Motion passed. Action – Alison motioned to approve the April 1 Saplings Grant Close Out meeting

minutes; Jim seconded. All ayed. Motion passed. Action – Bruce motioned to approve the April 1 Saplings Grant Application Meeting minutes; Jim seconded. All ayed. Motion passed.

- **Planning Commission Updates – Farley Brown**

  Planning Commission Chair Brown stated that Rudy Chase leaving the Commission; significant loss. Ross will hold off on leaving until someone found. Will mention at Planning Commission meeting on the 24th. Logan lives out of town – issues with State requirements? Question sent to VLCT and awaiting word. Planning and Conservation committees under State mandates VSA 24 VSA Chapter 117 and 118; must be a resident and a voter. Four members, including Farley, have been on commission since it formed; twenty+ years – close to time for one or more to step down. **Town Plan:** extension on municipal planning grant (end of April – in terms of payment for consultant). Draft done at end of month; stalled by various factors: the public walk, mapping, land-use info sessions. All sections drafted; just a matter of being read and signed-off. Once that is done: 30 days to hold public meeting then hand off to Select Board, which has another 30 days for public input. Have maps required by law; must finish printing. Close out the grant sometime in May. **NOTE**: Town Plan Contains Recommendation for Two Task Forces – one for land use tools and another to look at wastewater; both for exploratory purposes. Planning Commission met with State wastewater rep and Charlie Hancock w/Montgomery Select Board; discussed Montgomery wastewater. Neighbors losing back yard and having septic questions. Planning Commission will do groundwork. Jim Ryan in Wolcott described the arrangement of homes along river. Everyone gets a whole new tank; then it all gets put into one long system leading to one larger leach field. Have something similar on Common with Sterling. **Transparency:** Planning Commission is not hiding anything, to address an issue raised at meeting; a pro-zoning slant accusation. Regulatory and siting of renewal energy (wind or solar). Town must has deference / ability to be part of conversation in public hearing process. Updated 2020 Town Plan (enhanced energy plan) specifically includes statement: siting of large-scale renewable energy must be considered by Town. **Regarding Presentation:** a bit challenging: subdivision regulations and zoning - complicated. Felt it was about zoning. NVDA (Northeastern Vermont Development Association) workshop covered Act 181 – Informative about Act 181: she described it in workshop. Included what ifs, wastewater, zoning or other regulatory rules. Intentions were informative: need not go certain levels of Act 250 components (slows down and add costs). So the recommendation for Task Forces to review options, explorations: ad hoc committees? Would comprise Planning Commission members and others. **Knotweed Project:** Have unearthed sink holes; have identified additional. Can Highway Department fill with rock, etc.? Sterling students have been filling in; Fish & Wildlife said plant grass to catch sediment. Needs a site visit. **Telecommunications:** church steeple needs repairing; adding a cell tower at steeple and wondering about ordinances for that. Checked briefly. Steeple must be rebuilt; want to offset cost.

- **Weight Permits**

  Signed.

- **Committees**

  Planning Commission – Rudy Chase had resigned from Planning Commission

- **Clerk Report**

  - Quarterly P&L and Review first quarter checks; doing much better than past years. The budget shows the difference – net. No need to borrow any monies. Bills /should they be brought to Select Board.

- $9900 reimbursement from insurance; extra monies from 4Cs ($20K+); trail grant money; grants-in-aid and FEMA. Doing good this year.
- Every year should have in the minutes that the warning is signed by Board Co-chair
- Animal Control ticket book

- **Action – Road Foreman Report (Approve VTrans Grants in Aid Application)**

  Roads: clearings and pavement; new truck to arrive in June. Completed by end of June. Colors for town signage on truck. Sent in Vermont Municipal Grants in Aid application; offer came through. Where to go with it? Offering $18.5K and Town would pay $4,625 (ditching; Post Road). $23,125 total project cost: must submit by 23rd of May to participate. Trucks and labor; **Action – Alison motioned that the Town accept the Grants in Aid for a total amount of $23,125 ($18.5K in grant funds and $4,625 by Town); Jim seconded. All ayed. Motion passed.**

- **Action – Approve Bruce Continue Signing Warning of Checks**

  Alison motioned to approve Bruce continuing to sign weekly warnings; Jim seconded. All ayed. Motion passed.

- **Animal Control Officer Appointment Letter Signed by Select Board for ACO Ticket Books**

  Signed.

- **Upcoming Projects to Keep on Agenda**
  - Cell Tower Regulation
  - Contractor Letters
  - Schedule meeting with Kurtis
  - Unclaimed Parcels
  - Appropriation Policy
  - Triggers for Opening the Emergency Shelter, Providing Assistance, Activating N2N
  - VT Route 14 - Slow Down Sign Request - Karen Lapoint

- **Other Business & Walk-ins That Have Business to Come Before the Select Board**

  None.

- **Public Comment**

  None.

- **Decide Next Meeting Date & Adjourn**

  Next meeting May 6 at 7 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Victoria Hudson, Select Board Clerk