TOWN OF FAIR HAVEN, VERMONT
SELECT BOARD
WATER AND SEWER COMMISSIONERS
CEMETERY COMMISSIONERS--LIQUOR COMMISSIONERS

OCTOBER 27, 2014
SELECT BOARD SESSION

Members Present: Christopher Cole, Rod Holzworth, Bob Richards, Jeff Sheldon, Dave Ward

Others Present: John Lulek, Glen Roberts, Town Clerk/Treasurer Suzanne Duchame, Rebecca Marcoux, Stephen Marcoux, Lister Judy Reed, Police Chief William Humphries, Town Manager Herb Durfee, Recorder Wilma DeSpain

CALL TO ORDER
Chair Christopher Cole called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. and asked everyone to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES
Holzworth **moved** to approve the October 14, 2014 minutes. **Seconded** by Richards. No discussion. **Motion carried 4-0-1** (Ward abstained).

DEPARTMENT HEAD AND COMMITTEE REPORT
Cemetery Committee: The Chair was not present to provide a report.
Town Manager: Durfee made brief comments on a number of items before him and the Board. The Assistant Chief Operator—Wastewater position is being internally advertised according to the Union contract. Fire Extinguisher staff training was carried out with the help of VLCT and the Fire Department. This type of training and continued Safety & Wellness Committee work will result in a 2% discount on the Town's insurance premium through VLCT-PACIF. Staff is working with state water system officials to deal with a issues identified on the Water System's Sanitary Survey. Nathan Saxton has been hired as the new Equipment Operator at the Highway Department. A site visit was conducted with state dam officials. Based on the visit, the issue of ownership of the upper dam and surrounding lands is the biggest question raised by state officials. Ron Smith (auditor) will be here November 24 to discuss the FYE 2014 audit. The Adams Street Bridge remains under study by KAS Engineering.
Police Chief Humphries reported he continues to work on finding a used cruiser replacement for the department's fleet. He may have a deal worked out with an area department that has an SUV there are looking to sell. The chief explained he may be able to work out a trade for the vehicle with some unused equipment he has plus some level of money. He also reported he is still working with a New Jersey distributor of fleet cars turned over by various governmental sources. In this case, the chief would trade in one of the older Chargers for a newer, lower mileage Impala. Overall, the chief reported it's possible he might be able to negotiate for two newer vehicles and still be working within the reserve fund amount of $13,000 the board set for one vehicle. By consensus, the board indicated their support, if two vehicles could be obtain in the range of the $13,000 limit.

NEW BUSINESS

Water/Sewer allocation waiver request: Durfee explained that Stephen and Rebecca Marcoux propose to build a 3 BR, single-family home off Cedar Street. Water and Sewer Allocation is required but the Marcoux's are asking the board to waive Preliminary Allocation Approval such that approval would be for Final Allocation Approval. Durfee indicated that the issue is not so much the allocation but, rather, whether or not the Town physically will be able to tap into the old, 2" galvanized water line without creating a water line break. Lastly, Durfee said that if the board granted the allocation that it should be conditioned upon filing of the Marcoux engineer's drawing and the state's permit approval before their Connection Permit is approved. **Motion** by Richards to waive the requirement to file a Preliminary Water/Sewer Capacity Allocation Application and, further, to approve the Final Water/Sewer Capacity Allocation (450 gallons total daily flow for residential water and 210 gallons total daily flow for residential sewer), subject to filing the necessary paperwork noted by Durfee (engineer's drawing and state permit approval). **Seconded** by Sheldon. **All voted aye.**

Hampton Mutual Aid: Sheldon made a **motion** to renew the contract with Hampton, NY for $4,754.00 and to authorize the Town Manager to sign the contract. **Seconded** by Holzworth. Cole said he would not support the motion since it is a similar contract that the Town had for Benson police services and that the Town should be consistent with the decision to not renew that contract. There was no further discussion. The motion carried 3-1-1 (Cole voted nay and Ward abstained.

Boil Water--Abatement Consideration: There was considerable discussion on the question of granting water ratepayers some abatement of their utility bill as a result of the eight day "boil water" order. Durfee reported, as preparation for the meeting, he prepared a per metered account estimated abatement based on the water base rate. The total cost to the water/sewer district equaled about $2,500. He indicated the methodology equated to $2.80 per day per metered account. He noted this was not his recommendation since it didn't seem "politically" high enough of an amount, should the board opt to approve an abatement. After lengthy discussion, all board members agreed that it didn't make sense to grant an abatement due to the fact that the water/sewer district is a "proprietary" fund, audit-wise, and, as such, the users of the system must pay for all system costs. Abatement would be a form of "cost" to the system that would have to be made up by the ratepayers, the same persons receiving the abatement, via subsequent billing/rate setting. Given the user-based (proprietary) nature of the system, Sheldon **moved** to not grant abatements, at this time. **Seconded** by Richards. **All voted aye.**

Annual Report--Cost Sharing: The Board discussed whether the Fair Haven School District should share in the cost to print the Town Report. One-fourth of the 2013 report was school district information. **Motion** by Sheldon, **second** by Holzworth, to authorize the Chair to sign the letter prepared by the Town Manager respectfully asking the school district to share in one-quarter of the printing cost of the Town Report. **All voted aye.**

New England Clean Power Link: Durfee explained that the TDI-New England filed a 45-day notice of intent to apply for a VT Public Service Board permit to construct an electric power transmission line under Lake Champlain from Alburgh to Benson and, then, underground from Benson to Ludlow. The proposed power line would pass through Fair Haven totally within the US Route 22A and Route 4 VTrans rights-of-way. With recommendation from Durfee, the Board directed Durfee to file a Motion to Intervene to receive necessary updates related to the on-going process and to obtain further information related to whether or not the proposed transmission line would generate local tax revenues for the Town.

Recreation Committee Membership Policy: Lulek reported there was no new information from the committee but they next meet on November 13. The board agreed to table the item until they next heard from the committee.

FYE 2016 budget preparation: The board initiated discussion on the FYE 2016 budget by hearing requests/explanation from staff persons/elected officials on the following line items:

- **Selectboard**. The board agreed the elected Town Auditors, not the Selectboard, need to set any stipend amount for the board. Total legal fees and Professional Services line items throughout the budget related to legal costs needs to be further examined to determine whether some "pooling" of line items could occur to reduce cost but not legal exposure. This might include asking voters to approve a new legal reserve account. If the school district picked up one-quarter of the Town Report costs, that line item could be reduced from $2,100 to around $1,380.
- **Town Manager**. There was general discussion about the line items but no research or changes made during discussion.
- **Elections**. The Town Clerk explained the amounts proposed, basically related to one vote during the coming budget year. No research was needed and no changes made.
- **Town Treasurer**. The Town Treasurer focused discussion on the hope to train the Assistant Town Clerk to be the Assistant Town Treasurer. It was explained that the currently appointed Assistant Town Treasurer's duties focus on opening/closing the vault and signing checks in her absence. The current assistants aren't equipped to handle the full responsibilities. In reply to board member's questions, fees are paid to the Treasurer according to statute or based on the schedule adopted by the board. No other research was requested and no changes were made during discussion.
- **Accounting**. Durfee explained the line items and their composition. No other research was requested or changes made during discussion.
- **Auditing**. Durfee described the two main functions of this section involved payment for the professional auditor and the stipend for the Town elected auditors. No other research was requested or changes made during discussion. Based on input from Roberts, the board agreed to leave the elected Town auditors stipend line item at $-0-.
- **Listers**. Reed noted her concern that not enough money is budgeted for salaries if a third Lister is needed. Currently, the need is not warranted but that could change given statutory requirements of the office (e.g., grievance hearings requested). There was some general discussion about reappraisal and when it might next need to be completed along with its cost. Reed agreed to try and research what a town-wide reappraisal would cost the Town. There was also some discussion about professional services for possible legal proceedings. (Refer to the Selectboard line items discussion.) No changes were made during discussion.
- **Delinquent Tax Collecting**. Durfee and the board discussed the number of tax sales anticipated and their costs balanced with offsetting revenue from purchased properties or "redeemed" sales. It should be a net "wash." It was noted that the revenue side of the budget needed to be corrected to reflect the "wash." No changes were made during discussion.
- **Town Clerk**. The Town Clerk summarized her budget line items. (This discussion involved the Assistant Town Treasurer discussion listed above.) No changes were made during discussion.

Accept FYE 2014 Audit: Audit accept was tabled until the management letter is received from the auditor (RHR Smith & Associates).

OLD BUSINESS

Coin Drop Policy: The Board decided to table action on the Coin Drop until after the March 2015 re-organizational meeting of the board (i.e., after Town Meeting).
Transfer Station Fee Schedule: The Board decided to continue to study fees charged at the Transfer Station and obtain more information before making any decisions.

ROUNDTABLE

Richards shared his concern about the number of vacant store fronts in the downtown area. He also questioned the practice of paying part-time employees for attending training sessions.
The Chair wondered if it would be possible to have the Shrine Maple Sugar Bowl Parade in Fair Haven next year. There was general agreement by the board. The board asked Durfee to look into hosting the parade.

REVIEW OF FINANCE REPORTS

Financial reports were provided to the Board for their review. The checkbook balance is $389,779.97.

Sign Warrant

Sheldon made a **motion** to sign the Warrant as follows: Payroll-$27,132.76; General Fund-$136,159.44. **Seconded** by Holzworth. **All voted aye**.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion to go into Executive Session with the Town Manager and the Police Chief to discuss Personnel-Exempt Employee Contract was made by Sheldon. **Seconded** by Richards. **All voted aye**. At 10:27 p.m., Ward **moved** to exit Executive Session. **Seconded** by Holzworth. **All voted aye**. No action taken.

ADJOURNMENT

Sheldon made a **motion** to adjourn at 10:27 p.m. **Seconded** by Holzworth. Meeting adjourned.

Respectively submitted,
Wilma B. DeSpain, Recorder

Jeff Sheldon, Clerk