

Town of Pittsford SELECT BOARD MEETING – May 15, 2024 – DRAFT

MEMBERS PRESENT: Alicia Malay, David Mills, Dan Adams and Thomas Hooker. ABSENT: Mark Winslow OTHERS PRESENT: Rich Bowman, Kevin Blow, Brett Erickson, Rick Conway, Donna Wilson (6:45 PM), Helen McKinlay, Joe Raptour, Erin Eugair, Greg Hiltz, (6:45 PM), Miranda MacDonald, David Atherton – Town Manager, Kelly Giard – Recording Secretary

The Select Board was called to order at 6:30 PM by Chair Malay.

Chair Malay stated that there was a need to add the Discussion of the Enhanced Energy Plan (Rutland Regional Planning Commission). Motion by M. Winslow and seconded by D. Mills to adopt the agenda as amended. Motion passed unanimously 5– 0.

MINUTES:

The April 24, 2024 regular meeting minutes and the April 24, 2024 Liquor Board meeting minutes were signed with no corrections.

TOWN MANAGER REPORT:

Town Manager David Atherton reported the following:

- The 2024 Local Emergency Management Plan has been approved by the Rutland Regional Planning Commission and the Vermont Emergency Management
- A 11-11 permit application to VTRANS for the installation of the rapid flashing beacons for the crosswalk at the Route 7 and Arch Street intersection
- The Highway Department has been out grading gravel roads and cutting roadside brush
- The Chittenden Dam Warning Siren Full Test was held on May 14, 2024 and will be happening twice per year per an operating agreement with Green Mountain Power Company.
- Bridge 108 construction continues with the installation of the lower supports for the temporary bridge; installation of the temporary bridge pieces; continue receiving temporary bridge pieces causing possible intermittent lane closure during the off-loading process.
- Recreation Department News: Baseball season is in full swing, however, due to the lack of volunteers for the concession stand, food trucks have been contacted to be on-site for the days there are multiple games; Green Up Day was successful with 22 volunteers collecting 26 bags of trash and 6 tires; summer camp is nearing full capacity; a meeting was held with VABIR Youth Employment Agency and the Summer Camp has a full time counselor at no cost to the town as VABIR program covers payroll; collaboration with Maclure Library and Joe's 19th Hole to bring movie nights during the entire summer to the 19th Hole for the community; Pittsford Day events and organization is underway with updates to be coming; Exclusive Disc Golf Tournament to be held on May 18th costing \$300.

SELECTBOARD MEMBER REMARKS:

None presented at this time.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Joe Raptour inquired if there were plans of installing a traffic light at the Bridge 108 following the construction due to the traffic in the area. Mr. Raptour stated that the traffic has been backing up on Route 3. Rick Conway stated that this congestion is a result of the removal of the slip lane.

OLD BUSINESS

Fire Hill Health Order Update:

Health Officer Bowman was present to update the Select Board and the residents of the area on the concerns at Fire Hill in the vicinity of the Forrest properties. Mr. Bowman stated that the property owned by Ashley Forrest has shown no movement on the clean up process in the last 2 weeks. The property owned by Artie Forrest has shown some progress with a car on a trailer to be moved to the junk yard, however, his work schedule is not conducive to moving the vehicle due to the closing time of the junk yard is the same time he releases from work. Mr. Bowman stated that he has walked the property with the thermal imaging camera, which was used with permission from the Fire Department and no rats were detected. Brett Erickson stated that there were 11 vehicles on the property. Town Manager Atherton stated that there were 5 vehicles on the property and Mr. Bowman stated that the vehicles are registered and the ordinance specifically states unregistered vehicles are a violation. Mr. Bowman stated that rats will go where there is food and that horse food will call them. There was discussion of the town placing cameras on the property. Mr. Bowman stated that he has spoken with the Game Warden who stated that there were no signs of rats on the property as there were no sinking holes. There was discussion of the amount of the fine that would be imposed on Ashley Forrest for not being in compliance. Chair Malay stated that this would be researched and the fine would be the next step in the process. Town Manager Atherton stated that he would research the amount for the fine. Erin Eugair stated that she has recently had 3 dead rats on her property and she has no livestock. Ms. Eugair also stated that she would document the unregistered vehicles on the property and inquired how the pig food was kept on the property. Mr. Bowman stated that the pig food was locked. The town is supporting the neighbors and Mr. Bowman stated that this is the first time of this happening and it is a learning curve for all involved. Town Manager Atherton stated that the Zoning Administrator is working on the Artie Forrest, Sr. property situation and will be asked for an update. Mr. Bowman explained that the campers that are on the property are exempt, per the state, because they can be lived in without registering. There was discussion regarding the septic in the area and the concern of hazards being dumped. Mr. Bowman stated that he has checked the property and there is no water available at this property. Town Manager Atherton stated that this is a 20-year issue and can't be fixed immediately and there is no evidence of rats. D. Adams inquired if the animals on the property had adequate food, shelter and water, which Mr. Bowman confirmed. Mr. Bowman explained that Chief Warfle is working on the animal concerns and the Health Officer is working on the health concerns. Mr. Bowman stated that he has been on the property at various times of the day, however, will visit the property in the middle of the night to detect any rat movement. Mr. Erickson offered to accompany Mr. Bowman, which is not allowed due to the private property. Ms. Eugair inquired if Chief Warfle was aware of the deceased dog on the property. Town Manger Atherton stated that he saw the dog and that he only went to Artie Forrest's property and not Ashley's property. Mr. Bowman stated that he contacted Chief Warfle as soon as the deceased dog was discovered. Mr. Bowman stated that there had only been 1 other complaint regarding the dog, which occurred about 2 years ago. Mr. Raptour stated that he had burrow holes on his property when he purchased in 2020 and that they are Swedish Field Rats and they live in the country. D. Adams stated that he didn't have rats until about 3 years ago.

Mr. Raptour, Mr. Erickson and Mr. Bletz exited at 7:00 PM.

NEW BUSINESS

RHR Audit Presentation/Discussion:

Miranda MacDonald from the outside independent auditing firm of RHR Smith was present to discuss the results of the recent Fiscal Year end audit. Ms. MacDonald reviewed various accounts and discussed some key points, which include, but not limited to the following:

- ❖ Statement C – the General Fund Balance, which is showing approximately \$391,000 available to carry over to the current fiscal year
- ❖ Statement E – the Operating Revenue/Expenses – transfers in/transfers out is up approximately \$75,000 over the previous fiscal year
- ❖ Statement I – Comparison of budget vs income is approximately \$114,000 over the budgeted revenue largely due to the interest and penalties on taxes; the Highway Department showing a deficit possibly due to the road maintenance capital outlays and timing of the grant funds
- ❖ Statement F – Proprietary – Fixed asset in the Water/Sewer Infrastructure and the debt obligations
- ❖ Statement H – Operating for Water revenue loss of \$76,000 and a net decrease of \$131,000; the Sewer revenue showed a small profit.

Town Manager Atherton stated that the sewer rate increases are showing positive movements; the highway department deficit could be related to grant receipts; department heads are coding invoices and that is helping with them being more aware of the purchases for their departments.

Ms. MacDonald stated in the SAS 114 letter that there were no issues with management and the management letter stated that there was improvement over the past audit, however the policies need to be in place and in accordance with the Federal Purchasing/Procurement Procedure. The payroll testing showed that the managers are signing off on their department timecards; the reconciliations are not complete; the departmental coding makes a difference.

D. Mills inquired a topic in the Management letter stating that all records are not available for disbursement are a concern. Ms. MacDonald stated that there is a segment of items that are “tested” and there was blank information, missing invoices, coding not the proper account, proper approval not obtained are many of the items that are tested. Ms. MacDonald stated that there was a fairly large sample that were tested and some of the items found also included no warrant with the check. D. Mills inquired how this could be resolved. Ms. MacDonald stated that there could be a review of job descriptions vs what is actually being done by what position. Another solution could also be implementing automatic transfers within accounts to free up employee time to better focus on the accounting position. D. Adams asked for clarification of the concern. Ms. MacDonald stated that there are a lot of mistakes whether there was no invoice, no account number, no warrant – just no consistency. D. Adams inquired the sample audit process. Ms. MacDonald explained that the sample audit is a test of controls and is not a fraud investigation. Rick Conway inquired the aggregate result. Ms. MacDonald stated that she would forward that information to Town Manager Atherton. D. Adams inquired the possibility of actual cash expense. Ms. McKinlay stated that funds are either placed on a credit card or the checks are listed on the warrant. Mr. Conway inquired if Ms. MacDonald was a Fraud Examiner, which she stated that she wasn’t, however, there is one on her staff.

Ms. MacDonald and Ms. McKinlay exited at 7:30 PM.

Discussion of Enhanced Energy Plan:

A representative from the Rutland Regional Planning Commission was present to discuss the Enhanced Energy Plan that was compiled for the Town of Pittsford. The members of the Planning Commission will be reviewing this document in more detail at their next meeting.

Act on Orders \$755,557.02 Payroll \$13,915.78:

There was a payment to the OVUU School Board in the amount of \$665,084.52 was paid. There was no further discussion on the orders and the orders were signed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

In accordance with 1 V.S.A. § 313(a), where premature general public knowledge would clearly place the Municipality or person involved at a substantial disadvantage to discuss the appointment, employment, or evaluation of a public officer or employee, provided that a public body must make the final hiring or appointment decision, and explain its reasons for the decision, in open meeting 1 V.S.A. § 313 (a) (3) to include Chief Warfle, Bill Pratico and Town Manager Atherton. Motion by D. Mills and seconded by T. Hooker to enter into Executive Session at 8:15 PM. Motion by T. Hooker and seconded by D. Mills to exit Executive Session at 8:35 PM with no action taken.

In accordance with 1 V.S.A. § 313(a), where premature general public knowledge would clearly place the Municipality or person involved at a substantial disadvantage to discuss labor relations agreements with employees 1 V.S.A. § 313 (a) (1) (b) to include Town Manager Atherton. Motion by T. Hooker and seconded by A. Malay to enter into Executive Session at 8:35 PM. Motion by D. Mills and seconded by T. Hooker to exit Executive Session at 8:45 PM with no action taken.

In accordance with 1 V.S.A. § 313(a), where premature general public knowledge would clearly place the Municipality or person involved at a substantial disadvantage to discuss pending or probable civil litigation or prosecution to which the public body is or may be a party. 1 V.S.A. § 313 (a) (1) (E) to include Town Manager Atherton. Motion by D. Mills and seconded by T. Hooker to enter into Executive Session. Motion by T. Hooker and seconded by D. Mills to exit Executive Session at 8:55 PM with no action taken.

The meeting adjourned at 8:55 PM.

The next Select Board meeting will be held on June 5, 2024.

Respectfully Submitted

Kelly Giard
Recording Secretary

Alicia Malay, Chair

David Mills, Vice Chair

Thomas Hooker, Selectman

Dan Adams, Selectman

ABSENT
Mark Winslow, Selectman