

# MINUTES

## MAIDSTONE SELECTBOARD MEETING

Monday, June 7, 2021

Via Zoom Video Conference

Members Present (via Zoom): Doug Lord, Brad McVetty, Bob Snowman

Staff Present (via Zoom): Town Clerk Amy Pear, Town Treasurer Bob Champagne-Willis, Administrative Assistant Mary von Alt

Also Present (via Zoom): Lin Mixer; Andy Champagne-Willis; Sandy Gray

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Doug Lord at 7.01pm.

### PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Lin Mixer says two timber harvests will be happening, if they have not already started, that impact traffic on Maidstone Lake Road: one in Granby and one behind the helicopter site on Maidstone Lake Road.

### CORRESPONDENCE:

Amy Pear brought up the email about meeting the Governor. A suggestion has been made that towns east of St. Johnsbury be grouped together separately in a smaller group, as these towns have unique problems. No meeting has been set up as of yet.

Amy has been in email conversation with:

- a company regarding making cemetery improvements; she expects that a quote from them will be coming in soon;
- Marty Provost of the Vermont Division of Liquor Control, trying to figure out the status of our wet/dry town;
- Bruce Melendy and Alison Low of the Northeastern Vermont Development Association (NVDA), regarding the hazard mitigation plan; they will both attend the next Selectboard meeting.

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The draft minutes from the Selectboard Meeting held on Monday, May 3, 2021 were considered for approval. The misspelling of one attendee's name needs to be corrected. The word "lot" must be changed to "plot" to clarify that Edna Young wants to do work on her plot in the McDade Cemetery. Bob Snowman made a motion that

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the minutes be approved with those two corrections. Brad seconded it. The motion carried.

### METHODS FOR DEVELOPING COMPENSATION POLICIES:

The Selectboard discussed the need to study and develop compensation policies for the Town, and whether this might best be handled by a committee including Selectboard members and people from the Town. It was decided to use word of mouth and the website to seek people who would be interested in working on such a committee with the Selectboard to study this complex issue and develop policies for subsequent review and approval. Chris von Alt volunteered to participate on the committee. The committee will be formed next month.

### UNCLAIMED PROPERTY:

In the Unclaimed Property Division of the Vermont State Treasurer Office, Bob Champagne-Willis found an unclaimed property belonging to the Maidstone Town School District, a \$57.80 premium refund from State Farm Mutual Auto Insurance addressed to Cheryl McVetty at her PO Box. Brad said this is probably related to the insurance for the school bus at the time Cheryl was on the School Board. Bob Champagne-Willis will check with the State Treasurer and the new school district to obtain information about how to handle this unclaimed property. He will also pursue clarification of what happened with the leftover monies from the Maidstone Town School District when local districts were merged, as that is not clear from the existing minutes.

### OLD BUSINESS:

Buyak: Communication was received from the Town's lawyer requesting affidavits that the work required by the Court had not been done by Mr. Buyak. Brad visited the Buyak property, assessed the amount of court-mandated work that had been done, and had a discussion with Mr. Buyak. Brad reported that all of the work had been done with the exception of the work required on the ditch; he took photographs to document this. The members of the Selectboard agreed that the Town should report back to the lawyer about the assessment of work done and tell him to pursue this issue with the Court. Doug asked Amy to contact Nick Low, the lawyer handling the case for the Town, give him the information, and set up any necessary meeting with the Town.

American Rescue Plan (ARP) Funds: Doug attended a Zoom meeting regarding the ARP funds that will be distributed by the State to the towns. No decisions have been made thus far about how towns will be allowed to spend the money. The money is supposed to be available by the 10th of the month. Bob Champagne-Willis says that the State wants to know who the authorized ARP agent is from each town, but has not

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contacted the Town to ask who that agent for Maidstone is. Bob Snowman made a motion to make Doug Lord the person authorized to receive the ARP funds for Maidstone. Brad seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Weideman Bankruptcy: The Weidemans owe the Town \$6800 in delinquent taxes, starting in 2015. Bob Snowman made a motion that the Town spend the few hundred dollars necessary to contact the lawyers who handled the tax appeal and find out if there are any other solutions to this issue. Brad seconded it. The motion carried. Bob Champagne-Willis will contact the lawyers to ask them about cost and related documents.

Roof Estimate: A quote has been received from McKenzie Construction for the roof work required to prevent snow and ice from making the Town Hall door unusable, an issue that our insurance requires the Town to resolve in some way. The current Town budget does not allocate sufficient funds to cover the cost of the roof work. The Selectboard discussed other ways of handling the issue for this year to allow time to monitor the problem and make a decision about how best to handle it. In the meantime, during the upcoming winter, the Town will make sure the doorway remains free of ice and snow.

### DELINQUENT TAX REPORT:

The Delinquent Tax Report was reviewed and discussed, with Bob Champagne-Willis reporting that significant progress has been made.

### BUDGET TO ACTUAL:

Bob Champagne-Willis reported that the Town appears to have plenty of money to cover expenses until tax collection in October. At present, Bob expects to see an increase of approximately ten percent on both homestead and non-homestead taxes, before the CLA (Common Level of Appraisal) adjustment. He expects official notification of that on July 1st.

### SELECTMEN'S WARRANT:

All documentation is on the Signing Desk, and each Selectman has a copy of the Warrant.

### LISTER UPDATE:

The Listers have completed the grievance hearings and will be lodging the Grand List within the next week. The Listers must meet to make a final decision and send out a letter documenting their decision regarding the one grievance brought to the hearings.

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Bob Champagne-Willis has found that the State inventory of buildings that are in Maidstone must be updated to include 37 lean-tos in the State Park. This would increase the value from \$608,000 to \$759,000, which will mean an increase of \$400 in State PILOT (Payment in Lieu of Taxes) monies for Maidstone.

Bob Champagne-Willis reports that, based on his analysis, the Town's CLA and COD (Coefficient of Dispersion) both will increase when reported to the Town by the State in December, because the real estate market has shifted dramatically and quickly in the past year, affecting primarily properties classified as R1 (residential, below 2 acres) and S1 (seasonal, below 2 acres) at the Lake. The increase in the Town's CLA and COD expected to be reported in December may trigger the requirement for the Town to come up with a plan to do a reappraisal within three years in order to bring all appraisals back into parity. Bob discussed this with Ed Clodfelter of New England Municipal Resource Center (NEMRC), who suggested that the Town needs to do a statistical reappraisal. The Vermont Department of Property Valuation and Review (PVR) agrees. A statistical reappraisal involves analyzing land and property sales data for the entire Town, and costs about half the cost of a complete reappraisal. NEMRC could do a statistical reappraisal next year or the year after, depending on when the Town makes a decision to engage them. A statistical reappraisal can only be done once within 5 years of the last complete reappraisal. The Selectboard discussed the possible impacts of this both now and in the future, including on State and Municipal taxes. Doug asked Bob to keep the Selectboard informed about this situation.

### ROAD COMMISSIONER:

Hydroseeder: Maidstone has been using the Hydroseeder Collaborative's hydroseeder for seeding and mulching despite not being a member of the Collaborative, but, in order to continue using the machine, should join the Collaborative. The cost of joining is a \$500 joining fee plus a \$200 annual maintenance fee, for a total of \$700 the first year; only the annual maintenance fee of \$200 is due in subsequent years. The Selectboard discussed the insurance required and the relative merits of belonging to the Collaborative and the logistics involved with using the machine versus hiring someone else to do the job. Doug made a motion that Maidstone join the Hydroseeder Collaborative and pay the \$700 this year and the \$200 next year. Bob Snowman seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Calcium Chloride: The Selectboard discussed switching from using the flake form of calcium chloride to the liquid form for treatment of dirt roads, the cost and effectiveness of each, and sharing Guildhall's calcium chloride storage tank. The

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decision was made to switch to the liquid and work out the sharing of Guildhall's tank, with the purchase of Maidstone's own tank to be considered in the future.

### SELECTBOARD MINUTE REVIEW:

Draft minutes of Selectboard meetings, once approved, are supposed to be formally changed from Draft to Approved and recorded in the Selectboard Book in the vault. Amy has discovered that the last Selectboard meeting for which the minutes were recorded in that book was the one in December 2019. The only place Amy and Suzy Irwin have been able to find the minutes is on the website; most of those are still in Draft form, although noted on the side that they were approved. VLCT says that the Selectboard owns the minutes, therefore, to correct this problem, the Selectboard must authorize a person to change the minutes from Draft to Approved and record them in the book in the vault. Additionally, Amy found that the minutes from the Selectboard meeting on March 2, 2020 had not been approved. Bob Snowman made the motion to authorize Amy to change all of the minutes from Draft to Approved and to approve the minutes of March 2, 2020. Doug seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Bob Snowman made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Brad seconded it. The motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 8.17pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Mary von Alt