

**Brandon Select Board Meeting**  
**February 24, 2014**

**NOTE: These are unapproved minutes, subject to amendment and/or approval at the subsequent board meeting.**

**In Attendance:** Devon Fuller, Maria Ammatuna, Ethan Swift, Blaine Cliver

**Also in Attendance:** Robin Bennett, Wayne Rausenberger, Kathleen Rausenberger, Richard Baker, Cindy Bell, Alan Leavitt, Chris Brickell, Robert Black, Tecari Shuman, Jim Leary, Tracy Wyman, Janet Coolidge, Bruce Edwards, Arlyn Bloodworth, Anna Scheck, Leslie Krogh-Wisner, Phyllis Reed, Dick Kirby, Bernie Carr, Lisa Kenyon, Lee Kahrs

**1. Call to order**

The meeting was called to order by Devon Fuller - Chair at 7:00PM.

**a) Agenda Adoption – Motion** by Blaine Cliver/Ethan Swift to adopt the agenda as presented. **The motion passed unanimously – 3 to zero.**

**2. Consent Agenda**

**a) Approval of Minutes – February 10, 2014 – Select Board Meeting**

**Motion** by Ethan Swift/Blaine Cliver to approve the minutes of the February 10, 2014 Select Board meeting. **The motion passed unanimously – 3 to zero.**

**3. Public Comments for Items not on the Agenda**

There was no discussion held.

**4. FY 12/13 Audit Presentation**

Leslie Krogh-Wisner of the audit firm of Mudgett, Jennett & Krogh-Wisner provided a presentation of the financial statements and audit report that included an overview of the responsibilities dated October 28, 2013. She noted the town adopted a formal Fund Balance policy according to GASBE and implemented GASBE 63 to change a reference from net assets to positions. There were no significant transactions, no alternative acceptable methods, no new disclosures and corrections were discussed. There were five audit adjustments and one that Anna Scheck had provided them during the testing of statements. The largest audit adjustment was a \$500,000.00 amount from long-term debt to a liability on the Fund statement because it was short-term debt. The anticipation of the bond of \$395,000.00 was determined as proceeds to the General Fund. This was moved back into the General Fund because that was where the note was originally booked. There were some capital assets recorded. The adjustments were

proposed to management as recommendations. The town did not consult with any other CPA's, except Glenna Pound. There were no difficulties in doing the audit and the only significant deficiency was the \$500,000.00 adjustment. The Management Representation letter was attached to the audit. There are thirty points and management has provided the correction to the books and records. Ms. Krogh-Wisner stated the auditor's report is a clean opinion. Page 3 is the management discussion and analysis that describes what happened this year and compares it to last year. The business statement is divided into the governmental activities and the Sewer Fund that is supported by fees. The statement of activities is the full accrual method and the fund balance sheet. Modified accrual will not include fixed assets and are not shown on the statement. The reconciliation between the two types shows the comparison. The fund balance is reconciled to the government-wide statements on the full accrual, which then adds the fixed assets. \$2,138,564.00 is the modified accrual basis and the total fund balance, except the Sewer Fund, is \$8.5 million, which is the value of the capital assets. Long-term debt and fixed assets are the largest difference between the two reports. The largest adjustment on the financial statement was other financing sources and it has been proposed to remove the \$500,000.00 and put it back on the balance sheet in the General Fund. This note was paid off within a week of year-end and should not have been treated as long-term debt. This was moved off the income statement and back into liabilities. The \$395,000.00 proceeds from bond was the refinancing of the police station bond. The Sewer Fund statements are the business type activity on the government-wide statement and include all debt, fixed assets and depreciation. Page 33, 34 and 35 under the government auditing standards requires testing and reporting of certain items and testing of internal controls. There were no findings or expectations from the samples. They did find that there was a significant deficiency in the \$500,000.00 in long-term debt that should be short-term debt and this was the only finding this year. There were no material noncompliance issues and was a clean report except for the \$500,000.00.

Maria Ammatuna noted there are some taxpayers who request comparisons of the General Fund from year to year on specific transactions and questioned if there is an easier report that could be provided. Ms. Krogh-Wisner stated NEMRC might be the best solution to do comparisons, as they would provide more detail. Anna Scheck stated there is a comparative budget report from year to year. Ms. Scheck will discuss this matter with NEMRC. Mr. Fuller stated there is a restricted cash amount of \$745,000.00 in assets, but is not noted in liability. This is the unspent funds for Route 7 that will not show in liability, but will be in the government-wide statement under long-term debt. Ms. Krogh-Wisner advised there is a foot note about debt that provides an explanation of the bond of \$745,000.00. Ms. Krogh-Wisner thanked the Select Board for choosing them as the town's auditors.

## **5. Vermont Gran Fondo**

Robin Bennett reported this event is scheduled to go through Brandon and each town on the route has to provide permission. The traffic plan will have support from the local Sheriff's Department at the major intersections. Chris Brickell stated they typically go in

large groups and the Sheriff's Department will be present to assist. Ethan Swift questioned the extra time that may be required from the Brandon Rescue Squad. Mr. Brickell advised there will be a crew on standby, but they do not have to be staffed. Devon Fuller stated this would be a good opportunity for the Chamber to get involved, as it would be good for the town if more of these events were to go through Brandon. Mr. Fuller suggested a certificate of insurance be obtained from the event coordinator.

**Motion** by Ethan Swift/Blaine Cliver to approve the Vermont Grand Fondo request from the Addison County Chamber of Commerce in giving permission for the cycling event, with the caveat that the town receives a certificate of insurance. **The motion passed unanimously – 3 to zero.**

## **6. Town Moderator**

Devon Fuller stated the town moderator has resigned and the town is in need of a moderator for town meeting. The Select Board has received a letter of interest from L. Arthur Doty requesting to be considered for the position.

**Motion** by Ethan Swift/Maria Ammatuna to accept the letter of resignation from Bernie Carr, the former moderator, and to accept L. Arthur Doty's offer to be appointed to the office of moderator for the current year. **The motion passed unanimously – 3 to zero.**

## **7. RFQ – Engineering Services**

Robin Bennett reported this RFQ would be for engineering services for the grants in connection with the damage that was done during Hurricane Irene. To continue the grant work, a small amount of engineering is needed and there is money built into the respective budgets for the engineering. Ethan Swift asked whether this includes the Wheeler Road Bridge. Ms. Bennett stated this is for the culvert, not the bridge. CLD has provided some information on the engineering for the Green Park, but there needs to be coordination with the culvert proposal so that the park can be repaired now; and if the culvert is approved, to assure that work done prior to that project is not destroyed. There are 28 projects and the ones noted are those that require engineering. Blaine Cliver stated VHB is supposed to be doing a lot of the work for Segment 6 and the culvert. If an engineering firm is obtained through this RFQ process, Mr. Cliver suggested the firm perhaps would replace VHB in the long run, depending on which one is least expensive. Maria Ammatuna does not want to see a duplication of efforts and questioned what else this person would do that has not already been engineered. Ethan Swift stated the idea is to have a blanket engineering contract to move forward the HMPG applications. Ms. Bennett stated there is criticism that the two parks are not back to original condition, with emphasis on the Green Park. A significant amount could be restored; however, there is the issue of the culvert that could go through the park. The engineering for the culvert design would have to be in concert with Segment 6. It was questioned who the person would report to and it was confirmed that it would be the town manager. Blaine Cliver asked if the engineering firm would design the Wheeler Road Bridge, as this is all due to tropical storm Irene repairs, however the bridge is not

one of the items listed. Currently there is not an HMPG for that bridge. Ms. Ammatuna asked how the position would be funded and Ms. Bennett advised it could be an hourly rate; but there could be the option to bundle all projects together. Ms. Ammatuna suggested doing a retainer and then go to an hourly bid. Some of this work would be reimbursable, but there would be a cost share. Ethan Swift stated with the HMPG, he is not sure if the town gets the lower cost share, but it will likely be around 17%.

**Motion** by Blaine Cliver/Maria Ammatuna to approve the issuing of an RFP for engineering services to the town, as described in the document submitted by the Town Manager. **The motion passed unanimously - 3 to zero.**

Maria Ammatuna requested a separate agenda item for future Select Board meetings to be able to follow this.

## **8. Town Meeting 2014**

Robin Bennett stated town meeting is a couple days away. Work is being done on materials for a presentation at town meeting. There is a Coffee Break scheduled at Sheri's Diner for Thursday at 10AM to talk about the budget. Town representatives will also be present at the Fire District's meeting on Wednesday and at the Senior Center luncheon on Friday to discuss the budget. Maria Ammatuna asked if a paper ballot will be done for the town office question. Ethan Swift volunteered to develop the wording for the straw poll that will be done for the town office that will be a non-binding resolution. It was suggested the wording should be whether to move the town offices into 49 Center Street or not. Cindy Bell thought that when the town office project went out to bid that meant the town had decided to keep the town offices in that building. Mr. Fuller advised when the bid came back too high, it was decided the town building would be renovated for occupancy, but not necessarily for the town office. Judy Bunde expressed concern if this building gets renovated; no one has come up with what it would cost to have the town office in another location. Ms. Bunde suggested the straw poll be as simple as possible of whether the people want the town offices downtown, or moved to another place. Mr. Fuller agreed there are many aspects of the town office and it should be a simple question of whether people want the town office in the center of town or another place. Robert Black stated there should be an opportunity to have a discussion at town meeting regarding what people think is important to the town. Bernie Carr stated the question should be whether the town office should be in its current location at 49 Center Street, as it could be in another location downtown. Mr. Fuller agreed that the straw poll is worthwhile, but should be designated that it is non-binding. Mr. Leary also suggested placing a timeframe on this item.

## **9. Town Office Project**

Robin Bennett reported the town is pursuing a grant opportunity for the town office renovations. At this time, it is on hold to obtain a definitive answer whether the project is eligible for this source of money. It could potentially be a sizable grant opportunity. The grant application for the demolition of the town office has been withdrawn to concentrate

on the culvert grant, which is in good standing. A contractor has been hired to repair the roof leak that connects the town office with the Leary building and this work should be completed in 3 to 4 weeks. Ms. Bennett has had discussions with Mr. Leary regarding the agreement for the common space. Mr. Swift questioned if the agreement is a long-term agreement; Mr. Leary noted it would be in perpetuity. It was noted that it would have to be a legal right of way. The grant application being discussed would have a match and the insurance funds could provide the match. This could be an amount that would address the entire building and is only available to certain communities. This is the top priority and the town is working with the VDAT team on this grant. Ms. Bennett stated once the grant is applied for, it will be made public and it is expected to be in the 100's of thousands. With regard to the timeframe, Ms. Bennett advised this is a rolling application process and should go relatively fast. This is an entirely different program with a different focus. With the culvert grant, in removing the demolition grant, it made the culvert the focus. This will also be split into phases that should move it forward faster. Once the grant is obtained, it would still require a bid process for engineering and construction. The town office grant would have to go out to bid and would happen within the next year, as the town has only a year with the Markowski building. Robert Black stated when talking with the VDAT people, there are a series of grants the town could apply for through various sources. The town should determine the priorities and put the town office and 49 Center Street on the list of priorities. Mr. Black stated there should be a master plan for economic development and the branding of Brandon. The Planning Commission and the Chamber need to be involved in these discussions. Mr. Swift stated if there is a unique opportunity for funding, the town has a limited amount of money for leveraging. Mr. Fuller stated the Select Board needs to be careful how many grants are applied for, as the town has to be able to afford the match for the grants obtained. Ms. Bennett noted the grant the town is going for does not have a lot of competing interest.

Robert Black stated in the interest of moving toward preparing 49 Center Street for occupancy, the Design Committee has offered some information and recommendations for this building. They have gone through the cost estimates and broken it into three phases. In phase 1, the Design Committee has provided suggested work that was detailed to the Select Board with low and high estimate columns. Assuming there is no money to do this project, with the possibility of getting this project underway, it was recommended to leverage existing insurance money to obtain grants. The generic repair that includes the structural issues; a number of design recommendations were made that will meet the ADA standards and provide an energy alternative to reduce operating costs. The structure and infrastructure repairs have a high value of \$134,000.00 and there is information broken down into professional and volunteer work. There is a \$15,000.00 amount in the Barden bid that has already been done. Since the Barden estimate was done, the Design Committee has verified the items. The figures provided by the Committee are based on the premise that a general contractor is not hired and it is thought the project could be done with 2 to 4 contracts, with the mechanical and plumbing likely done by the same contractor. There is some flood proofing included in the first phase, but this item would need to be reviewed once it is decided whether town office is to move back into the space or not. If it is decided the

town office would move back into the space, the next phase would be about \$68,000.00, with the use of some professionals in town. Through Phase 2, the costs are estimated to be between \$170,000.00 and \$250,000.00. Phase 3 should be coordinated with Bridge 114. The recommendations are with the thought in mind that it would be done with local management, to avoid overhead fees. It is thought the town office project would cost around \$320,000.00 and would be a top notch renovation. Mr. Black stated there would be more study done relative to flood proofing. Ms. Bennett questioned what is not being done due to the cost difference between the Barden estimate and the Design Committee's recommendations. Mr. Black offered to meet with Ms. Bennett to review the proposal as it relates to Mr. Barden's information. There are a number of items that do not need to be done and the Committee's estimate removes \$80,000.00 to \$100,000.00 of contractor overhead and fees for engineering and an architect. Devon Fuller thanked Mr. Cliver, Mr. Ferro and Mr. Black for putting this information together. Mr. Black also encouraged the Board to put dates to this project.

## **10. Waterline/Segment 6/Bridge 114 Projects**

Robin Bennett stated the major event that has recently happened is the preconstruction meeting. The representatives from the involved parties went over the timeline and schedule. Based on feedback, the schedule will be revised. The contractor has been chosen and orders were placed, however, the piping has a long lead time. The next step is to meet with Bill Burke and then with Scott Newman to be sure there are no Act 250 issues. There are some minor changes, but nothing of significance. There have been some questions raised specific to Segment 6, which are items that came from the town quite a while ago. There was no official authorization given and at this point, there are no major issues with things that couldn't be addressed. Mr. Fuller stated the water line has an adjustment on the schedule and Ms. Bennett stated it is about the order in which they do things. There are concerns of the contractor starting at a different point and there are some other items being considered. It has been made clear there are deadlines that have to be met and they do understand. There have been no changes with Bridge 114. Wayne Rausenberger reminded the Board there was going to be a meeting between CLD and the town's arborist regarding the Segment 6 trees to determine what will be removed and which ones will be staying and to straighten out any problems prior to the start of the project. VTrans will also need to be there to provide input. Regarding Bridge 114, Mr. Rausenberger does not have a good feeling about this project after the meeting Ms. Bennett and Mr. Fuller had attended and would like to know what VTrans is going to do. Ms. Bennett advised VTrans has recommended the town go to the next step with CLD. Mr. Fuller agreed with Mr. Rausenberger's concern about the trees and agreed that whatever changes are going to be made should be obtained in writing. Mr. Cliver suggested requesting the local representatives discuss these items with VTrans on the town's behalf. Mr. Fuller noted VTrans main objective is the bridge's structure and the town also is concerned with the aesthetics and this process may take some time to come to an agreement; but he is confident the town will come to an agreement on it. Mr. Fuller feels more positive about the project and in the long run, it will be a bridge the town wants. Robert Black questioned, with the town's restricted cash and the project's proposed cost, what the net

liability will be. Richard Baker stated the town has already spent \$148,000.00 and another \$138,000.00 for the sidewalks. Mr. Black asked how the town can work creatively to leverage other funding and have less of a liability, such as facing the bridge with marble from a potential donated source. Mr. Fuller stated all options need to be kept open. Judy Bunde reminded the Select Board there is the issue of repaving Park Street that was put on the list for the state to pave at the tail end of Segment 6. Mr. Baker stated Park Street is proposed to be reconstructed from the library to the end. Ethan Swift stated CLD is operating under the premise they are under contract. Ms. Bennett stated the town is at the end of their contract and she suggested putting out an RFQ. Although there are some advantages to staying with them, VTrans is agreeable with switching, but the town may not want to. Mr. Swift stated it is good to see that the work for Bridge 114 is prior to Segment 6.

## **11. Town Manager's Report**

Robin Bennett stated work continues on the town website and it is hoped the new site will be launched next Monday. Mr. Fuller suggested not launching website until it is completely done. The department heads have provided their input and the items that needed to be addressed are complete and it is at the point of doing the fine tuning of the site.

Ms. Bennett reported VDAT has an extensive list of sources the town can go after. The focus has been on the town office and the next focus will be Kennedy Park.

Ms. Bennett noted there is a list of upcoming meetings, with the next meeting to be Town Meeting next Monday and voting on Tuesday.

## **12. Other Business**

Ethan Swift stated the town report looks great and appreciates the dedication to Bill Dick and the memorial to G.G. Corsones. He requested Ms. Bennett review the appointments noted in the report; he is unsure if the Rep for the Rutland Regional Planning Commission has been filled and also noted that Mr. Arlund and Mr. Baker are listed on one of the committees.

Maria Ammatuna questioned the 80/20 split for health insurance noted on Page 6 of the audit report under Economic Factors. It was noted this had been a prior approval and was before the change that was made in August.

## **13. Fiscal**

### ***a) General Fund Warrant – February 24 2014 - \$1,050,503.73***

**Motion** by Ethan Swift/Maria Ammatuna to approve the General Fund warrant of February 24, 2014 for an amount not to exceed \$1,050,503.73. **The motion passed unanimously – 3 to zero.**

Maria Ammatuna requested Ms. Bennett obtain additional copies of the Roberts Rules from the VLCT.

***b) Wastewater Fund Warrant –February 24, 2014 - \$17,059.08***

**Motion** by Maria Ammatuna/Ethan Swift to approve the Wastewater Fund warrant for an amount not to exceed \$17,059.08. **The motion passed unanimously – 3 to zero.**

Maria Ammatuna questioned whether the chemicals purchased with the last check on the ledger are environmentally friendly. Devon Fuller stated it is likely used for flushing out the lines at the wastewater treatment plant. Ms. Bennett noted it is most likely acceptable, but she will look into this item. Ms. Ammatuna noted she would like the town manager to estimate what the year-end figures will be. An estimation of the General Fund will be added to the Select Board agenda on a monthly basis.

Richard Baker thanked Blaine Cliver, Ethan Swift and Maria Ammatuna for their service to the Board this year, since this will be the last formal meeting prior to town meeting.

**14. Adjournment**

**Motion** by Maria Ammatuna/Ethan Swift to adjourn the Select Board meeting at 9:08PM. **The motion passed unanimously - 3 to zero.**

Respectfully submitted,

Charlene Bryant  
Recording Secretary