

Accepted as Written: \_\_\_\_\_  
Accepted as Corrected: \_\_\_\_\_

Vernon Selectboard Meeting – via ZOOM\*  
December 15, 2020

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Chris Parker – Chair  
Sandra Harris – Vice–Chair  
Jean Carr – Clerk  
Jeff Dunklee – 6:36  
Michael Root

Wendy Harrison – Town Administrator

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

Austin Rice  
David Emery  
Tim Arsenault  
Sandra Rulewich  
Kerry Amidon  
Lynda Starorypinski6:36  
John Fay 6:36  
Marylynn Scherlin – 6:45

Chairman Parker called the meeting to order at 6:30 P.M., and welcomed those logging in.

**ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA**

**SANDRA HARRIS MADE THE MOTION TO ADD DISCUSSION ON TOWN ADMINISTRATOR HOURS DUE TO TOWN MEETING AND TOWN REPORT PREPARATION.** Jean Carr seconded the motion. **THE MOTION CARRIED AS FOLLOWS:**

**MICHAEL ROOT – AYE**  
**JEAN CARR – AYE**  
**SANDRA HARRIS – AYE**  
**CHRIS PARKER – AYE**  
**JEFF DUNKLEE – NOT PRESENT AT THIS TIME**

**CHAIR’S REMARKS**

None

**OPEN PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None

**COVID UPDATE**

David Emery reported on the status of COVID which included, but was not limited to, the following:

- There were 66 new cases of COVID today, down from over 100 every day for a number of days;
- 20 are hospitalized
- 4 are in ICU
- There have been 100 deaths
- We are getting closer to the vaccine
  - Vermont has received their first batch which will be administered first to:
    - Emergency workers
    - First Responders

- Doctors
- Nurses
- Health Care workers and
- Health Care facilities
- We are not out of the woods yet and it is projected to get worse over the next few months
- Vermont survived the Thanksgiving holiday pretty well by abiding by the Governor's recommendations
- The next two holidays, Christmas and New Years are coming up with the recommendations as follows:
  - If you travel within the state do so with caution
  - If you travel out of state observe the 14 day rule
  - Continue to use masks, wash hands, social distancing
- Vernon Homes is on the list for receiving the vaccine and the plan is to start administering it on December 29<sup>th</sup> to residents as well as staff
- Schools and COVID
  - Brattleboro and Guilford schools both have reported some COVID cases
  - Vernon continues to be free of COVID and is staying as a hybrid through the end of next week
  - When school resumes after Christmas in Vernon there will be 1 week of on line classes and
  - January 11<sup>th</sup> school will resume with the hybrid model.

#### **MINUTE APPROVAL**

DECEMBER 1, 2020

**JEAN CARR MADE THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 1<sup>ST</sup> REGULAR SELECTBOARD MEETING AS WRITTEN.** Chris Parker seconded the motion. **THE MOTION CARRIED AS FOLLOWS:**

- **JEAN CARR – AYE**
- **JEFF DUNKLEE – AYE**
- **MICHAEL ROOT – AYE**
- **SANDRA HARRIS – AYE**
- **CHRIS PARKER – AYE**

#### **TREASURER'S REPORT**

BILLS AND WARRANTS

**JEAN CARR MADE THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING WARRANT:**

- **#12-T – ACCOUNTS PAYABLE for \$71,579.00**
- **#48S – PAYROLL for \$6,998.06**
- **#49S – PAYROLL for \$7,138.84**

Sandra Harris seconded the motion. **THE MOTION CARRIED AS FOLLOWS:**

- **MICHAEL ROOT – AYE**
- **JEFF DUNKLEE – AYE**
- **SANDRA HARRIS – AYE**
- **JEAN CARR – AYE**
- **CHRIS PARKER – AYE**

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### TOWN MEETING 2021

Town Clerk Tim Arsenault updated the Board on proposed changes to the Annual Town Meeting schedule being discussed with the Secretary of State and Legislature. Both the House and Senate are looking into the COVID impact on the Annual Meeting and they hope to have changes by mid-January. Discussion included, but was not limited to:

- January 4<sup>th</sup> is the current deadline for Article petitions
- January 25<sup>th</sup> is the current deadline for Candidates petitions/consent forms
- January 31<sup>st</sup> is the current deadline to post the Town Warning
- Discussed is the feasibility of giving municipalities the right to move the date of Town Meeting as well as
- The authorization to mail in ballots similar to the General Election, etc.

Tim is not comfortable with holding an indoor meeting the first Monday in March with COVID and suggested an outdoor meeting in mid-spring, still holding the elections at the regular time.

Jeff Dunklee suggested moving everything back two months and expressed his concern with not requiring petitions for candidates, just a consent form. This law was passed earlier and Tim will check to see if it is mandatory or if it is a municipality's choice. The school has a lot of time crunches by contract and/or statute so they are moving forward as if under the same deadlines until told differently. It was suggested that the school budget, which is voted by Australian Ballot, be voted at the regular time as a separate ballot.

Wendy Harrison spoke with Sara Coffey today who indicated there was no chance of the bill to reschedule not passing.

The Board clarified that organizations such as SEVCA are not being required to provide petitions this year.

### INTERIM TOWN ADMINISTRATOR HOURS

The consensus of the Board was to increase the approved hours of the Town Administrator due to the hours needed for the Town Report and Town Meeting. This will be solidified at the next meeting.

### Town Report

Discussed was a Hometown Heroes Page and Dedication. The consensus was in favor of both.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **RECYCLING PROGRAM**

#### CONSIDERATION OF MAILING TO RESIDENTS

**SANDRA HARRIS MADE THE MOTION TO ALLOW THE EXPENDITURE OF UP TO \$500.00 FOR MAILING OF THE RECYCLING RULES.** Jean Carr seconded the motion. **THE MOTION CARRIED AS FOLLOWS:**

- **MICHAEL ROOT – ABSTENTION due to a perceived conflict of interest**
- **JEFF DUNKLEE – AYE**
- **JEAN CARFRD – AYE**
- **SANDRA HARRIS – AYE**
- **CHRIS PARKER – AYE**

Town Administrator Harrison will plan on mailing them next week.

### **PROPERTY MANAGEMENT SERVICES - REVIEW**

Wendy Harrison will make some calls informally to see if there are companies/individual(s) that are interested in the proposed Building Cleaning and Maintenance, Mowing, and Snow Plowing and shoveling for the Town Office Building. She will then prepare an RFP for the Board's review structuring it so bids may be submitted for one or more or all of the services being sought.

This year's snow removal is covered by an individual who already does snow removal for the Elderly Assistant Committee clients.

### **TOWN ADMINISTRATOR REPORT**

Wendy Harrison gave a brief update on COVID testing by the Health Department that is held at the Brattleboro Memorial Hospital, noting results are available within one to two days.

She attended a Planning Commission meeting and learned they need assistance in grant applications of which there are quite a few out there.

The Fire Department's ISO rating was briefly discussed and she is available to help if needed. The rating organization realizes the turmoil the department has been in and the strides forward and they are not changing the ratings of Vernon's Fire Department. She would like to attend the property tax webinar.

### **MISCELLANEOUS**

Sandra Rulewich, Vernon's representative to Windham Solid Waste Management District had some information on funding available to the Town but did not request to be placed on the agenda in time. The information she has is such that it was felt more people should have the opportunity to hear her and her news. She will be placed on the January 5<sup>th</sup> agenda so more people can tune in.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

**JEAN CARR MADE THE MOTION TO ADJOURN.** Jeff Dunklee seconded the motion. **THE MOTION CARRIED AS FOLLOWS:**

- **MICHAEL ROOT – AYE**
- **JEFF DUNKLEE – AYE**
- **JEAN CARR – AYE**
- **SANDRA HARRIS – AYE**
- **CHRIS PARKER – AYE**

**The meeting adjourned at 7:29 P.M.**

### **Future meetings:**

Selectboard Special Budget Meeting – Wednesday, December 16, 2020 at 6:30 P.M.

Selectboard Regular Meeting – Tuesday, January 5, 2021 at 6:30 P.M.

*Sandra Harris*