

Poultney Board of Selectmen

Meeting

Monday, January 28, 2019 – 6:30 pm

Poultney Town Hall

Agenda

- 1) Adoption of the Agenda
- 2) Approval of Minutes: 1/14/19
- 3) Public Comments and Concerns
 - Green Mountain College closure announcement
- 4) Road Report
 - Report of Sale of excavator
 - Highway Mileage Certification
- 5) Town Manager's Report
 - Liquor License application – Stewart's Shop
 - Poultney Properties, LLC hearing 1-30-19 motion of Neal and Gail Vreeland
 - Execution of Warrant for Town Meeting
- 6) Transact Any Other Lawful Business
- 7) Executive Session
- 8) Health Officer's Report
- 9) Rutland Regional Planning Commission
- 10) Board Orders

Meeting Minutes

Poultney Board of Selectmen

Monday, January 28, 2019 – 6:30 PM

Poultney Town Hall

Jeff King called the meeting to order. Selectmen present included: Jeff King, Frank Fressie, Terry Williams, Tom Coloutti, and George Miller. Others present included Paul A. Donaldson, Town Manager, Ron Kelley, Road Foreman, Neisja Crawford, Bookkeeper, Bob Allen, President Green Mountain College and community members (see attached sign in sheet).

Adoption of the Agenda: Tom Coloutti made a motion to adopt the agenda. Terry Williams seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes: Minutes of 1/14/19 to be approved at 2/11/2019 meeting.

Public Comments and Concerns:

- Green Mountain College Closure announcement (GMC)
 - Paul Donaldson: Talked with the Deputy Secretary of the Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development, to work towards gathering data relating to the economic impact that the closure will have on the Town. When conversations start, meetings will include several other organizations, e.g., Rutland Regional Planning Commission and members of the community.
- Bob Allen: On Wednesday January 23, 2019 the board voted to close the school, due to financial pressure as a result of declining enrollment. The school is tuition dependent and lacks a large enough endowment to fund an annual deficit gap. The discussions regarding the closure were confidential and could not be discussed with the Town. “There are no answers for the future”.
 - Mr. Allen is presently working with brokers and lenders to market the campus. Working with one very large broker and an individual international broker (both to remain confidential).
 - Several articles including details of the closure have been published, i.e., Rutland Herald, Boston Globe and Chronicle of Higher Education.
 - USDA is the principal lender at \$19.5 million. Total debt is \$22.5 million (Key Bank being the other lender). Mr. Allen is meeting with USDA Feb. 13, 2019.
 - Commencement is scheduled for May 19, 2019. The school will continue to operate up to June 30, 2019. The campus includes 450,000 sq ft of buildings. It is staffed with approximately 40 faculty members, 60 other full time employees and 50 contractors. After June 30, 2019 thru July 31, 2019 the campus will be minimally staffed.

Terry Williams: Have concerns with vagrancy on campus. Please keep the Select Board informed.

Frank Fressie: It is a tough road ahead. Need to construct an operating agreement for debt.

Bob Allen: The problem is the school is operating at a deficit. The breakeven enrollment is 600.

Sheryl Porrier: Many community colleges and the state system are struggling. See articles in VT Digger and the Harvard Business Review.

Paul Donaldson: Have you had conversations with any trade schools?

Bob Allen: No, but that's a possibility.

Ernie DeMatties: The Town has seen a lot go with no grass roots support. Call our congressman. I have written the Governor. We need to ask ourselves what we can do.

Jonas Rosenthal: Right now we're in fact gathering mode. Need to meet with other planning commissions to discuss viable ideas.

Pam Burlingame: When will community talks start?

Paul Donaldson: Probably mid to late February.

Steve Broughton: When the colleges laves who do you proposition with business ideas?

Bob Allen: Up to June 30, 2019 contact the college, then USDA.

Paul Donaldson: USDA will market it if the Town presented a potential buyer.

Community Member: We should continue to talk with community colleges and have mixed use.

Josh Burlingame: What is the price tag to clear debt and ballpark to renovate?

Bob Allen: 22.5 million to clear debt. If renovate at \$100 per sq ft looking at about \$40 million.

- A low estimate cost is \$500,000 per year to maintain the campus e.g. electric, heat, plow, etc.
- The Methodist church funds the chaplain.

Fran Fressie: Has anyone talked to you about the hotel industry? Bob Allen: No.

Ida Mae: We should have another meeting.

Frank Fressie: GMC is part of our heritage.

CB Hall: Can GMC sell off pieces of the campus? Bob Allen: No.

Carol Bunce: GMC signed a 10 yrs lease with Poultney Properties.

Bob Allen: The lease will terminate.

Tom Coloutti made a motion to move Poultney Properties, LLC hearing next on the agenda. Terry Williams seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Poultney Properties, LLC hearing 1-30-19 motion of Neal and Gail Vreeland:

Paul Donaldson: Put on agenda to bring the board up to date on the latest development in the case. There is a hearing scheduled for Wednesday, January 30, in the Environmental Court to hear Neal and Gail Vreeland's Motion For Relief whereby they are alleging that the developer of the site have positioned bright lights to shine upon his property. Mr. Donaldson will be attending on behalf of the Town since Attorney Kupferer may be unavailable. Neal Vreeland stated that the lights are a very distressing situation and showed photos of the bright light filling rooms inside his home from the worksite flood light placed inside the building next door. Attorneys from both sides have been talking in an effort to resolve the matter.

Jeff King: Are the lights on all the time?

Karl Diethelm: The light used to be on 24 hrs. Now it's off at 8:00 am and back on at 3:00 pm.

Terry Williams: Should the Town send a letter? It's potentially a zoning issue.

Paul Donaldson: I have spoken with Gary Kupferer and the hope is that it can be resolved through parties mutual cooperation. Attorney Kupferer has visited the site and he believes the lights to be very bright, beyond security necessity and has expressed that sentiment to Mr. Knappmiller's attorneys.

Tom Coloutti: We need to revisit some of the antiquated bylaws.

CB Hall: Is it possible to fine him?

Paul Donaldson: An enforcement action could potentially be an avenue, but he would like to see what comes from the hearing.

Neal Vreeland: I think it's important to look at what they're doing and how they're going about it.

Road Report:

Ron Kelley reported the following:

- Report Sale of the excavator
 - Michael Lampson of Middletown purchased the excavator for \$21,001. Advertised it for \$20,000 on Craigslist. Mr. Lampson wrote a check to hold. We

will keep the excavator until we get delivery of the new one. Upon delivery the Highway crew will change the oil and receive a bank-check.

- Highway Mileage Certification
 - Select Board signed no changes to calculated highway mileage for year ending Feb. 2019.
- Received \$10,000 quote for mower from Brown Equipment (which includes municipal discount).
- Repaired two trucks
 - Took the 2006 International, oldest tandem, to Turunen to be repaired. It slid into a ditch while sanding.
 - The 2005 International, the smallest truck, is being repaired by the highway crew.
 - Both trucks should be back on the road tomorrow.
 - Tom Coloutti: Could this accident have been prevented?
 - Ron Kelley: Not this time. The trucks leave with chains on them and still sometimes the ice is too much.
 - Tom Coloutti: A three sided shelter might be good for the Town's people to get sand.
 - Ron Kelly: Will get a quote for the cost of the shelter.
- A lot of sanding and plowing.

Town Managers Report:

Paul Donaldson reported the following:

- Liquor License applications
 - Stewart's Sop
 - Shaws
 - Taco Restaurant -cannot approve liquor license for Taco Restaurant until receive health license number.

Tom Coloutti made a motion to sign Liquor License Renewals for Stewarts and Shaws. Terry Williams seconded the motion. Motion carried

- Execution of Warrant for Town Meeting
 - Drafted all warnings for the Town Meeting, e.g., officers, etc. Will place the ad this Friday and it will run in the Free Press five days before the meeting.
 - February 8, 2019 is the Town Report deadline for the printer.

Health Officer:

None.

Rutland Regional Planning Commission:

Terry Williams reported the following:

- Forwarded to the Select Board the proposed amendments to ACT 250 and a brief review of zoning bylaws.

Executive Session: Tom Coloutti made a motion to enter into Executive Session at 8:34 pm to discuss potential litigation matters. Terry William seconded the motion. Motion carried. At 8:43pm Tom Coloutti made a motion to leave Executive Session. Terry Williams seconded the motion. Motion carried. Executive Session ended with no action taken or required by the board.

Board Orders:

Tom Coloutti made a motion to pay board orders. George Miller seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Adjournment: Frank Fressie made a motion to adjourn. George Miller seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned.

s/Neisja Crawford

Select board Mtg Jan 29, 2019

DOUG LANGDON

ERIE DE MATTIES

NC VREELAND

Andrea Finerty

MICHAEL FINERTY

Carol Bunce

Patricia Estrada

Carl Diethelm

E. B. Hall

Ida Johnson

Dawn Sarli

Valerie & ~~Steve~~ Broughton

Bob Allen

Steve Broughton

Kimberly Carter

Kerry O'Flaherty

Greg Povey

Jaime Lee

Pamela Burlingame

BILL LANDSMAN

Kat Barrell Herald

Sheryl Porter