

Town of Mendon

Selectboard

June 12, 2023

Members of Selectboard present: Val Taylor, Seth Bridge, Lisa Brooks

Town Officers and employees present: Sara Tully, Town Administrator & Health Officer, Nancy Gondella, Clerk & Treasurer, Jesse Bridge, Assistant Clerk and Bookkeeper,

Visitors present: Dave Brooks, Kyle Taylor, Brian Gates, Carol Gates, Justin Lindholm, Liam Frachte-Monroe, Fred Bagley, Teri Corsones, Dennis Charles, RCS Sheriff Cross, Matt Bloomer

PEG TV was recording.

V. Taylor called to order at 5:32 PM at the Town Office

Agenda:

Motion by V. Taylor to approve the agenda with the addition of the approval of the 5/16/23 payroll for \$10,962.43 and the Mendon Seniors. Motion seconded by L. Brooks. The motion passed.

Announcements

US Route 4 Corridor Scoping Study Local Concerns Meeting, Hybrid meeting, June 21, 2023 5:00 pm Rutland Regional Planning Commission 3rd Floor Conference Room, 67 Merchants Row, Rutland

A link to this meeting can be found at www.mendonvt.gov

The Town of Mendon is seeking qualified applicants to fill 3 full time positions:

- Road Commissioner
- Equipment Operator & Highway Maintenance
- Equipment Operator, Highway and Building & Grounds Maintenance

See www.mendonvt.gov for job postings.

Administrative Matters

Selectmen's Orders were reviewed.

Motion by V. Taylor to approve orders in the amount for 6/12/23 for \$46,346.26 and payroll for 5/30/23 for \$10,705.66. Motion seconded by S. Bridge. The motion passed.

Motion by V. Taylor to approve payroll for 5/16/23 in the amount of 5/16/23 for \$10,962.43. Motion seconded by L. Brooks. The motion passed.

Motion by V. Taylor to approve the minutes of 4/24/23. Motion seconded by S. Bridge. The motion passed.

The minutes of 5/8/23 were approved at the last meeting.

Motion by V. Taylor to approve the minutes of 5/22/23. Motion seconded by L. Brooks. The motion passed.

Public Comment The Selectboard heard from multiple residents concerned about the state's housing vouchers ending leaving hundreds of people homeless in Rutland and whether they will relocate to Mendon looking for places to camp. J. Lindholm expressed concern regarding camping in Mendon on federal and state land which both have limitations on how long campers can stay in one place. F. Bagley issued similar concerns regarding no camping in the Rutland City Watershed and how these rules conflict with Green Mountain national Forest rules. T. Corsones inquired whether Rutland City would post signs prohibiting camping in the watershed.

Brian Gates addressed the Selectboard accusing Seth Bridge, Selectboard and Fire Warden, of intimidation and that he felt threatened while trying to obtain a burn permit because S. Bridge "showed up with a weapon to intimidate me". B. Gates questioned why he was not let in the Town Office. He continued to ask for the Ring door cam video of the meeting between S. Bridge and himself in the parking lot. B. Gates accused the Selectboard of taking bribes and conflict of interest as well as having secret meetings with neighbors regarding his legal activity on his own land. L. Brooks addressed B. Gates informing him to contact the State's attorney to conduct an investigation that the Selectboard can not investigate themselves or to contact an attorney. B. Gates was shouting accusations at the Selectboard. L. Brooks repeatedly asked B. Gates to calm down. L. Brooks requested Deputy Cross to ask B. Gates to calm down. Deputy Cross addressed Mr. Gates asking him to stop screaming over the Board members. The Chair, V. Taylor raised her voice stating that B. Gates time was up for public comment. V. Taylor apologized for yelling. B. Gates continued to accuse the town of taking bribes. L. Brooks again instructed B. Gates to contact the attorney general's office and the Rutland County Sheriff. B. Gates continued to complain about his neighbor's driveway washing out into the road. Two weeks ago he texted V. Taylor after a downpour that the gravel was out on the road, its still there. B. Gates claimed the town told them two years ago to fix their driveway and nothing had been done. L. Brooks asked B. Gates to send her an email and request something be done.

Carol Gates accused town officials of bribery and stated she had video of town officials taking bribes.

Business

Mendon Seniors S Tully reported that the Mendon Seniors is not a formal organization so they are experiencing difficulty cashing checks from organizations like the Southwest Council on Aging to assist with their programming. The Town could assist them by bringing the organization in house as part of the Recreation Department. This would need to be further looked into by Treasurer, Nancy Gondella with the Mendon Seniors. Issue tabled for further discussion.

Recreation Playground Project L. Fracht-Monroe discussed the timeline and cost for the playground project. The playground and installation is \$63K and the woodchips another \$2200. The cost that is still pending is the site work excavation. L. Fracht-Monroe requested removing the old structures. S. Tully reported that the excavation costs are expected to be minor costs and according to the purchasing policy 2 quotes are required.

Brief discussion regarding the logistic of the equipment. L. Fracht-Monroe discussed doing a capital fundraising campaign for the playground.

Overview of projects awarded with grant funds S. Tully provided an update regarding current grant funded projects that includes:

- i. Route 4 Scoping Study
- ii. Journeys End Erosion Control
- iii. Town Office Generator Grant
- iv. Woodward Road Dry Hydrant
- v. Grants in Aid FY24

Rutland County Sheriff Contract FY24 L. Brooks questioned the execution of the contract and the fulfillment of the contract. S. Tully provided information that the current contract is not being fulfilled at the number of hours requested under the contract. Brief discussion regarding the execution of the contract and reporting of hours. Issue tabled until the next meeting.

Adoption of Visitor Code of Conduct Policy Motion by V. Taylor at 6:40 PM to find that premature general public knowledge regarding the town counsel's analysis of a legal matter would clearly place the Town at a substantial disadvantage because the discussion will include confidential attorney-client communications made for the purpose of providing professional legal services to the Town. Motion seconded by L. Brooks. The motion passed. The Chair declared the board out of Executive Session at 6:58 PM. The Visitor Code of conduct was discussed. The Town of Mendon's commitment to providing a positive experience for those working, conducting business, and visiting Town facilities, including the town office, and other public spaces, is of the highest importance. Motion by V. Taylor to adopt the Visitor Code of Conduct Policy. Motion seconded by S. Bridge. The motion passed.

Motion by V. Taylor to enter into executive session at 7:02 PM with the inclusion of town counsel, Sara Tully, Nancy Gondella and Jesse Bridge present to discuss town counsel's analysis of a legal matter as allowed under Title 1, Section 313(a)(1)(F). Motion seconded by S. Bridge. The motion passed. The Chair declared the Board out of Executive Session at 8:08 PM.

No action taken.

Adoption of Policy for Notice of Trespass on Town Property Issue tabled until further discussion.

V. Taylor moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:09 PM. Motion seconded by L. Brooks. The motion passed.

Date Approved _____

Val Taylor

Sara Tully - Clerk of the Board

Seth Bridge

Lisa Brooks