

## Town of Mendon

### Selectboard

November 13, 2023

Members of Selectboard present: Val Taylor, Seth Bridge

Town Officers and employees present: Sara Tully, Town Administrator & Health Officer

Visitors present: Shelly Susina, Mary Ruth, Jennifer Bagley, Olivia Boughton, Brian and Carol Gates

PEG TV was recording.

V. Taylor called to order at 5:33 PM at the Town Office.

The pledge of allegiance.

#### Agenda:

B. and C. Gates requested ZBA Complaint, Discrimination, Code of Conduct/Ethics be added to the agenda. S. Tully requested Health Insurance be added to the agenda.

Motion by V. Taylor to approve the agenda with the addition of ZBA Complaint, Discrimination, Code of Conduct/Ethics and Health Insurance. Motion seconded by S. Bridge. The motion passed.

#### Administrative Matters

*Selectmen's Orders* were reviewed.

Motion by V. Taylor to approve orders for 11/13/23 for \$243,894.29 and payroll for \$10,129.48. Motion seconded by S. Bridge. The motion passed.

Motion by V. Taylor to approve 10/23/23 minutes. Motion seconded by S. Bridge. The motion passed.

Announcements: None

Public Comment: B. Gates complained that the Town is not following regulations and procedures and referred to a handbook created by the Vermont League of Cities and Towns. He stated the Gate's previously requested Jack Kennelly be removed from the Zoning Board of Adjustment. B. Gates stated the town is breaking the law. They claim the appeal should never been brought to the ZBA with out the fees being paid. V. Taylor responded that the town has

consulted their attorney and she is happy to go over the information with them. The Gate's continued to speak over each other demanding who brought forward the appeal. When asked, S. Tully responded that the ZBA warns their own appeals. The Gates' disagreed.

### Business

*Carving Studio Bench Project* O. Boughton presented the Carving Studio Bench Project to the Selectboard with the support of the Mendon Historical Society.

*ZBA Complaint, Discrimination and Code of Conduct/Ethics* C. Gates read from a prepared statement that summarized their request to have Jack Kennelly removed from the ZBA for conducting ex parte communications with the appellants. Their complaint continued against one of the appellants, former Selectboard member Geoff Wells, who appointed 3 of the 4 ZBA members in his role on the Selectboard. The complaint stated they were informed that the appellants did not submit a complete application by not submitting payment at the time of the appeal therefore rendering the hearing invalid and unlawful. B. and C. Gates want to know why the ZBA and Jack Kennelly believe they have jurisdiction to continue the appeal without payment. They claimed their 14<sup>th</sup> amendment right has been violated by the town and are seeking the removal of Jack Kennelly, Harvey Zara and Therese Corsones from the ZBA. They are also seeking the removal of Lisa Swett from the Planning Commission and whoever forwarded the application as complete to the ZBA should be removed from office. The complaint continued that they have been discriminated against because of what they do for a living which is legal, registered and in good standing with the State of Vermont. The couple continued to berate the Selectboard while using profane language and obscene finger gestures. The Chair repeatedly asked Mr. and Mrs. Gates to stop screaming at the Board and that the Selectboard is moving on to the remainder of the meeting.

*FY24 Budget* N. Gondella submitted budget recommendations for the 2024 budget to include an increase in income by \$15,700 and an increase in expenses by \$11,560. These were primarily changes in the Administration portion of the budget. Specific discussions occurred regarding computers and computer services, cybersecurity, Robinwood roads, winter and summer salaries for the Infrastructure Budget, bond debt, and the contract with the Rutland County Sheriff. These updates will be included in the second draft of the budget at the next meeting.

*Health Insurance* S. Tully submitted funding recommendations for health insurance for 2024. The town has funded health insurance premiums at 92.75% and the employees pay 7.25% of premiums. Employees have the option to purchase the plan that best suits their needs. They can buy up to purchase the premium plan or utilize funds to purchase a high deductible plan with the implementation of an HSA. MVP currently has lower rates than Blue Cross Blue shield by 3.5%. Health insurance is increasing for two reasons one is the percent increase from the rates and the

second is the makeup of employees and what plans they are eligible for. In 2023 the town spent \$107,402 on health insurance and it's expected that in 2024 this will increase to \$123,647. This amount is reduced by \$17,000 because the new employees will not be eligible for health insurance based on their probationary. V. Taylor move to approve the 2024 funding levels as recommended.

2024 Funding Levels		BUYOUT
<b>SINGLE</b>	<b>12,186</b>	<b>4874</b>
<b>TWO PERSON</b>	<b>24,372</b>	<b>9749</b>
<b>PARENT/CHILD</b>	<b>23,519</b>	<b>9407</b>
<b>FAMILY</b>	<b>34,242</b>	<b>13697</b>

Motion seconded by S. Bridge. The select board unanimously approved the motion.

*US Route 4 Speed Limit and Safety* V. Taylor reported that Mendon is requesting a speed reduction on Route 4. Mendon is looking to coordinate this speed limit reduction request with neighboring towns of Killington and Rutland Town. Rutland Town has a Selectboard meeting on November 21<sup>st</sup>. Motion by S. Bridge to have V. Taylor represent Mendon at the Rutland Town Selectboard Meeting on November 21, 2024. Motion seconded by V. Taylor. The motion passed.

*Highway Staff* S. Tully reported that the town is in the final stages of hiring seasonal and permanent employees for the highway staff. Currently pre-employment requirements are being conducted and hope to have new employees on board by November 27th.

V. Taylor moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:37 PM. Motion seconded by S. Bridge. The motion passed.

Date Approved \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Val Taylor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Sara Tully - Clerk of the Board

\_\_\_\_\_  
Seth Bridge