



Village of Manchester, Vermont

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DRAFT MINUTES

**Regular Meeting of the Village of Manchester Board of Trustees
Monday, January 9, 2023, at 4:30 pm
Village of Manchester Office, 45 Union Street, Manchester Village**

Present: President Tom Deck; Trustees: Jim Lewis, Anthony MacLaurin; Clerk/Treasurer and Tax Collector Donald Brodie; Office Administrator/Asst. Clerk & Treasurer Missy Johnson

President Deck opened the meeting at 4:31 pm.

President Deck ask for a motion to add two items on the agenda to be discussed in Old Business. Trustee Lewis moved to add a discussion on Cannabis Opt-In/Out and discussion on employee succession. Trustee MacLaurin seconded the motion, and all voted in favor.

Trustee MacLaurin moved to approve the minutes from the December 5, 2022 Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees. Trustee Lewis seconded the motion, and all voted in favor.

President Deck spoke about Brian Knight and his long-time service to the Village of Manchester. All in attendance participated in a moment of silence for Brian who held a position as trustee and President of the Village of Manchester Board of Trustees for 25 years, and who passed on December 28, 2022.

President Deck introduced Attorney John (Jack) A. Facey, III from Facey, Goss & McPhee P.C and thanked Ms. Johnson for working on the attorney search. Mr. Facey introduced himself and touched on the experience he and those in his firm had in representing other municipalities and municipal districts. He explained how those experiences could help the Village of Manchester should his firm be chosen to represent and assist the Village of Manchester with its legal matters. Comments were made by the BOT and the previous BOT President regarding the needs for certain areas of expertise and an understanding of Village business. Questions were posed and answered. It was stressed that the board was looking for good communication and responsiveness.

Ms. Johnson provided an update on how the Town of Manchester came to impose an Option Tax on Village of Manchester businesses. She mentioned that she was conversing with a representative from the State of Vermont Treasurers' Office and that certain questions were outstanding. Another update will be scheduled for the next BOT meeting.

President Deck showed the BOT and those in attendance a map of the area near River Road, Ekwanok, Taconic and Route 7A, and showed 3 locations where a new crosswalk could be installed. This crosswalk project would be in conjunction with a property owner's desire to install an extension of marble sidewalk across the front of their property at their cost. It was mentioned that trees in this area would need to be moved. An estimate of the cost for the project as far as it pertained to the Village was discussed. It was noted that Ed's Masonry would need to be contacted soon if this project will be completed during the

summer of 2023. Several people spoke about the location of the crosswalk and consensus was that the southern most option would be the best safety wise. A comment was made that there should be flashing lights on the crosswalk sign.

The BOT reviewed the 2023 State of Vermont Certificate of Highway Mileage. Ms. Johnson explained that a section of Class 2 Road had been removed from the Certificate in 2022. The Village road foreman gave direction to have that section of road re-added to the Certificate this year as it's removal in 2022 was done in error. Trustee Lewis moved to have the section of road (0.09) added to Class 2 Roadways on the 2023 Certificate of Highway Mileage and to otherwise approve the Certificate as provided. Trustee MacLaurin seconded the motion, and all voted in favor. The Certificate was signed by the BOT members present (a quorum) and the assistant clerk.

The Draft Village of Manchester Financial Policy was not approved by the Financial Investment Committee and therefore could not be proposed to the BOT at this meeting. It will be added to the agenda for next month.

Review and possible approval of Road Opening/Curb Cut Application for BBA at 43 Williams Street. The project and scope were briefly discussed. Trustee Lewis moved to approve the application as provided. Trustee MacLaurin seconded the motion, and all voted in favor.

The following reports were provided: Office Administration, Zoning Administrative Officer (by Tom Deck); Road & Trees, and Clerk/Treasurer and Tax Collector.

Keld Alstrup mentioned that there was a buildup of trash on River Road.

Russell Mills commented that a parking spot near his driveway on Seminary Avenue limited his line of sight when pulling out into traffic and he asked to have this spot removed.

Donald Brodie provided information on the potential of Town of Manchester officials to obtain grant money to make improvements for the Courthouse. A possible future as a community center was discussed although it was stated that nothing formal had been decided. The town may be requesting a letter of support from the Village.

Donald Brodie distributed a plan for tax sales and he recommended the Village follow this policy which mirror's the Town of Manchester's policy. Residents present showed support for this plan.

Donald Brodie officially introduced Sarah McIntock and mentioned that he would like her to begin the process of taking over his duties as treasurer so that she can be fully trained by the Annual Meeting election in July. He asked the board to vote on making her an assistant treasurer. Ms. Johnson provided information recently received from the Vermont League of Cities and Towns that indicated Ms. McIntock could be allowed to train for this position as treasurer but that only one assistant treasurer could be appointed at a time. It was mentioned that the treasurer position was not an appointed position but an elected position that commenced upon election. Orland Campbell mentioned that if Montpelier provided guidance on an issue that it would be wise to adhere to that guidance. Mr. Brodie indicted that he did not care about the guidance that was provided. Trustee MacLaurin moved to allow Ms. McIntock to train with Mr. Brodie with a title to be determined. Trustee Lewis seconded the motion, and all voted in favor. Trustee MacLaurin indicated that he felt Ms. Johnson had too much authority. *(Note: it was later brought to the BOT's attention that this vote may not have been valid as it was not warned on the agenda for this meeting.)*

In "Old Business":

- President Deck indicated that the new website will be ready by this coming week and that the office staff will have the ability to post directly to the site which should alleviate delays. It was also mentioned that the Energy Plan needed to be posted to the site.
- President Deck met with a potential candidate for the interim place on the BOT. He mentioned that was meeting with a second potential candidate but that a committee may need to be formed to find someone to fill this position until July.
- The Cannabis Business Option was discussed as was potential plans to add this matter to the agenda for the Annual Meeting. Trustee MacLaurin would like to see a vote happen as soon as possible on this matter. Ms. Johnson and Mr. Campbell both voiced concerns about pulling together a vote on this quickly, as the vote must be held by Australian Ballot. The difference between Australian Ballot and a Floor Vote was provided.
- Employee Succession was discussed. Trustee MacLaurin again mentioned his concerns that no one was poised to take over in the absence of either the road foreman or the office administrator. He continued by saying that he would like to see people trained in these positions should something happen to either of these employees. President Deck indicated that he had been informed that the road foreman would not be retiring for approximately five years and that this time-period allowed adequate training of a candidate with the addition of having the Road Foreman available as a consultant after he retires. It was generally determined that this solution was adequate.

Ms. Johnson was asked how she felt about training someone to replace her. She indicated that like the road foreman, she would like to continue to work for the Village until she was ready to retire. She presented an alternative plan to provide the BOT with a detailed job description/calendar and to train someone in the basic weekly duties that are part of her job description. She reiterated that there was also back-up available through NEMRC.

Orland Campbell questioned why only the two employees were being singled out in this concern. Ms. Johnson indicated that she could fill in for the Zoning Administrative Officer should there be a need until a permanent replacement could be found.

In "New Business";

Marian Haines noted that she had concerns regarding the demolition of a building on Main Street but that she investigated the matter and reviewed the zoning file and was please to discover that the plan for the property is clear, and that she was no longer opposed to the project. She also mentioned that she liked the addition of the wording at the bottom of the agenda and would like to see the message in bold red lettering. She mentioned that the new sandwich boards advertising the BOT meetings was a "move in the right direction."

As there was no further business before the BOT, Trustee Lewis moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:11 pm. Trustee MacLaurin seconded the motion, and all voted in favor.

The next Regular Meeting of the Village of Manchester Board of Trustees will be held on February 6, 2023.

Respectfully Submitted,
Missy Johnson, Office Administrator