



# Village of Manchester, Vermont

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## Draft Minutes

### **Regular Meeting of the Village of Manchester Board of Trustees**

**Monday, October 2, 2023 at 4:30 pm**

**Village of Manchester Offices**

**45 Union Street, Manchester, Vermont**

In Attendance: President Deck; Trustees: Jim Lewis, Anthony MacLaurin, Nina Mooney; Treasurer Sarah McClintock; Clerk Donald Brodie; Village Administrator Missy Johnson

Public: Brian Maggiotto

President Deck called the meeting to order at 4:30 pm. He indicated that the agenda did not necessitate a long meeting and he hoped the meeting would adjourn before 5:30 pm.

President Deck moved to add discussion and possible approval of a new Fidelity account to New Business. Trustee Lewis seconded the motion, and all voted in favor.

Trustee Mooney asked to have a discussion on Act 250 developments involving Burr & Burton. After a short discussion and a recommendation from Ms. Johnson, this topic was tabled for the next Development Review Board meeting.

President Deck asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the September meeting of the BOT. Trustee MacLaurin mentioned a typo in paragraph five where a word was inserted twice. He then moved to approve the minutes with this correction. Trustee Lewis seconded the motion, and all voted in favor.

President Deck provided the wording on a formal resolution for the Municipal Planning grant previously approved by the BOT. Trustee MacLaurin moved to approve the resolution. Trustee Mooney seconded the motion, and all voted in favor. The document was signed and returned to President Deck. The board then considered a proposed lease provided by the Town of Manchester for the office space at 45 Union Street. Several trustees mentioned they objected to the amount of the rent requested in the draft. The possibility of leasing the entire building from the town was mentioned. The time needed to determine whether taking on the whole building would be advisable was discussed. Ms. Johnson and Ms. McClintock mentioned that it might be best to have a lease at least for the short term as the draft does contain some protection regarding the town's responsibilities with the building. It was mentioned that having the Village offices in the building was a service to the town.

Mr. Maggiotto spoke and asked why the courthouse was under the control of the Town of Manchester. There was review of the findings of the Vermont Courts on this subject, but all agreed that ownership might still be in question. Certainly, the land under the building may belong to the Village of

Manchester. Additionally, due to the building's historical nature and background as a Village icon, the ownership should lean toward it belonging to the Village of Manchester and not the Town. It was also mentioned that if the Courthouse was not owned by the Village that perhaps it could be a taxable property.

After the board elaborated on the discussions outlined above, Trustee Mooney moved to complete a draft Lease for the Town's consideration, for the period of one year, at \$800 per month. Trustee MacLaurin seconded the motion, and all voted in favor.

The board then discussed a proposed job description for the Village Administrator. Trustee MacLaurin asked that knowledge of software, management of the website, and responsibility for setting up Zoom meetings for the BOT be added to the duties outlined in the document. Ms. Johnson was questioned and indicated that wording existed in the description for knowledge of software; that the website is currently being handled by the Zoning Administrative Officer; and that Zoom meeting setup could be added to the list of responsibilities. Trustee MacLaurin also asked to know who was maintaining the exiting email list for the Village. Ms. Johnson provided some background on this duty and indicated that the project had landed with her. After a comment by Trustee MacLaurin, she indicated that this duty could also be officially added to the list of responsibilities in the job description. President Deck moved to approve the job description as amended, and to add the responsibility of website updating to the Zoning Administrative Officer's job description. Trustee MacLaurin seconded the motion, and all voted in favor.

Discussion continued regarding the Courthouse and the Village's use of the building in the future. President Deck reiterated that he would like to form a committee that included people from the Town of Manchester. He mentioned this was going to require a lot of work but that some of the costs could be offset by grants and the renting of office space. Options for fuel alternative heating/cooling may also make sense. The feasibility of the plan appeared to be the first step in the process as the Village needs to figure out if it wants the building. Mr. Maggiotto asked if the Town was willing to sell the building rather than have the Village rent it. Owning the building may have some benefits for grants that leasing the property would not provide. It was mentioned that a huge amount of due diligence is needed to go into this project. The positive side of owning the building vs. renting it was discussed. President Deck mentioned that a vision for this project was necessary that would paint a picture of how the building would benefit the residents of the Village. Liability issues of the building were discussed, and it was determined that an inspection of the building should occur before further discussion takes place. Trustee Mooney expressed that she liked the idea of the main part of the building being used for flex space that is available to everyone. President Deck volunteered to help the process by having a discussion with a local architect who knows about the building.

Ms. Johnson provided a brief report. All taxes paid in a timely manner have been processed. It appears the Village still has approximately \$40,000 of taxes still outstanding. Because the payments are still coming in, a more formal report will be available at the November meeting. She thanked Ms. McClintock, Mr. Brodie and Ms. Towsley for their assistance during the tax season. She stated the month had been a very welcome revolving door of Villagers, some whom we only see once a year. The extra assistance during this time was very appreciated.

The Zoning Administrative Officer's Report was provided in hard copy earlier in the day and was provided to the BOT.

Mr. Lewis provided the Road and Trees Report. Photos of the Stonewall Project on River Road were distributed. The Board thanked and applauded Mr. Mowrey and Mr. Stannard for their hard work and

for Mr. Mowrey's diligence, knowledge, and resourcefulness on this project. Mr. Lewis mentioned that due to the amount of work needed, the project would probably not be finished until the spring. Striping on Seminary Avenue has been scheduled; however, like years past, the company is running into problems with weather etc. There were questions about the new crosswalk and indication that signs need to be put up. It was mentioned that a couple of complaints had been voiced. Mr. Lewis indicated that he thought that once the striping was in, signs would not be needed.

There were questions regarding the tree work scheduled for this year. Continued discussion regarding the condition of the trees that had been planted in the last two years took place.

Ms. McClintock provided the Treasurer's report. Monthly financial statements were reviewed. It was determined that a work session with NEMRC was necessary and will be scheduled as soon as possible. Ms. McClintock mentioned that it was a successful tax season and that a delinquent taxpayer had paid back taxes and had agreed to a payment plan for this coming year. It was also mentioned that another delinquent taxpayer appears to have moved with no forwarding address.

In new business Trustee Mooney moved to open an Operational Account with Fidelity and to deposit the amount of \$723,489 into this account while making assurances that liquid operating expenses would be maintained at \$100,000 in the current checking account. Trustee Lewis seconded the motion, and all voted in favor.

Trustee Lewis moved to go into Executive Session to discuss legal matters. Trustee Mooney seconded the motion, and all voted in favor. The board went into executive session at 5:29 PM.

The board exited Executive Session at 5:31 PM. No vote was taken.

As there was no further business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 5:31 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Missy Johnson  
Village Administrator

*The next Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees is currently scheduled for Monday, November 6, 2023.*