



Village of Manchester, Vermont

Village of Manchester Board of Trustees Public Hearing & Regular Meeting Agenda

Via Zoom & 45 Union Street
Manchester, VT 05254
Monday, December 4, 2023
4:00 pm

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DRAFT MINUTES OF PUBLIC HEARING & REGULAR MEETING

In attendance: President Tom Deck, Trustees: Jim Lewis, Nina Mooney, Anthony MacLaurin, Peter Mull (Zoom); Clerk Donald Brodie; Treasurer & Tax Collector Sarah McClintock, Missy Johnson

Public: Missy Levis, Rich Heilemann, Keld Alstrup, Chrisian Weigand, Claudia Burns, Warren Cairo, Max Levis

President Deck brought the First/Final Board of Trustees Public Hearing on proposed revisions to the Village of Manchester Zoning Bylaw to order at 4:00 pm.

Planning Commission Chair Rich Heilemann summarized the changes to the bylaw. He explained the changes were rather minor in nature and revolved around changing Vermont law and the need to have an updated bylaw to obtain a state grant to further modernize the document. The public was assured that the Planning Commission had worked closely with the regional commission (BCRC) on the changes.

Members of the public expressed concern that the document was not available earlier for review. It was mentioned that this hearing was actually the second hearing on the adoption of this document as the Planning Commission had held a public hearing as well. There were questions posed regarding an appendix to the document that was referenced but did not appear on the website version. It was confirmed that there were no proposed district changes to the bylaw at this time.

Trustee Mooney moved to adjourn the First/Final Board of Trustees Public Hearing on proposed revisions to the Village of Manchester Zoning Bylaw. Trustee MacLaurin seconded the motion, and all voted in favor.

President Deck called to order the Regular Meeting of the Village of Manchester Board of Trustees immediately following the public hearing.

President Deck asked, and Trustee Mooney moved to change the agenda to have the review of a letter regarding lighting at BBA placed under New Business. Trustee Mull seconded the motion, and all voted in favor.

Trustee MacLaurin moved to approve the minutes from the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees Minutes from November 6, 2023. Trustee Mooney seconded the motion, and all voted in favor.

President Deck then asked the BOT to consider approving the Zoning Bylaw changes discussed at the previous public hearing. He asked that the public hold comments in an effort to have the

changes approved in an expedient manner. He reiterated, as did Trustee MacLaurin point made during the Public Hearing. It was mentioned that this approval by the BOT was meant to be the “last stop” for the current version of the bylaws, but that the document could be considered a “draft or interim document” as additional modernization is expected to occur in the coming months. President Deck moved to approve the Bylaw as suggested by the Planning Commission with the condition that the redlined copy is available on the Village website for review. Trustee Mooney seconded the motion, and all voted in favor.

The board then continued on to discuss the Village of Manchester Short Term Rental Ordinance. President Deck provided a brief overview and explained the spirit of the ordinance. It was mentioned that the rules included are not overreaching. It was explained that this law would be the first step in trying to understand who is operating rentals of this nature in order to help preserve Village neighborhoods. It was noted that the language of the ordinance does not change or restrict rentals but would allow the municipality to get a handle on just what is going on within the Village in this regard, and to make sure safety issues are in place.

Trustee MacLaurin mentioned this ordinance was, in large part, borrowed from the same ordinance the Town of Peru enacted. He continued by saying the state is struggling with short term rentals because it is a factor in where we live and can affect entire communities. It was stated that this ordinance is a first step with additional changes possible in years to come.

The definition of STR was discussed. The safety aspects were read. Clarification of “Hotels” was discussed. It was generally agreed that future changes to the ordinance could address whether there was a delineation for hotels and other types of short-term rentals. Various options for the ordinance were discussed. It was mentioned that the document had been reviewed by Vermont League of Cities and Towns for legal purposes. The effect of short-term rentals on bookings at the Wilburton was mentioned as being about 1/3 of their bookings. It was mentioned that restrictions in this area could have a negative effect on their business. After additional discussion, Trustee Mooney moved to pass the Short-Term Rental Ordinance as written. President Deck seconded the motion, and all voted in favor.

The BOT then reviewed the final changes made to the draft Lease for the Village Office with the Town of Manchester. Trustee MacLaurin moved to approve the document with outlined changes incorporated and spelling errors corrected. Trustee Lewis seconded the motion, and all voted in favor.

The review, discussion, and possible approval of reduction in cost of BCBS coverage for member reaching retirement age was moved to executive session.

A request for the approval of a handicapped parking space in the front of the Village of Manchester Post Office was deemed not feasible as there is only parallel parking in this area.

There was review and discussion of a written concern regarding traffic issues at the intersection of Seminary Avenue, West Road and Route 7A. Previous traffic studies of this area were discussed and the approximate cost of a roundabout in this area (1.5 million) was mentioned. Other options were discussed including the restriction of cars allowed on campus, a better police presence and having bus collection points at areas around the campus to bus students in.

There was follow-up review and discussion of a new Village of Manchester policy for bringing matters before the BOT. The reasoning for the practice was presented and it was generally agreed to that the edits made to the original proposed document were more friendly and “cut to the chase.” Trustee Moony moved to approve the document with the changes presented. Trustee Mull seconded the motion, and all voted in favor.

Continued discussion on the Courthouse was tabled for the January meeting.

President Deck then mentioned that the Village Charter allowed the BOT to hire a Village Manager. An increase in the amount of work needed to be completed due to state mandates, too much reliance on volunteers and a need to keep a high level of professionalism were noted reasons for the addition. One resident expressed a desire to see a job description before a vote. Another expressed that the job could be part-time. Trustee Lewis moved to hire a Village Manager. Trustee Mooney seconded the motion, and all voted in favor.

Ms. Johnson mentioned that the village administration update had been covered by the items in the agenda.

Trustee Lewis noted that a tree had been added to the tree list for this year. It was confirmed that Kyle Zecher Tree Care got the bid for this year’s tree work. Salt use is down due to the weather.

Ms. McClintock provided the Treasurer & Tax Collector’s report. Ninety-five percent of the tax revenue has been collected, \$33,000 in taxes are currently outstanding for the last 3 years. A review of the top unpaid taxes recently took place with the top 5 properties already working with the Village on payments.

In Old Business, records relating to the National Register of Historic Places scheduled to be turned over to the Village of Manchester will be tabled until the January meeting as Ms. Haines was not present at the December meeting.

In New Business a letter addressing lighting on Seminary Avenue was read. As a site visit and possible discussion with BBA may be necessary, this matter will be placed on the January, 2024 BOT agenda for follow-up. Mr. Brodie indicated that this area may be a good candidate for a flashing light crosswalk.

At 5:14 pm, the board exited the Regular Meeting to go into Executive Session to discuss personnel matters.

At 5:43 the BOT exited Executive Session and voted unanimously to hire Curan Van Der Wielan, as the Village of Manchester Zoning Administrative Officer. It was agreed that Mr. Brodie and President Deck would meet with Ms. Johnson to discuss the BCBS coverage for the member reaching retirement age and that this matter would be followed up on at the January BOT meeting.

There being no further business before the Board of Trustees, the meeting was adjourned at 5:45 pm.

The next Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees will be held on Monday, January 8, 2024 due to the New Year holiday.