



Village of Manchester, Vermont

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DRAFT MINUTES

Special Meeting and Regular Meeting of the Village of Manchester Board of Trustees
Monday, March 4, 2024 at 4:30 pm
Village of Manchester Offices
45 Union Street, Manchester, Vermont

In Attendance: President Tom Deck, Trustees: Jim Lewis (Zoom); Anthony MacLaurin, Peter Mull; Treasurer and Tax Collector Sarah McClintok; Clerk Donald Brodie; Asst. Clerk & Treasurer Missy Johnson

Public: Keld Alstrup; Suzi Nemeč (Zoom), Bill Juan (Zoom), "J" (Zoom)

President Deck brought the meeting to order at 4:30 pm. It was mentioned that a Public Hearing was not necessary to amend the Short-Term Rental Ordinance and this matter was moved to the Regular Meeting Agenda. It was also mentioned that item #3 on the Agenda would be brief as the Village is waiting for a traffic study to be completed.

Ms. Johnson expressed her apology for not catching the misspelling of Trustee MacLaurin's last name in the minutes from the February 5, 2024, Regular Meeting of the BOT. Trustee Mooney moved to approve the minutes with these corrections. Trustee Mull seconded the motion, and all voted in favor.

Validation of traffic changes in the BBA School Zone were discussed. The BCRC is currently conducting traffic studies in this area. Once they are complete, the board will meet, possibly in a Special Meeting, to discuss any possible modifications before voting on any changes to the existing Village Traffic Ordinance. President Deck mentioned that the review of these changes in the School Zone has uncovered the need to update the current Village Traffic Ordinances in whole. It was discussed that this is a project that may take some time to bring to fruition. A plan to get the project underway will be discussed in open meeting(s) in the coming months.

The Board reviewed a quote provided on Short-Term Disability Insurance for the Village of Manchester staff. After a brief discussion the topic was tabled for the next meeting.

There was discussion on the reason the Village of Manchester no longer sees any funds from the State of Vermont regarding traffic tickets being issued within Village boundaries. These payments dropped off suddenly about three years ago with no notification provided by the Town of Manchester or the State of Vermont for this change. It was mentioned that both the town manager and chief of police have already been asked about this issue and the Village has yet to receive an answer. It was determined that President Deck will reach out to the town manager by email once more. If the questions can be resolved, no further steps will be taken; however, if questions remain, President Deck has authorization from the BOT to ask the town manager to place this matter on a Town of Manchester Selectboard agenda for discussion and hopefully resolution.

President Deck provided information about a recent meeting with State of Vermont Wetlands and Stream experts to rule out the need for possible applications in regard to the Union Street Culvert replacement. The BCRC has been helpful in assisting the Village in acquiring a Grant In Aid which should cover a large portion of the finances needed for this project. Bids will go out soon for excavation companies. It is expected that the street may be closed either partially or in full for one day during the construction. Additional updates will be forthcoming. Trustee Mooney moved to apply for the Grant In Aid. Trustee Mull seconded the motion, and all voted in favor. President Deck signed the agreement on behalf of the board and returned the document to Ms. Johnson for processing.

Trustee MacLaurin moved to approve the following State of Vermont Liquor Licenses: The Wilburton, Silver Fork, Curate Café, and The Taconic Hotel. Trustee Mull seconded the motion, and all voted in favor.

Ms. Johnson provided that visitors in the Village Office were increasing in numbers as it does in every Spring. She mentioned that she was busy finishing up projects because budget/Annual Report season is fast approaching. She provided a brief review of a recent webinar on annual meetings presented by VLCT and mentioned issues in obtaining credentials with new government websites.

President Deck mentioned that there were very few zoning and planning permits in the last month. He and Mr. VanDerWeilen will be working on issues pertaining to the Courthouse in the coming weeks as well as other projects.

Trustee Lewis provided a Roads & Trees update and nominated Trustees Mull and Mooney to pick out a "Holiday" Evergreen tree at a local nursery for planting in the Village Green. It is the board's goal to have this tree decorated for the holidays each year. Trustee Deck moved to allocate up to \$5,000 for the purchase of the tree. Trustee Lewis seconded the motion, and all voted in favor.

A large shout out to Alan Mowrey the Village Highway Forman. He has been working quite a bit on his own recently and doing an excellent job. His sacrifice and hard work during the evening hours in getting the Union Street culvert repaired was mentioned as was his retrofitting of a plow part that he did on his own, with his own tools. The Board expressed its appreciation and noted the amount of money that is saved by having Mr. Mowrey as a Village employee. Great job!

Mr. Alstrup mentioned that there are some areas that appear to be breaking down on the left side of River Road.

Mr. Brodie mentioned that it is time to start thinking about budget items. A schedule of meetings will be prepared and circulated in the coming weeks. He mentioned that the date of the Annual Meeting this year is July 8, 2024, at 7:00 pm. He discussed the Bennington County Annual Report.

Ms. McClintock provided information on a recent payment of back taxes and mentioned that there is only one other seriously overdue property in the Village.

In Old Business – neither item on the agenda was ripe for an update. Both items, the Manchester Village National Historic District update and the Bennington County Courthouse will be placed on the agenda for the April meeting.

In New Business it was mentioned that a couple of the older homes on Route 7A were looking “messy”, and it was asked what could be done to have the owners clean up their properties. President Deck mentioned the ZAO may have information on what can be done. Some Trustees mentioned that perhaps the owners may be older and that it may be kind to offer to help with a cleanup effort.

With no other regular business before it, President Deck moved to go into Executive Session to discuss an employee matter (5:29 pm).

At 5:47 pm the Trustees exited Executive Session. Trustee Lewis moved to approve a set amount of funds for a Village Employee who will be out of work while they undergo medical treatment. Trustee Mull seconded the motion, and all voted in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 5:58 pm.

The next Regular Meeting of the Village of Manchester Board of Trustees is currently scheduled for Monday, April 1, 2024, at 4:30 pm.