April 7th, 2025

Members Present: Tom Deck (Chair), Anthony MacLaurin, Jim Lewis, Nina Mooney, Scott Swinarton

Members Absent:

Others Present: Curan VanDerWielen (Interim Village Manager), Sarah McClintock (Village Treasurer)

Call to Order: 4:31 PM by Deck.

1. **Changes to Agenda:**

   No changes to the agenda were noted. Lewis asked if the Board needed an executive session to discuss Item 9 of the agenda. Deck and VanDerWielen responded that it was unnecessary.

Motion: To approve the agenda, as posted.

Motion made by Deck. Motion seconded by MacLaurin.

Motion approved unanimously.

2. **Approval of the draft meeting minutes for the regular and special meetings held March 3rd, 2025**

Motion: To approve the minutes of the regular meeting of the BoT held Monday, March 3rd, as submitted.

Motion made by Deck. Motion seconded by Swinarton.

Motion approved unanimously.

Motion: To approve the minutes of the special meeting of the BoT held Monday, March 3rd, as submitted.

Motion made by Mooney. Motion seconded by Deck.

Motion approved unanimously.

3. **Monthly Reports**

   a. **Road Commissioner**

   Lewis asked VanDerWielen to comment on the staffing situation with the Highways Department. VanDerWielen noted that Scott Stannard had recently resigned from his role as Road Specialist and that ads had been rolled out to find a replacement for the role. Deck asked VanDerWielen to comment on the status and role of VTRANS grants for the next fiscal year. VanDerWielen noted a recent conversation he had conducted with staff from VTRANS regarding grants for this year, and that it appeared improbable that Manchester Village would be awarded any significant sums due to its recent major grant award for the River Road wall project. VanDerWielen noted that he would be submitting multiple applications regardless in case partial awards became available, and to assist VTRANS in demonstrating need for Bennington County, more widely. MacLaurin expressed concern about the availability of grants in future years due to recent changes of priority at the Federal level.

A short discussion ensued regarding the design and potential cost of the proposed Ways Lane paving project for next fiscal year. It was resolved to discuss the matter in more detail during the budgeting process. Mooney noted possible repair items for a couple of streetlights along Main Street.

b. Tree Warden

Lewis noted the ongoing issue with the Emerald Ash Borer and the likely need to remove several dead or dying ash trees, which he would discuss with VanDerWielen to budget for appropriately in the next fiscal year. Swinarton noted issues near his residence regarding the maintenance of trees and electric lines, resulting in possibly dangerous power surges in the area.

c. Village Manager

VanDerWielen noted several updates regarding general administration within the Village Offices, including the wrapping up of the Village's ARPA reporting in April, the ongoing Zoning Administrator and Road Specialist searches, the steady continuation of daily operations and the cleaning up of financial records, and ongoing work on communications items such as a monthly newsletter and a packet to send out to new residents.

d. Zoning Administrator

VanDerWielen noted that five permits had been issued over the past month and several zoning violation letters issued. VanDerWielen also reported on the ongoing work Planning Commission was pursuing regarding the Bylaw Modernization Project and that the Commission was reaching its final stages of review. A short discussion ensued regarding the recently permitted turfing of Burr and Burton Academy's Friendship Field.

e. Treasurer & Tax Collector

McClintock presented the Chart of Accounts, noting recent impacts of volatility in markets due to the Federal government's announcement on tariffs and explained the composition and outlook of each Fidelity account held by Village. McClintock noted that the Investment Committee had met earlier that day and resolved to hold all positions where they currently sit, due to the conservative makeup of the investments themselves. McClintock also presented the Budget Status Report, and Expenditures Report for the current period.

f. Clerk

Brodie noted VLCT's recent introduction of a Town Clerk's Handbook and noted the need to appoint an Assistant Village Clerk, nominating VanDerWielen for the role. It was resolved to appoint VanDerWielen as Assistant Village Clerk. Brodie noted VanDerWielen's appointment for the meeting minutes.

4. Review of State of Vermont Liquor License Applications

Deck introduced the topic of discussion. VanDerWielen recommended the Board approve all liquor license applications as listed, although noting that he had yet to receive the permit fee for Inn at Manchester's application.

Motion: To approve of all liquor licenses as submitted, including the Inn at Manchester's First Class License, pending payment.

Motion made by Deck. Motion seconded by MacLaurin.

Motion approved unanimously.

A short discussion ensued regarding the liquor licensing process and its history.

5. Review of Itinerant Vendor Permit Applications

VanDerWielen recommended striking Item 5(c) from the agenda as the application packet remained incomplete.

a. Mountain Fresh Bowls
VanDerWielen presented the materials for the application, noting its completeness, and recommended its approval. MacLaurin asked if the chairs proposed would be left overnight. Morrison answered that she would prefer to leave them overnight, due to their weight. Mooney asked about the design and placement of the sign. Morrison answered that the sign would be placed outside of the right-of-way in the flower beds aside the Orvis Outlet parking lot. A short discussion ensued regarding the placement and possible need to remove the chairs, nightly. It was resolved that so long as the chairs remained neatly organized and the sign was removed nightly, that their placement was permissible.

Motion: To approve of Itinerant Vendor Permit Application I-01-25.

Motion made by Deck. Motion seconded by Swinarton.

Motion approved unanimously.

b. **Big Pop's Sandwich Shop**
VanDerWielen presented the materials for the application, noting its completeness and unchanged status relative to last year, and recommended its approval. A discussion on the use of picnic tables and seating for the establishment ensued. Mooney noted the need for the applicant to bring in their sign overnight. VanDerWielen noted that he had made the applicant aware of the need.

Motion: To approve of Itinerant Vendor Permit Application I-02-25.

Motion made by MacLaurin. Motion seconded by Swinarton.

Motion approved unanimously.

A short discussion ensued regarding the placement of seating and the difference between seating placed by the landowner and the applicant.

6. **Review of Annual Events Permit Applications**

a. **Equinox Resort, Various (4) Locations**
Deck introduced the topic of discussion. Brodie asked whether the Equinox Golf Course had the liquor licensing it needed for this year. VanDerWielen stated that he believed they did but would confirm after the meeting. VanDerWielen introduced the four permit applications submitted by Equinox Resort, noting each was complete and recommending all four for approval. VanDerWielen noted no noise complaints assigned to any during the preceding period.

Motion: To approve of all four Equinox Resort Annual Events Permits.

Motion made by Lewis. Motion seconded by MacLaurin.

Motion approved unanimously.

Brodie asked about the status of obtaining a decibel meter from the Wilburton Inn, based on discussion from its permit hearing. VanDerWielen noted that he would follow up. Swinarton asked about whether Reluctant Panther and Inn at Manchester pursued Annual Events Permits. VanDerWielen responded that entities usually pursued Annual Events Permits as a cost-effective means to permit across a year when hosting a large volume, whereas entities with limited volume generally permitted on a case-by-case basis. A short conversation ensued regarding the definition and enforcement of Special Events.

7. **Appointment of Assistant Village Clerk**

[Please refer to Item 3(f) on Page 3.]

8. Possible Allocation of Employee Benefit Funds to Offset Employee COBRA Continuation

Deck introduced the topic of discussion, noting that as part of the conversation regarding his recent resignation, himself and VanDerWielen had indicated the possibility of Village pursuing a continuation of his healthcare coverage until his disability payments started kicking in, several months down the road. Deck emphasized his belief that this was the right thing to do, given the circumstances, and that such coverage could appropriately be arranged under the Employee Benefit Fund, given his status still as an employee of the Village. Mooney asked why Stannard couldn't sign up for an alternative plan through Vermont Health Connect or another resource. VanDerWielen noted that such a path could interrupt ongoing medical treatments, but that he was working with partial information. MacLaurin asked about the cost of the proposal. Deck responded that it was likely around $1,000.00 per month, for up to a six-month period. A short discussion ensued regarding the number of months and the proposed cost. It was resolved to approve of a three-month period of coverage and to check back in with Stannard after the three-month period to reassess.

Motion: To approve of a three-month allocation of employee benefit funds to offset an employee's COBRA continuation coverage.

Motion made by Mooney. Motion seconded by Swinarton.

Motion approved unanimously.

New Business:

VanDerWielen noted that he would be out of the office on April 14th and 15th.

Mooney asked about the timing of the curb project outside of the Equinox Junior Shops. VanDerWielen responded that Alan Mowrey had indicated to him that he intended to start in May.

MacLaurin asked about the documentation and reporting of road signage within Village. Deck stated that that item as it pertained to a speeding issue the previous year had been resolved.

Swinarton expressed concern over the maintenance of several properties within Manchester Village and asked about avenues to resolve such maintenance issues. VanDerWielen noted that the issue was already on the Planning Commission's radar and that a property maintenance ordinance was likely to be designed by the Commission after it had completed its Bylaw Modernization Project. A short discussion ensued regarding several specific properties and their status.

Old Business:

The Board reviewed the police reports supplied by the Town of Manchester. A short conversation ensued regarding the statistics supplied.

Adjournment: 5:42 PM.

Motion made by Deck. Motion seconded by Lewis.

Motion approved unanimously.

The next regular meeting of the Board of Trustees will be held at 4:30 PM on Monday, May 5th, 2025.

Respectfully submitted,

Curan VanDerWielen
Interim Village Manager