VILLAGE OF MANCHESTER VERMONT

January 6th, 2025

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

Members Absent: Jim Lewis

Others Present: Curan VanDerWielen (Interim Village Manager), Sarah McClintock (Village Treasurer), Donald Brodie (Town Clerk), Jodi Morrison, and 1 Other

Call to Order: 4:30 PM by Deck.

1. **Changes to Agenda:**

   No changes were noted.

Motion: To approve the agenda, as posted.

Motion made by MacLaurin. Motion seconded by Swinarton.

Motion approved unanimously.

2. **Approval of the draft meeting minutes for the regular meeting held December 2nd, 2024**

Motion: To approve the minutes of the regular meeting of the BoT held Monday, December 2nd 2024.

Motion made by MacLaurin. Motion seconded by Swinarton.

Motion approved unanimously.

3. **Monthly Reports**

   a. **Road Commissioner**

   VanDerWielen reported in Lewis' absence. Regular road maintenance continued to be executed throughout December. VanDerWielen noted that Alan Mowrey was in the process of designing an addition to the street corner where Main Street and Union Street intersect, in front of the 'Little Equinox' shops.

   b. **Tree Warden**

   VanDerWielen reported in Lewis' absence. No items were reported.

   c. **Village Manager**

   VanDerWielen reported on the administrative work conducted by the office in December. Of note were that interviews for the open Zoning Administrator position were now being conducted by the Planning Commission search committee, that work had continued on correcting and improving financial reporting internally, that VanDerWielen and Kylie Allen (Village Bookkeeper) had attended a training with NEMRC on the 17th, and that all grants reporting and requisitions for CY2024 had been completed in full.

d. Zoning Administrator

VanDerWielen reported on the ongoing work of the Planning Commission regarding the Bylaw Modernization project, noting that the goalposts for the project had moved and that it was likely the draft bylaws would come to Board review now in the later Spring or even early Summer. Several major questions had been raised regarding the structure of the bylaws and a pair of resignations had hit the Commission in December, slowing work on the project. VanDerWielen also noted several minor zoning reporting questions and permits fielded in December, which had worked to resolve. Brodie emphasized the need to fill vacancies on Village boards.

e. Treasurer & Tax Collector

McClintock reported on the status of tax collection for Manchester Village, noting that ~98% of taxes had been collected to date. A second round of tax delinquency letters were to be sent out in the coming weeks.

McClintock then presented the financials of the organization, including the balance of accounts, expenditure report, and fund accounts report. McClintock noted that VanDerWielen and Allen would begin work on correcting fund accounting in January and would report on progress made in the next meeting (February). McClintock also noted that a transfer out of the Bank of Bennington checking account would be made immediately to the Fidelity investment accounts, considering how far over the policy-minimum the former currently stood.

f. Clerk

No updates were noted by the Clerk.

4. Continued discussion on the Itinerant Vendors and Possible Amendment to Section IV of the Village Ordinances

Deck introduced the topic of discussion and opened the floor to VanDerWielen to present. VanDerWielen presented the draft document. A discussion on the amendment was engaged with all present, at length. Key points highlighted were discussing the principle under which the Board would work to fairly distinguish between applications received simultaneously should the proposed permit cap be reached, discussing the appropriateness of allowing seating, discussing the appropriate use limitations, and whether to allow for flexibility regarding a permit cap in a Winter season.

No additional changes were immediately made to the draft document. Mooney asked VanDerWielen to research how the Town of Manchester handled the 'fairness' question regarding their permit cap and to relay options at the next regular meeting.

It was resolved to table the issue and re-visit an updated amendment in February.

5. **Discussion and Possible Vote on the Naming of Trail Off West Union Street to Allow for E911 Address Assignments**

Deck introduced the topic of discussion and opened the floor to VanDerWielen to explain further. VanDerWielen noted that he had been reached out to by Peter Brabazon at the Town regarding the assignment of E911 addresses to a few hunting cabins along the Red Gate Trail. The Village of Manchester would need to assign and report a street name for the trail in order for the Town to work with the state on the addresses, themselves. A short discussion ensued, at the end of which it was agreed to name the road as Red Gate Trail, in order to avoid any confusion.

Motion: Name the Road Beginning Off West Union Street as 'Red Gate Trail'

Motion made by Deck. Motion seconded by Mooney.

Motion approved unanimously.

6. **Review of Proposal for Services from Sullivan, Powers & Company Regarding the Structure and Term of Future Financial Reviews and Audits**

Deck introduced the topic of discussion and both McClintock and Brodie commented on the structure of the proposal. A brief discussion ensued, at the end of which it was resolved to accept the proposal, as written.

Motion: To Approve the Proposal for Services From Sullivan, Powers & Company

Motion made by Deck. Motion seconded by MacLaurin.

Motion approved unanimously.

New Business:

VanDerWielen raised the need for the Board to assign a Village Ethics Officer as part of a new law which had come into effect at the beginning of 2025, requiring municipalities to adopt ethics policies and assign an independent ethics officer. While the Village already maintained a set of ethics policies and procedures, it did not have an independent ethics officer. VanDerWielen suggested either appointing himself or Deck, given both of their existing roles in administering the Village ethics policy. It was resolved to appoint Deck to the role.

Motion: To appoint Tom Deck as the Village Ethics Officer

Motion made by Mooney. Motion seconded by MacLaurin.

Motion approved unanimously.

Old Business:

A short discussion was also held regarding police reporting and the provision of police reports from the Town of Manchester for the Trustee's review on a monthly basis.

Executive Session:

The Board of Trustees entered an Executive Session at 5:37 PM to discuss a personnel matter.

Adjournment (de facto): 5:49 PM.

The next regular meeting of the Board of Trustees will be held at 4:30 PM on Monday, February 3rd, 2025.

Respectfully submitted,

Curan VanDerWielen
Interim Village Manager