

TOWN OF WHEELOCK
Special Selectboard Meeting
Thursday, November 10, 2022, 6pm
Wheelock Town Hall and via Zoom
MINUTES

Present in person:

Selectboard: Ann Lawless, Mike Richardson. Jim Blackbird joined by phone for item #2.

Visitors: Linda Rhodes, John Vojta, Bradley Brewer, Tanya Brewer, Nathan Davis, Nicky St. Jean, Nick Heltzel. There were no attendees via Zoom.

Chair Ann opened the meeting at 6pm. She asked for any changes to the agenda. She suggested the following, which was agreed to by Mike: To add an item concerning the Town Hall ADA project, to vote to engage Greg Paus, Silver Ridge Design.

1. Appointments to Prudential Committee, Wheelock Fire District #1

Ann provided background and read the agenda article. Wheelock Fire District formed in 1991 to provide water to 20 or so residences plus town hall in Wheelock village. All the terms of district's prior Prudential Committee members and officers have expired. The Selectboard received a written request from Wheelock Fire District member and registered Wheelock voter Tanya Brewer. The letter asks the Wheelock Selectboard to appoint three Fire District members, Bradley Brewer, Nikki St. Jean, and Nate Davis, to an interim Prudential Committee, in accordance with 20 VSA, Chapter 171, Sections [2483](#) and [2485](#). All are district residents and Wheelock voters. The term of the appointments by the Selectboard shall expire at the next Annual or Special Meeting of the Fire District, to be duly warned and convened by the appointed Prudential Committee members. At that meeting, the members of the Fire District shall elect a Prudential Committee of three persons and officers.

Mike made a motion to so appoint, Ann seconded.

Discussion:

Ann noted there is a folder of founding documents 1991-2005 in the town office. There is a document that might be titled "Bylaws" or "Powers" but no-one present had a copy. It is different from the Rules and Procedures document which spells out items that would be expected to change and need updating over time, such as fees, shutoffs, delinquent payments etc. Jim Blackbird has been operating the district until he turned over his equipment and files to the Town Clerk on 11/3/22. Ann stated Jim's opinion is that members of the Prudential Committee must be property owners in the district. Nate confirmed he is a resident, renting, with intention to purchase. Ann stated she was not able to get a copy of the Powers document in time for this meeting, and also that this document may have been subsequently updated. She stated she did not have the authority to seek legal counsel, did not ask for it because this is really the fire district issue, not the town's. She suggested appointing all 3 proposed individuals, and if it turns out Nate is not eligible, he can step down, but there would still be 2 appointed members who could warn the meeting of the district members. She asked if anyone else present would like to be appointed, and no-one offered.

Nate asked about the selectboard's role. Ann said the state's [guidance document](#) provides that in forming a fire district, the Selectboard, upon petition, makes the appointments to form the first Prudential Committee to run the district, and the Selectboard chair presides at their first meeting. She stated the current request is not to form a new district; it is to fix a dysfunctional one, and the guidance provides for the Selectboard to appoint new Prudential Committee members in case of vacancy.

Mike noted there are addresses in Jim's records so the appointees can mail a warning to every district household. In small towns people often disagree but he hopes people can come together. "You've got motivation, just need to connect the dots." He expressed appreciation for Jim's work over the years, as did Ann, noting there was not a perfect governance situation but Jim deserves credit for keeping the system running so households have water.

Linda explained she has been a district member since its founding, and it was a real need at the time. In the early days and over the years there were very few people who attended meetings, gradually no one except Jim running things. She thanked Jim and thanked the nominees for stepping up. She noted at the last shutoff in Sept. 2022 Jim did get 2 days of help from the VT Rural Water District Association to get her water running, as she had been without for a week.

At approximately 6:20pm the motion was voted unanimously, with congratulations and best wishes expressed to Bradley, Nate and Nikki.

Ann thanked those who attended, and invited all to stay. Several visitors left.

2. Vote to engage architect Greg Paus, Silver Ridge Design for Accessibility Improvements

At 6:27pm Jim joined by phone.

Ann explained the Selectboard had engaged Ryan Edwards but he recently notified us he could not start in Nov. as planned until February. He provided contact info for four other architects. Ann contacted them all and met with two: Greg Paus, Hyde Park, visited Fri. Nov 4; James Coe, Glover, visited Nov. 9. Rob Brown, Sheffield/St. Johnsbury is no longer doing municipal projects and she has not heard back from Tim Kane, E Hardwick.

Ann read Greg's proposal (appended), reported on his references she checked, and noted Greg had also sent a fee schedule: \$110 per architect hour; mileage \$.625; copying fees.

Mike made a motion to engage Greg Paus according to his proposal, which includes a payment of \$5,720 to complete Phase I. Ann seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

3. At 6:37pm Ann made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mike, carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Ann Lawless

(update and Silver Ridge Design proposal appended)

Selectboard signatures:

UPDATE - Architect for Town Hall ADA. 11/10/2022. From Ann

Background:

Ryan Edwards wrote to me right before the 10/4 SB meeting. He said he could not work with us in Nov/Dec as he had initially planned because one of his jobs is going into construction now but he could start in the spring. He provided contact information for 4 architects suggesting we reach out to them to find someone who would be acceptable and could start right away. On 11/1 we voted to contact them. I contacted them all on 11/3.

- Greg Paus, Silver Ridge Design (Hyde Park) followed up immediately and visited Town Hall with me on Friday 11/4. See proposal in the email copied below.
- I met with James Coe (Glover) at Town Hall on Wed. 11/9. He would like to work with us but cannot start until January. I plan to follow up with him after 11/10.
- Rob Brown (Sheffield/St. J) called back 11/9. He prefers not to do any more municipal projects and is leaving for France for the winter.
- No word back yet from Tim Kane (E Hardwick).

Greg Paus:

He is an experienced architect. He has done many municipal projects in small towns mostly in Lamoille County, including the Gihon Valley Grange in N Hyde Park, a large addition to the Morrisville Public Library, auditorium at Bishop Marshall School, 30 years of commercial work at Smugglers Notch including a new home for the owner, and many private homes. The 2018 Hyde Park Town Report contains a dedication to him in honor of his 30 years of service to his town and surrounding community. He serves on the VT Arts Council Board and Lamoille County Regional Planning Commission. He provided 4 references.

Reference Checks:

- Kimberly Moulton, Town Clerk Kim@hydeparkvt.com, 802-888-2300. Spoke with someone in the office. Kim is out on extended medical leave.
- Ron Rodjensky, Town Administrator Ron@hydeparkvt.com, 802-888-2300. 11/10 Spoke with Ron. Greg has done many projects with the town: garage, rail trail kiosk, lighting upgrade, currently working on town office ADA upgrade. He is understanding of town constraints, a good listener, spends the time, easy to work with, stays on top of projects. 2 possible concerns: (1) He does everything by hand, including any revisions. No digital. However he does create a PDF. Ron said there are no negative consequences to this. (2) Hyde Park needed engineering work done concerning the grades for ramps and paths at the exterior. The town had to provide that separately.
- Bill Stritzler, Owner, Smugglers Notch Resort, 802-644-1234. 11/10 left mssg.
- Carrie Wilson, Head of School, Bishop Marshall School, 802-888-4758. Spoke 11/10. Greg designed a 52,000 sf. Addition with business office, 2 preK classrooms and more, completed Nov 2019. The exterior looks consistent with the existing building, but has a softer feel for preschoolers inside. He has a nice eye for detail and was great to work with, and timely. She would hire him again any time.

Greg said he could work with the existing drawings created by prior architects, no need to reinvent the wheel. I sent him a lot of those files. He confirmed later by phone he can use Black

River's. I thought he had a good understanding of what we want – a no frills answer to our ADA and public safety deficiencies. He would like to work with local contractors on estimating the work. I think he would be easy to work with.

Knowing our tight timeline, he offered to send a written proposal in time for the special SB meeting on 11/10/2022, see below. This is not on the 11/10 warned special meeting agenda, but we could decide to add it to the agenda at the beginning of the meeting, and vote on engaging him for \$5,720 to complete Phase I.

11/9/2022

Proposal Outline from Greg Paus gap8246@aol.com, via email, to Ann

Hi Ann,

My secretary will be in my office tomorrow, so I'll put my proposal in this email.

The initial phase of renovation work at the Wheelock Town Hall is to determine what renovations are required to meet state and federal ADA requirements and to meet state codes as identified by a state fire marshal.

1. Two architects from our office will take site measurements required, and we will produce accurate existing conditions floor plans and building sections.
2. We will meet with Tim Angell, the state Fire Marshal, to determine the number of ADA bathrooms required, as well as fire separations between the town clerk's office and the meeting room. Other renovations will be required to accommodate the vertical lift and to correct code violations in stair and egress construction.
3. We will meet with Bob Weber of Accessibility Systems, Inc., to research and determine the type and location of vertical wheelchair lift(s) to access the town clerk's office and possibly the meeting hall and stage.

When the above listed work is complete, we will understand the renovations required to bring the building into conformance with state requirements. The cost to perform items 1 thru 3 is \$5,720.

At the conclusion of the initial phase, we will prepare a cost to do Phase 2, which will consist of preliminary design schemes to accomplish the design objectives. After the selectboard decides which scheme is most appropriate, we will prepare construction documents to go out to bid to qualified contractors. We will also fill out a Vt. Division of Fire Safety Construction Permit Application. Permit fees and submittal will be the responsibility of the Town of Wheelock.

Phase 3 will be the bidding procedure to select a contractor. We will make site visits to insure that the Contractor is following the plans and the work is of a high quality. Monthly requisitions will be reviewed and approved by us. We will be involved thru project closeout.

If you approve this proposal, our secretary will prepare a contract for our services. She returns to our office tomorrow, and I will have her print a copy of printing costs and miscellaneous expenses.

Thank you for the opportunity to prepare this proposal.

Greg Paus, Architect
Silver Ridge Design, Inc., Architects
37 Paus Lane
PO Box 32
Hyde Park, Vermont 05655