

Bellows Falls Village Trustees Regular Meeting
Tuesday, October 13, 2015

Present: Nancy McAuliffe, Evelyn Weeks, Sanford Martin, Stefan Golec, Colin James

Also Present: Willis D. Stearns, II, Municipal Manager; Kerry Bennett, Village Clerk; Steve Cenate, Bellows Falls Fire Department Deputy Chief, and Jon Bebey, Bellows Falls Firefighter

Press: Joey Powers, FACT8; Nancy Cavanaugh, Eagle Times

Call to Order: Meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Village President Nancy McAuliffe.

Additions to the Agenda for Routine Administrative Matters and/or Pressing Matters that will require ratification at a future meeting: None

Approve Minutes of September 8, 2015: *Sanford Martin made the motion to approve the minutes of September 8, 2015 as printed. Motion was seconded by Evelyn Weeks. Motion passed unanimously.*

Public Comment on Items not on the Agenda: (3 minutes per person): None

Manager's Report: None

Agenda:

1. Ratification of action taken at 9/8/2015 meeting: Stearns, noting that Golec was not present at the September 8, 2015 meeting, and reviewed the below 2 items for his benefit.

- a) Water Plant Drainage: *Colin James made the motion that the Bellows Falls Trustees ratify the vote taken on September 8, 2015. Motion was seconded by Evelyn Weeks. Motion passed unanimously.*
- b) Water/Wastewater Rates: Stearns reminded the Board that rates had been set during the budget process but no formal vote had been taken to adopt these rates. *Sanford Martin made the motion that the Bellows Falls Trustees ratify the vote taken at the September 8, 2015 meeting to adopt the water & wastewater rates as presented. Motion was seconded by Evelyn weeks. Motion passed with McAuliffe, James, Martin & Weeks voting in favor of the motion. Golec voted no.*

2. Updates

- a) Water Project: Stearns noted that the work to stub out the wastewater lines on Oak, Chase and Hadley Streets should be completed today and Henry Street should be paved next week.
- b) Wastewater Project: Stearns reported that this is still being held up in final design by USDA and there is nothing new to report.
- c) Route 5 (Atkinson Street) – State project: Stearns stated that paving was supposed to have begun yesterday but is now scheduled for Monday, October 19 with a possibility that some may be done this week Thursday or Friday. However, Stearns noted that there are still 30+ main gate structures that have not been raised so it is doubtful that this will occur as scheduled.

3. Finance Office – C. Stearns

- a) FY2016 YTD Budget Status: Stearns explained the upgrade expenses that have occurred at the Fire Department recently including software, computers and some equipment and answered specific line item questions from Board members.

It was also noted that revenue in the wastewater septage is way up and timber sales for the water department is also up. Stearns did note that the bid to be awarded tonight for timber sales will most likely be the last one for several years. Stearns stated that the overtime in the Water Department will be decreasing for now but will go up again in the spring when the project starts up again.

Golec noted some high utility delinquencies. Stearns stated that he has been in touch with New England Power, that has a bill of over \$40,000, and it is hoped that this will be resolved soon.

Stearns stated that the auditors will be back on October 30 for a final review. Stearns stated that he did ask them if there were any adjustments to be made and was told there were none. Stearns did state that he would like to thank Finance Assistant Nicole Gay for all her hard work during this audit process.

- b) Darby Hill Timber Sales Bid Award: Stearns stated that 3 bids were received and it is the recommendation of staff and State Forrester Tim Morton to award the bid to BK Skidding. *Stefan Golec made the motion to award the bid for the Bellows Falls Water Shed 2016 Oak-Pine-Pulp Sale to BK Skidding of Chester, VT for \$39,905.50 and authorize the Municipal Manager to sign any and all documentation for this project. Motion was seconded by Evelyn Weeks. Motion passed unanimously.*

4. Trustee Items

- a) Discuss Article on Fire Departments: Village President Nancy McAuliffe had included an article about the Port Huron Fire Department's about reducing response to medical calls. Martin stated that he is in favor of making this kind of a shift in the Bellows Falls Fire Department and feels it would be cost effective and practical. James disagreed asking why the Board would consider taking away a valuable service nothing that 80 to 95% of the time the Bellows Falls Fire Department is on scene prior to the ambulance. Weeks asked how medical calls could be separated from fire calls through a dispatch service. McAuliffe noted that earlier today during a meeting that she attended a woman fainted and 911 calls were made by several individuals. The ambulance arrived first and the BF Fire Department responded as well noting that there were 2 EMT's and 2 firefighters present which she felt could have been handled by the ambulance service. Bellows Falls Fire Deputy Chief Steve Cenate was present and did correct McAuliffe stating that the firefighters are EMT's as well.

Stearns commented on the article stating that the service there is through a hospital dispatch and the hospital makes the determination of who to send. It is not realistic to think that Keene Mutual Aid would or could make this type of assessment. Either the fire department responds or does not respond, simple choice. Stearns stated that we do have this service available and it is not a lot cheaper to do away with it.

McAuliffe asked Cenate to review the procedure and asked if a call is answered do they call in someone else to cover the station. Cenate explained the procedure and stated that no one is called to cover the station unless it is determined at the scene that those responding will be tied up for a long period of time. Cenate noted that when Keene Mutual Aid tones a medical emergency there is no way to know if an ambulance is actually going to show up or if they are out on another call or a transport. If Walpole Rescue is toned then it is clear that Golden Cross is unavailable. Cenate reported that this has happened 12 times in the past year. Cenate also stated that the new American Heart Association Guidelines encourages a team approach to dealing with a patient resulting in a better outcome for the patient. Cenate also noted that this service was stopped by the Trustees several years ago and it has been apparently since that time at Village Meeting that the voters want this service to remain. Cenate also reminded the Board that Golden Cross covers many other communities, not just Rockingham. Stearns also noted that Golden Cross has its own dispatch out of Claremont.

McAuliffe thanked Cenate for attending and his explanation of the procedures. Cenate did state that he is available daily for anyone who would like to stop by.

- b) Overnight Parking Permit Policy: Stearns noted that Martin had requested that this item be on the Joint Board Agenda in September. Stearns reminded the Board that this is a Joint Policy and the Selectboard approved the changes at that meeting. There were only 3 Trustees present and the vote taken was James and Weeks in favor and Golec opposed. The policy was therefore placed on this agenda for a vote. Stearns noted the changes to the policy were highlighted in red but were basically to allow non-residents the opportunity to purchase a year-round permit for \$80.00 noting that now a non-resident would have to purchase a guest permit for \$10.00 per month. *Sanford Martin made the motion to adopt the Town of Rockingham/Bellows Falls Village Corporation Municipal Overnight Parking Permit Policy as presented. Motion was seconded by Colin James. James stated that he felt a permit holder should be allowed to purchase a guest pass that can be utilized by several individuals when visiting. Stearns stated that each permit is administered to a particular vehicle registration and cannot be used for multiple vehicles. Motion passed with McAuliffe, James, Martin and Weeks*

Overtime & Comp Time Reports: No comments or concerns.

Review Fire Dept & Police Dept Call Logs: Martin noted that there has been a decrease in EMS calls. Cenate noted that the call logs are now posted on the Bellows Falls Fire Department Facebook page.

Review Agenda Items for Next Regular Trustees Meeting – November 10, 2015:

- FY2016 YTD Budget Status
- Possibly Final Audit
- Update Unsafe Buildings

James asked for a quick update on the unsafe buildings. Stearns reported that the owners have walked away from the 3 Pine Street and 25 Hapgood Street properties. However, the police department had recently ejected individuals apparently sent in to strip the property of any value. The 42 Green Street lot has been bought by a relative of the neighbor. Martin noted that while it is expensive he feels it is worth the time and expense to address these properties. Stearns did note that the liens placed on the 35 Front Street property and the 42 Green Street property have been paid by the mortgage companies.

Review Agenda Items for Joint Board Meeting – December 29, 2015: Stearns noted that historically this meeting, falling between Christmas and New Years, is cancelled and the Selectboard has made the motion to cancel at its 10/6 meeting. *Colin James made the motion to cancel the December 29, 2015 Joint Board Meeting. Motion was seconded by Sanford Martin. Motion passed unanimously.* Stearns did give the Board a heads-up that there may be a Special Joint Board Meeting just prior to the Merger Committee Meeting on October 27.

Approve Orders, Bills and Warrants: *Colin James made the motion to approve the orders, bills and warrants as presented. Motion was seconded by Evelyn Weeks. Motion passed unanimously.*

Other Business:

- James thanked the Bellows Falls Fire Department for the invitation to the Annual Parade stating that it was a beautiful day and the parade was very well attended.

Executive Session: No executive session was necessary.

Adjourn: *Evelyn Weeks made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:00 p.m. Motion was seconded by Sanford Martin. Motion passed unanimously.*

Attest: _____
Kerry Bennett, Village Clerk