

Regular Meeting of the Dorset Select Board

January 20, 2011 ~ Minutes

Present: Chris Brooks (Chairman), Marge Freed, Mike Connors, Michael Oltedal,
Brad Tyler

Absent:

Also, present: R. Gaiotti (Town Manager), Robert Gibney, Tyler Yandow, Marilyn Kinney, Pat Taylor, David Sands, Beth Meachem

C. Brooks, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

Approve Minutes of December 21, 2010

M. Oltedal moved and M. Connors seconded to approve the December 21, 2010 minutes as presented. Motion carried 4-0.

Board of Listers Update

R. Gibney, Chairman of the Board of Listers, reported that it was a very active year in real estate with prolonged trends in Vermont and particularly in Dorset. Three documents were presented:

- Residential Real Estate Market ~ a breakout of two years (2009-2010) showing the number of new listings has dropped with a continuation of a downward curve of sales along with increased length of time on the market.
- History of Equalized Education Grand List ~ the last Town property inspections for reappraisal were done in 2003 and a statistical reappraisal was completed in 2006. The CLA has gone up to 101.32 and the COD stands at 17.11 with the CLA still in an acceptable range. Property values have declined by approximately 6% with Dorset losing at a faster rate than other Towns due to higher property wealth. R. Gibney felt that, looking ahead one to two years, preparation should take place for a reappraisal as it takes a great deal of time to plan and execute. He explained that the quality of sales has gone down (arms length) causing difficulty with comparables. Dorset is not alone with this problem and discussions have been held about the solution to the problem. The reappraisal fund balance is \$86,000 - \$14,000 given each year by the State - and a complete property inspection could cost approximately \$200 per parcel.
- Grand List Comparisons ~ shows other Towns' CLA and COD numbers and R. Gibney noted that a good number of properties have been selling under assessed value. M. Freed requested that a presentation be held at the Annual Town Meeting and R. Gibney replied that the Listers were working on a presentation possibly with graphs and pie charts. He will work with R. Gaiotti on the reappraisal numbers for the next budget.

Planning Commission Interviews

Three applicants were present for interviews for the two open positions on the Planning Commission (Beth Meachem, David Sands & Pat Taylor). C. Brooks noted that an email from B. Breed was received requesting that the interviews be handled by the PC and C. Brooks explained that the positions on the Board have been open for 1½ years and it was the duty of the SB to appoint members. M. Connors moved and M. Freed seconded to move to Executive Session to hold interviews at 7:35 p.m. Motion carried 4-0. Executive Session ended at 8:34 p.m. with R. Gaiotti noting that there were two other applicants to be interviewed and a decision would not be made until all interviews were completed. T. Yandow spoke on behalf of P. Taylor noting she would be a good addition to the Board.

Public Hearing: FY2012 Municipal Budget

R. Gaiotti mentioned that the Select Board Legal line item was increased to \$7,500, but asked if the Board would like to increase the amount as \$15,818 has been spent in 2010. One legal item is still pending and has the potential for significant fees along with whatever else comes up. The amount was not changed. The Bennington County tax was decreased to \$55,000; the Bicenquingenary Celebration line item was increased by \$2,000 and the GNAT voter appropriation was decreased by \$2,000. The budget has increased 1.8% over last year by \$22,814. Discussion included fuel prices and the planning of the Bicenquingenary celebration. R. Gaiotti noted that the reserve funds along with transfers in and out have been included on the budget for the Town report as requested. M. Connors moved and M. Oltedal seconded to approve the FY2012 Municipal Budget as amended. Motion carried 5-0.

Town Meeting Warning

Article 19 was changed to "*Shall the voters appropriate the sum of \$2,500 for the support the East Dorset Cemetery Commission?*" The following articles to be re-numbered as numbers 20 and 21. R. Gaiotti opened the discussion about Article 7 noting that there is \$140,000 surplus carried over from FY2010. The auditor recommends that the Town keep a reserve fund balance for tax relief of 5% to 10% for operating costs in case there is a revenue slump. This will allow for filling in any gaps that may occur, such as loss of State aid for highways, and help to keep the tax rate level. M. Freed suggested that Article 7 remain as it is and this can be amended from the floor. R. Gaiotti noted that the difference in the tax rate with and without the surplus would be \$0.168 per \$100 and \$0.187 per \$100. C. Brooks asked that an informational packet be distributed at Town meeting regarding this subject. Article 18 concerning the Mettowee Valley Community Center will be taken out as they have not submitted a report or financials for the Town report as requested by voters. It was discussed if they could be covered under the Recreation Fund and it was requested that they come before the SB to ask for funds. All article numbers are to be reorganized.

Finance Report

It was reported that spending is on track and the overall general fund was at 59% expended. C. Brooks asked that the cell tower line item be deleted and to clean up some of the other items. M. Kinney noted that some items had activity and cannot be deleted, but the line items could be cleaned up for the Town report. R. Gaiotti explained that a lot of salt/brine has been used and there will be additional orders.

Manager's Report: Draft Employee Handbook

- Discussion ensued regarding the beginning and ending dates for summer work hours for the Town employees. C. Brooks asked who is affected by the change in summer hours and M. Kinney responded herself and R. Gaiotti as the Town crew works longer hours Monday through Thursday in the summer. It was the consensus of the Select Board to delineate the summer hours for the Town Manager's office as the Friday before Memorial Day through Labor Day. M. Connors moved and B. Tyler seconded to approve the Town of Dorset Employee Handbook as amended for summer hours. Motion carried 5-0.
- R. Gaiotti reported that the Town has received a \$7,000 grant for culvert maintenance which will be used for the upper portion of Danby Mountain Road between Birch View Lane and Scallop Drive on the right side.
- A recreation trail grant application for \$20,000 has been submitted for use for tree clearing, trail head access and signage for the Pinnacle and Cutler properties.
- C. Schmidt, Bennington County Sheriff's Department, has expressed interest in offering a contract for an ex-State Trooper for patrol of Dorset.

Approve Payroll & Accounts Payable for the Week of January 18, 2011

Approval of payroll and accounts payable for the week of January 18, 2011 was completed on Tuesday, January 18th. The list was reviewed by all SB members.

Other Business

1. It was the consensus of the SB members to sign the Highway Mileage Certificate.
2. C. Brooks reported that he has received complaints about early morning noise from the Town Garage on Village Street and R. Gaiotti remarked that this was a working garage which has to be active for the safety of the Town especially during snow storms. It was noted that the State garage also contributes to the noise as they are located close by. R. Gaiotti is to write a letter to the complainants.
3. M. Oltedal moved and M. Connors seconded to move to Executive Session to discuss contracts at 9:40 p.m. Motion carried 4-0. Executive Session ended at 10:30 p.m. with no decisions finalized.

M. Oltedal moved and M. Connors seconded to adjourn the meeting at 10:35 p.m. Motion carried 4-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Aversano

Dorset Select Board Meeting

January 20, 2011 Regular Special

Please Print Name & Address		
1.	Robert Gibney - Town Historian	163 Denny Hill Rd Dorset
2.	Tyler Landon - ZA	Dorset
3.	Maureen Kinney	241 Denny Hill Rd
4.	Pat Taylor	Holloway Hill Rd
5.	DAVID SANDS	397 Fern Hill
6.	Beth Meacham	241 Denny Hill Rd
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