

Regular Meeting of the Dorset Select Board

December 15, 2015 ~ Minutes

Present: Chris Brooks (Chairman), Mike Connors, Michael Oltedal, Brad Tyler, Henry Chandler, R. Gaiotti (Town Manager),

Absent:

Also, present: Seth Bongartz (The Partnership), Berta Maginniss (The Partnership), Lane Dunham (The Partnership), Frank Hanes (The Partnership), Dick Coss, Sandy Pinsonault, Danny Pinsonault, Lee Romano (The Partnership)

C. Brooks, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Approve Minutes of November 17, 2015

M. Oltedal moved and H. Chandler seconded to approve the November 17, 2015 minutes as presented. Motion carried 4-0 (B. Tyler not present for vote or November 17, 2015 meeting).

Public Comment

None

Economic Development Update Study/Future Work

R. Gaiotti explained Dorset partnered with Manchester and Manchester Village to do the Northshire Economic Study which is 75% complete. Good information, goals and strategies were developed which can be executed to benefit the region. The next step for Dorset is to budget money to keep the initiative ongoing.

S. Bongartz noted that the Chamber of Commerce re-evaluated its current business model with membership input to create an organization called The Partnership – a public/private organization. People at the public forums felt there was a need for taking the next step in building up the tourism market along with having a solid economic base underneath tourism. S. Bongartz stated that they were requesting \$6,300 from Dorset as their share out of 16 Towns.

B. Maginniss described her marketing background in Washington, D.C. and with the Walt Disney Company noting that destination marketing and economic development were two different things. She noted that destination marketing could have a quick turn around and that the Visitor Welcome Center has 13,000 people a year visit, but it is re-active instead of being pro-active. Some of the initiatives would be to attend major shows for marketing destinations, increasing staff, attending expos and travel shows. B. Maginniss explained the funding spreadsheet for the 16 Towns which showed the amounts requested from each Town. C. Brooks

asked if clear performance measures would be available before Town meeting and B. Maginniss responded yes, but not before the petition date. R. Gaiotti noted that the spreadsheet identifies the goals. C. Brooks asked if the organization would be seeking grants and B. Maginniss answered not in the first year and S. Bongartz noted that they would have staff available to seek this type of funding. C. Brooks questioned whether there would be any Town representation at their meetings and B. Maginniss replied yes, every Town would be present on the Advisory Board. H. Chandler commented that it was impressive how they spread out the funding which gives credibility, but puts pressure on the Chamber. H. Chandler asked if there would be quarterly or annual reports and B. Maginniss responded she was not sure, but they would have reports. S. Pinsonault wanted to know if the funding would be by petition, on an article or by a budget line item. S. Bongartz hoped that the Town would place the funds in a line item in the budget.

Discussion ensued regarding Dorset's reluctance for economic expansion with R. Gaiotti saying that the median income numbers and aging demographics show a downturn in economy. Business owners in Manchester wanted to know what the Town is doing to create an atmosphere where the economy can flourish. Manchester is hoping to make changes in the downtown core to be a hub of activity so that it can spur private investment. Dorset needs to support economic growth as part of the region and as part of its Town Plan. C. Brooks noted that there were a number of complaints about the sign in Dorset attracting new people and they didn't want more people. R. Gaiotti remarked that it's hard to overcome opinions, but any change could be a benefit in the future. H. Chandler stated that it was a small amount of money and he personally advocates for it. C. Brooks said that they needed to shine a bright light on the requested amount of money so that people are aware of what is being funded by placing the request as a non-binding straw vote.

FY201 Town Budget Workshop (continued)

R. Gaiotti reviewed the FY17 Workshop items as covered in the document given out to the SB members. Items discussed were:

- Manchester Rescue Squad ~ possible creation of a committee of participating Towns
- Economic Development ~ possible budget appropriation of \$6,000 for continuing support
- American Red Cross ~ petitioning for funds of \$1,000
- Act 148 ~ Bennington County Solid Waste Alliance budget number is similar to last year, but may increase if it becomes more complicated to administer
- Wheel Loader Replacement ~ estimated cost for new loader \$160,000
- Highway Projects ~ Pave Lower Hollow Road, smaller paving projects on Paul's Way and Danby Mountain Road, culvert replacement on Lane Road which will be dependent upon grant money.
- Route 30 Building Re-construction ~ replacement of current shed for salt shed and one bay for equipment

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cc: Listers, Planning, Zoning, Select Board, Town Clerk, Town Clerk, Foreman, and School Board
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- ANR General Permit ~ the Town will have to pay the State an annual permit fee to maintain Town roads. A firm dollar amount has not been given yet.
- Personnel ~ discussion of cola/merit increases and admin position. Included a stipend for cell phone use for road crew members.
- Miscellaneous ~ Meetings and Elections will have higher activity for an election year; Planning Consultant line item was left at \$5,000; DRB expense line item has been added; and consideration of an ADA study and building renovation.

D. Pinsonault mentioned that the DRB have revised their ZBL criteria and it is now approximately 30 pages. He felt that the Planning Consultant should review the changes so that “gray” areas can be avoided. C. Brooks noted that the DRB has to follow procedure in posting their agendas and minutes as the other Boards do since they are now included as a line item in the budget.

H. Chandler asked about the dog census and S. Pinsonault noted that it is State law to do one every couple of years. She said that loose, unlicensed dogs are a problem and Dorset is lenient as there is no fine or penalty. R. Gaiotti is to contact R. Downey to discuss.

January 19, 2015 will be the Public Hearing for the budget.

Board/Committee Appointments

H. Chandler moved and M. Oltedal seconded to appoint Stephanie Breed to the Conservation Commission until 2019. Motion carried 5-0

R. Gaiotti noted that as per State Statute, the SB members have the ability to appoint members for vacate positions on the Prudential Committees and there are two vacancies since July for the East Dorset Prudential Committee (5 member Board). An application has been received for the Planning Commission position.

Grand List Errors and Omissions

It was the consensus of the SB members to sign the Errors and Omissions document submitted by the Dorset Listers.

Finance Report

Finances were discussed mentioning sand and salt supplies. C. Brooks stated that the Boards should have help from the Planning Consultant in creating their Findings of Fact documents as these are legal documents that have to stand up in court.

Manager’s Report

R. Gaiotti reviewed his report mentioning the hydraulic study for the wooden bridge on Lower Hollow Road and the Lane Road culvert. The Owls Head Town Forest Project fund raising has been active and closing in on the goal. Marilyn Kinney will be retiring on December 31st after

24 hours of service to the Town. The PC has discussed having educational workshops to be developed with the help of the BCRC so that the public will be more informed about the ZBL's.

Approve Payroll and Accounts Payable for the Week of 12/15/15

It was the consensus of the SB to approve the Payroll and Accounts Payable for the week of 12/15/15 as presented.

Other Business

M. Oltedal moved and M. Connors seconded to move to Executive Session at 9:10 p.m. to discuss personnel. Motion carried 5-0. Executive Session ended at 9:18 p.m. with no decisions announced.

M. Connors moved and M. Oltedal seconded to adjourn the meeting at 9:20 p.m. Motion carried 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Aversano