

PRELIMINARY MINUTES

**TOWN OF LUDLOW
BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

December 4, 2017

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Howard Barton, Jr., Chairman	Logan Nicoll	Bruce Schmidt
John Neal	Brett Sanderson	

STAFF PRESENT:

Frank Heald	Pam Cruickshank	Rose Goings
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OTHERS PRESENT:

Jeff Billings	Carl Matteson	Jason Rasmussen
Terry Carter	Mariel Meringolo	Lisa Schmidt
Alan Couch	Paul Orzechowski	Ron Tarbell
Lyza Gardner	Ralph Pace	Ed McEneaney (LPC-TV)
Cheryl Hammond	Howie Paul	
Alan Isaacson	Meg Powden	

PUBLIC HEARING

Pursuant to the provisions of Title 24, Chapter 117, §4444, of the Vermont Statutes Annotated, the Select Board for the Town of Ludlow proposed to adopt an amendment to the Municipal Plan. The Ludlow Select Board will conduct a public hearing for the residents, taxpayers and interested persons in the Town of Ludlow on the fourth day of December, 2017 at 7:00 PM in the Town Hall Conference Room to hear comments on the "Plan."

- A. Chairman Howard Barton called the Public Hearing to order at 7:00 p.m.
- B. Alan Couch explained that the Planning Commission is requesting comments and input regarding revisions to the Municipal Plan. Towns are periodically required, by the state to update their plans. The Planning Commission would like to get this revision adopted and then begin a major overhaul of the plan. The updates included in this revision include the following:
 - i. Chapter 1 – vision statement updated
 - ii. Chapter 2 - revised to reflect current information
 - iii. Chapter 3 –addition of language regarding water quality, shore land protection, flood resiliency and air resources
 - iv. Chapter 4 – lists accomplishments to implement recommendations from previous plan, including increased Village Center Designation
 - v. Chapters 6-7-8 – revised to reflect current information
 - vi. Chapter 9 – Energy Chapter was completely removed and replaced to conform to new state goals and regulations.
 - vii. Chapter 10 – revisions to Ludlow business goals; added Smart Growth Principles language.
 - viii. Chapter 12 – added implementation matrix to guide priority actions desired to implement town plan over the next 8 years.
- C. Jason Rasmussen explained that the changes to the Energy Chapter would possibly give Ludlow Substantial Deference at PSB hearings for larger renewable energy projects. If this plan is adopted by the town, it will be sent to the state for certification.
- D. Logan Nicoll advised that the State had not decided their definition of Substantial Deference, but the state will require the Energy Chapter in our plan to conform to state goals. He added that the state goals are not currently feasible with respect to technology.
- E. Alan Isaacson said that the state goal is to have 90% of all energy used be from renewable sources by the year 2050. This chapter had to be written to support that goal. We wrote the chapter based on recommendations from the Regional Planning Commission.
- F. Jason Rasmussen suggested that the town may want to ask the PSB to “pre-review” the plan and they will let you know of any short comings.
- G. Howard Barton commented that the state may not be aware of the fill impact of how much this will cost taxpayers.
- H. John Neal asked what Substantial Deference will do if the state hasn’t defined it yet.
- I. Alan Isaacson said it will give the town more input at hearings for renewable energy projects in town.

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- J. Logan Nicoll said that some of the language was added in response to various towns' complaints about renewable energy hearings at the PSB. We had hoped Substantial Deference would be more well defined and it has not been tested yet.
 - K. Howard Barton said if the plan is adopted, it can be updated later.
 - L. Alan Isaacson advised the board that the town has received a grant to revise the town plan using 5 – 10 – 20 year goals. The current plan expired in November, so we need to adopt this, then move forward with a more extensive revision.
 - M. Logan Nicoll said it is an ongoing project. We need to make the plan clearer, and less wordy.
 - N. John Neal asked about the changes to Chapter 3.
 - O. Alan Isaacson said they were in response to the new Water Quality bill.
 - P. Jason Rasmussen said we have started the re-adoption process with Planning Commission hearing in June for public outreach.
 - Q. John Neal asked about Shore land protection.
 - R. Jason Rasmussen said it is mentioned.
 - S. Logan Nicoll said the Planning Commission has done what needed to be done to have a town plan acceptable to the state, including water quality, energy and shore land protection. The new town plan guidelines are set by the state and we can adopt the plans for 8 years now.
 - T. John Neal asked if our zoning regulations regarding Shore land Protection conform to the state's and if not, which take precedence.
 - U. Rose Goings said ours are different.
 - V. Logan Nicoll said the Planning Commission also updated language in the Land Use Chapter to which the trustees had objected.
 - W. Terry Carter said we added more positive language to maintain a vital downtown
 - X. Howard Barton asked what happens if the trustees make changes, will they have a different plan from the town's.
 - Y. Logan Nicoll said that currently, we do have 2 plans for the town and village. Hopefully, they will accept this one.
 - Z. **MOTION by Logan Nicoll and seconded by Brett Sanderson to close this hearing. Motion passed unanimously.**
 - AA. Public hearing closed at 7:20 p.m.

REGULAR MEETING OF THE SELECT BOARD

1. **Call to Order**

- A. Howard Barton called the regular meeting to order at 7:21 p.m.

2. **Consideration of any Changes, Additions or Removals to the Agenda**

- A. Howard Barton advised that the board would include an item to vote on the amendments to the town plan.
- B. **MOTION by Bruce Schmidt and seconded by Logan Nicoll to add vote on town plan to the agenda. Motion passed unanimously.**

2A. **Vote on Municipal Plan**

- A. **MOTION by Logan Nicoll and seconded by John Neal to adopt the town plan as presented. Motion passed unanimously.**

3. **Approve Minutes of Previous Meetings**

- A. Howard Barton advised that the minutes to be reviewed are from the meetings on November 6, 2017.
- B. Logan Nicoll noted that for item 11C, the text read "ACT25" and should read "ACT250."
- C. **MOTION by John Neal and seconded by Logan Nicoll to approve the minutes from November 6, 2017 as corrected. Motion passed unanimously.**

4. **Comments from Citizens**

- A. There were none

5. **Consider SEVCA Appropriation Request**

- A. Howard Barton noted that SEVCA did not get its appropriations request in by the deadline.
- B. Frank Heald said they just missed the deadline. It was an oversight. He does not think they ever missed the deadline before. He said the deadline was more flexible in the past.
- C. Howard Barton said they started the deadline because groups were coming in at the last minute.
- D. Bruce Schmidt said SEVCA is a good organization and not allowing their request would impact the people who could least afford it.
- E. There was general consensus among board members to allow the Appropriations Request from SEVCA.

6. **Consider & Approve FY2019 Appropriations**

- A. Frank Heald said the Appropriations list, less SEVCA was in the packets.
- B. Howard Barton asked if Streetscapes has reorganized.
- C. Frank Heald said that they have new energy. Patty Greenwood is the new leader.
- D. Howard Barton asked if they will also be requesting funds from the Village.
- E. Frank Heald said yes.
- F. Bruce Schmidt noted that there are people in attendance from the schools and that there is a significant amount of Appropriation Requests for education. He asked if there would be savings down the road.
- G. Frank Heald said we still have some flexibility. The board does not approve the budget until mid-January. We will put in as much as we can.
- H. Bruce Schmidt said that come July, there will be a different funding program with one board and 3 schools. We need to be mindful that Ludlow taxpayers are paying for programs in Mount Holly, but are Mount Holly taxpayers paying for Ludlow programs.
- I. Howard Barton said that Mount Holly has refused to pay its portion of sports uniforms, coaches, referees and field trips. We need to take care of Ludlow.
- J. Bruce Schmidt said he does not think it's good to pull out the rug in January.
- K. Cheryl Hammond said they do budget for sports.
- L. Frank Heald said this board needs to pass a budget and the taxpayers vote on it at Town Meeting. In July we set the tax rate. During this process, we can reduce line item amounts, but cannot increase them. If in the budget process, we find that we need to reduce items, we can ask the voters at town meeting.
- M. Bruce Schmidt said the biggest item is transportation if it gets put back into the school budget. TRSU will handle it and the cost will be spread out amongst everyone in the district. We need to find a balance.
- N. Meg Powden said they (TRSU) are grateful for the ways that Ludlow subsidizes the schools. She hopes that the board will be mindful that the district is also in transition. The schools, hopefully, will operate through June 2020.
- O. Mariel Meringolo suggested that a committee be formed with the town and schools.
- P. Howard Barton said that communication may be easier through emails rather than meetings as everyone has busy schedules.
- Q. Mariel Meringolo asked if the municipal budget has a savings of \$400,000 from the busses, does that go into the education budget.
- R. Frank Heald said it would go into the town budget and spread throughout the grand list. The school budget is only based on the residential grand list. A negative \$400,000 would be about 2-3¢ savings.
- S. Bruce Schmidt said it is good to understand what's on the list. The High School is shared by Ludlow and Mount Holly and all those costs should be shared.
- T. Frank Heald said the After School Program is based on LES. Education Operations consists of trash, guards, and the treasurer. Fletcher Books serves the needs of the High School teachers.
- U. Bruce Schmidt asked if that accounts for the \$22,000.
- V. Frank Heald said that when Act 60 took effect, you moved some of expenses to the town.
- W. Cheryl Hammond asked who would like to have the conversation with Mount Holly about expenses. If transportation gets put back into the school, and we were very close to penalty before, this will put us into penalty.
- X. Brett Sanderson said it should be in the school board.
- Y. Cheryl Hammond said she bills the town for the After School program.
- Z. Frank Heald said LES Mentoring is at the request of LES.
- AA. Cheryl Hammond said it goes to BRACC.
- BB. Bruce Schmidt asked Frank Heald, Cheryl Hammond and Meg Powden to look at the Municipal Transit and see if it is worth transferring back to the schools.

- CC. Meg Powden said it would be centralized throughout the supervisory union.
- DD. Bruce Schmidt said more discussions are needed.
- EE. Mariel Meringolo said we need to do what is best for Ludlow taxpayers.
- FF. Howard Barton said if the High School is closed in 2020, people will move out of town to towns where there are high schools. He said that young families look at the schools.
- GG. Paul Orzechowski said we can lease out the building and make it an independent school.
- HH. Mariel Meringolo said that tuition for Springfield HS is \$16,000; Green Mountain HS is \$14,000-\$15,000 and Mill River is \$16,000. The district pays what the average state rate is, about \$15,000 for students in grades 7 – 12.
- II. Cheryl Hammond said the school boards need to know what Ludlow's intention is regarding the buses.
- JJ. Frank Heald said very few people use the buses other than students. We have stops throughout the town and the scheme was to avoid the penalties of Act 60. We also use the buses for summer recreation program trips.
- KK. Pam Cruickshank added that some people use the buses for Adult Learning in Springfield.
- LL. Bruce Schmidt said the cost would decrease if we close the high school and just bus the elementary students. The board may combine the Mount Holly and LES busses.
- MM. Cheryl Hammond asked about bus runs outside of school hours.
- NN. Frank Heald said they do run pre-school, after and super-after school and other runs shuffled in. We would probably only need 2 of the 5 buses we have.
- OO. Howard Barton said that he has heard that the after school program numbers are down and asked if the costs will also go down.
- PP. Cheryl Hammond said she will find out if the numbers are down.
- QQ. Frank Heald said that there has been \$19,000 in there for years.
- RR. Cheryl Hammond said they run multiple programs.
- SS. Lisa Schmidt asked about the student to staff ratio.
- TT. Frank Heald advised there has been a problem with the gym floor, we don't have a CDL driver and we may need to rent a 15 passenger van to accomplish the sports schedule.
- UU. Bruce Schmidt said that he hadn't heard about that and would like an update. When will the floor be repaired?
- VV. Meg Powden said they are working on the repairs, but it is not fixed yet. The tentative plan is to have the games away.
- WW. Howie Paul said in the past 2 weeks, the floor has gotten worse and it is spreading. The HS PE classes are using the Community Center.

7. **FY 2019 Budget Workshops**

- A. Highway
 - 1) Frank Heald said the largest increase in Highway is the addition of one full time person. He is already on board.
 - 2) Howard Barton asked where that person's pay costs are now.
 - 3) Frank Heald said we shaved some from the FY 2018 budget; we're up \$24,000 in FY 2018.
 - 4) Ron Tarbell said the person replaced Dan Cavoto who left last year. He was in the Cemetery Department in the summer and for Highway in the winter.
 - 5) Bruce Schmidt asked if there should be a decrease in OT.
 - 6) Brett Sanderson said that is plowing and last year they hired part time persons.
 - 7) Frank Heald said that Cemetery Labor is down \$7,000. In 2017 they had 1 person, this year they had one person plus part time mowers and trimmers. They used highway to dig the grave and Kevin supervised.
- B. Police
 - 1) Frank Heald said there is an additional officer and no new cruiser. There was \$92,000 in last year for the detective, but not this year.
 - 2) Bruce Schmidt asked why.
 - 3) Frank Heald said the cost of transition added \$54,000 to police duty.
- C. Recreation
 - 1) Bruce Schmidt asked where things are going with the schools.
 - 2) Howie Paul said summer recreation was down to 35 this past summer with 4 staff. This year there will be 3 staff, with more on Fridays for trips. There is a downtrend in school enrollment.
 - 3) Bruce Schmidt asked how we can get more kids from the area, possibly scholarships.
 - 4) Howie Paul said the majority of the kids are on subsidy.
 - 5) Frank Heald said it is an important program for those kids, many of whom are at risk. Maybe we would combine with Cavendish.
 - 6) Bruce Schmidt said that may be better for the kids to have a viable recreation program. He added that we are running the athletic program for LES.

- 7) Frank Heald said if there were no high school, there would be no Fletcher Fields, field lights or summer softball costs.
- 8) Bruce Schmidt said we need to keep an eye on what will be done with the high school building.
- 9) Howard Barton asked who owns it.
- 10) Bruce Schmidt said the new school board.
- 11) Howard Barton asked about state stipulations.
- 12) Bruce Schmidt said there will be.
- 13) Paul Orzechowski said the new board will put the building to good use.
- 14) Bruce Schmidt asked about Fireworks.
- 15) Howard Barton said they were paid for last year by a grant from the Okemo Community Challenge. We haven't heard anything yet.
- 16) Frank Heald said there was \$5,000 in for fireworks in FY 2018 that was not used.

D. Ambulance

- 1) Frank Heald said we made a decision to spend and included money for paid staff (EMTs and Paramedics.) In FY 2018 we made the decision to overspend and took the money from the reserves. This cannot continue for long. He advised that Stowe did a study in 2016 that looked at the EMS and FD services. They are facing the same issues as Ludlow. If we fully funded the service, it would add about 1/2¢ to the tax rate.
- 2) Howard Barton asked why the drop in volunteers.
- 3) Brett Sanderson said we don't have the population and people don't have the time for the training and requirements.
- 4) Frank Heald said Ludlow has an aging and declining population and people are not volunteering.
- 5) Bruce Schmidt asked about going Regional.
- 6) John Neal said they looked at a New Membership drive, but did not discuss regional. He also noted that the population is declining.
- 7) Bruce Schmidt asked about our rates, are they proper?
- 8) Carl Matteson said they are kind of. Medicare and Medicaid pay 80% of the allowed fee. Private insurance pays up to a certain amount. Our rates are slightly above the Medicare rates and we adjust our rates to that. Other nearby services charge almost twice the Medicare rates. He added usage used to be higher in the private insurance area, now the Medicare/Medicaid mix is higher.
- 9) Frank Heald said with Mount Holly and Chester, we wouldn't want to move the center far from Okemo.
- 10) Carl Matteson said that Ludlow service has higher volumes than Mount Holly and Chester. We have first responders in Cavendish who go directly to the scene and stay until the ambulance arrives.

8. Consider Manager Recruitment Process & Set Date for Joint Meeting

- A. Frank Heald advised that there is a proposal from VLCT that is in front of the board and will also be in front of the Trustees and Water Commissioners tomorrow night. He recommends using VLCT for the search/
- B. Howard Barton said they would still need to have a joint board meeting.
- C. John Neal said they did use VLCT when they did the search for Frank Heald.
- D. Howard Barton said that VLCT had done the ads and we looked at and rated the responses.
- E. Bruce Schmidt said the Select Board should suggest a date for the joint meeting.
- F. Frank Heald suggested Monday, December 18th at 6:00 p.m.
- G. There was board consensus on the date for the joint meeting.

9. Solid Waste Rates & Dates

- A. Frank Heald said that rates are not ready yet.
- B. Howard Barton noted that we are losing money with the state requirement and the bags. We need to explore increasing the permit fees, possibly having separate full time and part time resident rates.
- C. Frank Heald said he will research that. He said we are losing money with less people going across the scales with MSW. Property managers are using the bags.
- D. Bruce Schmidt said if the residents have the bags and the property managers use them, we have to let them go.
- E. Frank Heald said we may have to change the rules.
- F. Bruce Schmidt said it would still be a good deal at \$25 per permit.
- G. Howard Barton said the money has to come from somewhere.
- H. Frank Heald said we will need to raise \$267,000 in taxes to cover the operation and MSW rates are going up in July. There are also problems with sending the recycling to China.

10. **Review Andover Street Culvert Project**

- A. Frank Heald said the contractor was not able to get the culvert here earlier, but now the culvert is done and the contractor wants to be paid. The concrete contractor wants the town to pay for the culvert, but he doesn't want to pay \$22,000 for it because we can't put it in until spring.
- B. John Neal suggested paying part of it.
- C. Bruce Schmidt suggested paying half.
- D. Howard Barton asked where the culvert is being stored.
- E. Frank Heald said at the concrete contractor's place.
- F. Brett Sanderson said we should pay the concrete contractor direct.

11. **Department Heads Reports**

- A. Howard Barton advised that all reports are in.

12. **Other Business**

- A. There was none.

13. **Set Date for Next Meeting**

- A. Joint Board meeting on December 18, 2017 at 6:00 p.m.
- B. Next regular meeting will be January 8, 2018

14. **Sign Warrant Orders**

- A. Warrant orders have been signed.

15. **Possible Executive Session/Personnel/Contracts**

- A. Frank Heald advised that an Executive Session is not needed.

16. **Adjourn**

- A. **MOTION by Brett Sanderson and seconded by John Neal to adjourn. Motion passed unanimously.**
- B. Meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisha Klaiber

Howard Barton, Jr., Chairman

Brett Sanderson

John Neal

Bruce Schmidt

Logan Nicoll