

PRELIMINARY MINUTES

**VILLAGE OF LUDLOW
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

REGULAR MEETING

**6:00 PM
HEALD AUDITORIUM**

Tuesday October 6, 2020

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Dave Rose, Chairman

Bob Brandt

Earl Washburn

STAFF:

Scott Murphy

Chuck Craig

OTHERS PRESENT:

Wayne Elliot

Mary Ciasca

Rosemarie Stoltze

Scott Baitz

Connie Miele

Patrick Cody – Okemo Valley TV

Art Ciasca

Jeff Sumner

Lisha Klaiber, Recording Secretary

1. **Call to Order**

A. David Rose called the meeting to order at 6:47 p.m. All members present.

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

A. Scott Murphy advised that no changes are required.

3. **Approve Minutes from Previous Meetings**

A. David Rose advised the minutes to be approved are from the regular meeting September 1, 2020 and the Special Meeting of September 21, 2020

B. **MOTION by Earl Washburn and seconded by Bob Brandt to approve minutes from the regular meeting of September 1, 2020 and the Special Meeting of September 21, 2020 as submitted. Motion passed unanimously.**

4. **Comments from Citizens**

A. There were none

5. **Consider & Accept Board of Listers Errors & Omissions**

A. Richard Russo and Barbara Storrs

- i. Property address is 130 and 136 Main Street
- ii. David Rose advised the properties were omitted from the Village District and not assessed a Village tax.
- iii. **MOTION by Earl Washburn and seconded by Bob Brandt to accept the Listers' recommendation and make the correction as indicated. Motion passed unanimously.**

6. **Stone House Demo Material Discussion**

- A. Art Ciasca advised that he and his wife, along with Mr. Sumner are owners at the 85 Main Street Condos. They are concerned with debris pile for safety and health. There are broken stones, rotted wood, rusty nails sticking up and twisted metal. There are children walking by and they are afraid that when covered with snow, children may climb on it. They are concerned that there may be rats, snakes, mice and possibly standing water in the basement. They are concerned about their property values because of the debris. One condo that rents out on Air B&B had comments about the views being an eyesore. We hope to see something done about this.
- B. Jeff Sumner said that the Governor's Inn is immaculate and recently had a lot of work done on it. Their porch faces the debris. He said that Connie Miele did work on her deck and it faces the rubble. He said that property is owned by the owner of the motel. Mr. Sumner said he knows that a water heater exploded and the town bull-dozed the house. He asked what happens when the town demolishes a property, who is responsible to clean it up. This is a safety issue and public health issue. How can this be resolved?
- C. David Rose explained that after the explosion, the house sat there for a few years and there were numerous complaints about it. The Village hired a structural engineer and it was declared structurally unsafe. We also had it checked for asbestos and there was none. We notified the owner about the engineer's findings and there was no response. The building was condemned and taken down. The State got involved and tried to get the owner to do clean it up, but has not response.
- D. Scott Murphy explained that the Village had no response from the owner. He said that the Village ordinance did not include removal of debris. The ordinance now does provide for that. We need the owner's permission to remove the debris and put a lien on his property for the costs of removal. The owner refuses.
- E. Art Ciasca said it is an accident looking for a place to happen. He said that the owner's stance is that the town should do it.
- F. David Rose said that the estimate for removal was given to the owner, but he refused to do it.
- G. Scott Murphy said the cost would be about \$12,000 to \$14,000. He said there are currently other town members who are trying to fund the removal and the momentum is growing.
- H. Art Ciasca said that it goes against his grain that the owner could get off scot-free.
- I. David Rose said the Village thought the State would be able to take care of it. Everyone is sick of it. The problem is we don't own the property.
- J. Scott Murphy said we may possibly have some better options in 30 days.
- K. Earl Washburn said we have gone as far as the law allows. We tried to work with the State, we had the owner come in and we offered to help. The owner never came back. He still owns the property and we can't do anything.
- L. Scott Murphy said the owner is current on his taxes, so we can't do a tax sale. He suggested the group come to the next meeting.
- M. Jeff Sumner said they are all concerned tax payers and would like to see this resolved.
- N. Art Ciasca said he will let the Condo Association know what is going on.

- O. Earl Washburn said we are all concerned. We would pay to have it removed and put a lien on his property. He said it is someone's private property.
- P. Scott Murphy suggested that they come to the next meeting.

7. **Wayne Elliott to Discuss High Street Project Costs and Next Steps**

- A. Please refer to separate minutes from the joint meeting. Attached.

8. **Discuss Possible Additional Staff Personnel**

- A. Scott Murphy advised that we currently 3 good employees. Chuck Craig will be retiring in 2 to 3 years. He said that we need to build for replacement and may even possibly lose someone else. We need another staff member and he would like to build this into next year's budget. He would like to start putting the word out.
- B. David Rose said that we have had 4 people there before Loran Greenslet retired. It is a good idea to start to build the program.
- C. Bob Brandt said it does take time to train someone.
- D. Chuck Craig said the formal training is 2 to 3 years, but it also takes time to gain experience.
- E. Bob Brandt said we should do it.
- F. David Rose polled the board and there was consensus to start looking.

9. **Junk Ordinance Violation Update**

- A. Scott Murphy said this is ongoing on Bowker Court. A certified letter was sent to him on 9/24/2020. It gives him 30 days to comply. If he does not, the next step is to issue a violation with the Windsor County Superior Court. We have not heard from him.
- B. David Rose said that he is the only one now. The other property that the Village has been working with, on Andover Street, looks better.

10. **Possibly Amend Village Purchasing Policy**

- A. David Rose said that asked for this to be put on the agenda. He said that back in 2014, bids were opened at the regular board meetings. That was changed to having bids opened at a special meeting that were warned, where the Municipal Manager, Town Clerk, Department Head and vendors were present. The procedure is found in the Purchasing Policy, Item 3-1-G – Major Purchases. There were separate minutes for those meetings, including date, time and all bid prices. It is important for transparency. We have not been doing this lately. We need to make this part of the policy.
- B. Earl Washburn agreed.
- C. Bob Brandt agreed.
- D. **MOTION by Earl Washburn and seconded by Bob Brandt to include the following in the Town & Village of Ludlow Purchasing Policy:**

Section III-1-G

The bid opening shall be conducted at a duly warned public meeting. Bid opening shall be conducted in the presence of the Municipal Manager, the Town/Village Clerk/Treasurer, the appropriate department manager as well as any vendors, Board members, or members of the public who choose to attend. **Minutes shall be taken and include at a minimum the date, time, those in attendance, bid results by vendor and an estimated date when the results will be presented to the appropriate board for consideration.**

E. **Motion passed unanimously.**

11. **Other Business**

A. **Town Charter**

- i. Scott Murphy said this is FYI for board members. The Select Board have decided to proceed with putting together information to create a Town Charter that will allow them to include Australian ballots for voting at town meetings. The Village already has a charter. They will have to hold public informational meetings. Once drafted, it would go to a public vote, then to the Legislature.

B. **Voter Drop Box for Ballots**

- i. Scott Murphy advised that there is now a small mailbox in front of town hall that is just for ballots. The cost was \$960 and is reimbursable from the State.

C. **Highway Foreman**

- i. Scott Murphy advised that Ron Tarbell will be out for health issues. He said that there is already an empty slot in the department and they have put out ads.

12. **Municipal Manager Updates**

A. **Lamere Footbridge Robert Gilmore Plaque**

- i. Scott Murphy advised that the plaque is up and look good. He showed a picture to board members.
- ii. David Rose asked about the planking coming up.
- iii. Scott Murphy said we repaired it. They used the wrong screws.

B. **Planning Commission – Rental Registry**

- i. Scott Murphy advised that the Planning Commission is working on creating a rental registry and will bring information to this board. They met with the Select Board last night.
- ii. David Rose asked what the catalyst was for this.
- iii. Scott Murphy said that Justin Hyjek has brought it up and that other towns are doing it. Ludlow is #3 in the state for short term rentals. We don't know how many we have.
- iv. David Rose said that he has mixed opinions on this.
- v. Scott Murphy said the main issue is safety and Rose Goings is concerned about this and overcrowding.
- vi. David Rose asked how this would be enforced. Would it be a full-time job?
- vii. Scott Murphy said that is something they need to work on.

C. **Board Minutes**

- i. Scott Murphy advised that the Select Board has asked to receive copies of the Trustees' minutes.
- ii. David Rose he would like to see the Select Board minutes, also.

D. Year End Numbers

- i. David Rose asked how the year end numbers were.
- ii. Scott Murphy said that these would be preliminary. The auditors will be here in the next few weeks.

Budgeted Revenue	\$836,000
Actual Revenue	\$822,000

- iii. David Rose noted that the Village closed out Fiscal Year 2020 \$13,000 to \$14,000 in the hole. Do we take that from this year's budget?
- iv. Scott Murphy said that we are tied to the town's expenditures and we have very little room.
- v. David Rose said that as we get more into each year, we should keep an eye on the numbers and hold back on spending toward the end of the year, if needed.

E. Town/Village Merger

- i. Scott Murphy advised that the Select Board said that if the Trustees want to merge with the town, they will need to come to the Select Board. He said that could be included in the town charter

F. Sidewalks/Sewers

- i. Scott Murphy advised that they are scheduled to start Gill Terrace tomorrow, but he has not heard about the Access Road. He said that the sidewalks will be started after Columbus Day weekend.
- ii. David Rose asked about the manhole at the base of the Access Road.
- iii. Chuck Craig said it should be done in about a week.

13. **Set Date for Next Meeting**

- A. David Rose advised that the first Tuesday in November is Election Day and we move this meeting until the second Tuesday
- B. Next regular meeting November 10, 2020 at 6:00 p.m.

14. **Possible Agenda Items for Next Meeting**

- A. Personnel Policy Manual
- B. Wayne Elliot

15. **Sign Warrant Orders**

- A. Warrant orders were signed.

16. **Possible Executive Session/Personnel/Contracts – Possibly Approve Wage Increases**

- A. Scott Murphy said that an Executive session is needed for “Confidential Attorney – Client Communications Made for the Purpose of Providing Professional Legal Services to the Body” 1 VSA §§ 313(a)(1)(E) and (F)

- B. **MOTION by Bob Brandt and seconded by Earl Washburn to enter into Executive Session for Legal issues. Motion passed unanimously.**
- C. Board entered into Executive Session at 7:34 p.m.
- D. Trustees exited from Executive Session at 7:45 no action taken.

17. **Adjourn**

- A. **MOTION to adjourn by Bob Brandt and seconded by Earl Washburn. Motion passed unanimously.**
- B. Meeting adjourned at 7:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisha Klaiber

David Rose, Chairman

Earl Washburn

Robert Brandt