

**Dover Select Board
Meeting Minutes
Dover Town Office
Tuesday, January 7, 2020**

THESE MINUTES ARE NOT OFFICIAL UNTIL THEY HAVE BEEN APPROVED BY THE DOVER SELECT BOARD

Select Board members present: Josh Cohen, Victoria Capitani, Joe Mahon, Sarah Shippee, Dan Baliotti
Also, present: Office Manager, Jeannette Eckert

Public: Lauren Harkawik, Jim McDevitt, Steve Neratko, Bob Holland, Paul Fisher, Randy Johnson, Linda Sherman, Jeremiah Sund, Shannon Wheeler, Jim & Judy McDevitt, Mike Garber

Regular Meeting Called to Order at 6:30pm by Chair Josh Cohen

I. Public Comments:

Josh Cohen commented on the flashing lights at Tannery Rd, a business owner expressed appreciation to him, thought it was a great thing to do; thought it would make things better as he watched a white SUV blow through the stop sign

Randy Johnson mentioned that the next agenda item is about this issue

II. Police Dept: Randy Johnson

A. Update on Handle Rd/Tannery Rd Intersection Concerns

- Citizens have expressed concerns about this intersection
- Police have been a visible presence there
- Vehicles have been going through the stop signs
 - Heading north on Handle Rd toward Mt Snow
 - It is the worse I have ever seen it
- Did some research on stop signs with solar LED lights—but they are very expensive
- Bob Holland found less expensive flashing lights which have been installed
- Have alerted some people to slow down and stop but not everyone
- Will keep an eye on it; officers will provide more detail in ticketing
- Rec'd some feedback already that it was a good idea

Additional suggestions: Toll gate, air horn, drag racing lights, round-about, speed bumps, scarring along the road prior to it, camera tickets.... will see how this first step works and move forward from there

III. Unfinished Business:

A. Continue Discussion on Commercial Reappraisal

Board comments:

- Felt like I was comparing apples to grapes to oranges, they were so different
- One company wants to do Mt Snow, one wants to do the whole town, & for twice the price can get everything covered
- One company has lots of snow experience
- Does Jeremiah work for one of these? *No, it would be more of a sub-contracting role as a cost savings to the Town*
 - Appraisal Resources Group
 - *Russ is the Management/ IT guy for Pro Val/CAMA system*
- Reviewed Certified Sales Report
 - Three commercial properties sold in previous three years
 - Co-efficient of dispersion is high (COD)
- Mountain Park Plaza sale
 - One that was thrown out was a non-profit; another was a condominium

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- Leaving one property in three years
- Seems like there is more commercial activity this past year
- Trying to understand why all the business owners should be alarmed
- Such a small volume of transactions
- Don't think the business community will be knocking down our doors
- Wonder why we are thought to be irresponsible on this
- After all this research, not married to a re-appraisal at this point

Linda & Jeremiah:

- We had very little response on the RFP
- Most companies want to do the whole town
- Made a list of definitions of terminology—will add to the website as well
- We had one good sale which we were pretty close on
- Commercial category—had good negotiations with the Mt Snow project that happened on the base lodge—cost approach
 - Settled on a value that was pretty close to our number
 - Large percentage of the overall category—if off, it impacts greatly
- Went back to 2016, there is a big enough inconsistency
 - Goal is to be able to bring that piece into a normal fair range
 - Its not fair, job is to be as fair as can possibly be
- This particular category, Mt Snow is a huge part of it
 - Not trying to single out the Mountain; trying to be fair to that whole category;
 - By not doing this and not being consistent, it is not being fair to these business owners
- No one wants to do a reappraisal—it's a lot of energy, a lot of work; we approached the State, since we have such a large impact in this category, feel the need to bring it inline
- Goal is to maintain equity and be fair; Usually have to do a re-assessment to accomplish that
- Appears that our commercial is out of line; not enough market evidence
- Use sales from other towns to compare
- Dover has never had enough sales of commercial property
- Had to set a base; Our job is to bring any inequities to the town and make you aware of what we are seeing; The State is allowing us to do this, until we have more evidence one way or another
- Last Town wide commercial reappraisal did not move much either way
- COD—coefficient of dispersion—it's saying that within the Town taxpayers are paying more than their fair share
- Reappraisal—most people think their assessment will go up, not always the case
- Overall our numbers are good for being 10 years out
- My concerns are with the land but that would involve a total reassessment; we don't want to spend a lot of money if we don't have to
- Mt Snow has never been assessed by a specialist
 - Snow Val did one back in 2000 for a bank, not the Town; only does ski areas
- What is our end result? Is the appraiser going to be available after the fact to help the Town through the next process?
- Vass has done more resort type appraisals

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- Separate estimate on the time shares; potential for a lot more costs
 - Cost benefit was a big factor some of the other things made us leery
- Two RFP's to consider both the mountain & the commercial and one to do just the commercial; knew there would not be a lot of bids on just the mountain
- To our knowledge there has never been an independent analysis of a mountain
- Want to have a professional do it; Putting a number on it responsibly
- Mt Snow is part of a larger sale; this process began before that sale
- Our duty is to bring it to you as Listers; goal is to bring it close to 100
- How much of your concern is based on a letter from the Town Clerk about the repour with the mountain?
- There are a lot of things that will be in flux
- 2021 deadline has passed at this point
- Not sure how long the State will give us to re-val. this category
- Carinthia value was negotiated last year
- Would like to see a decision made tonight—are we going forward with a commercial appraisal?
- A lot of stuff was shoved to the side to concentrate on this; our focus now is on the 2020 grand list
- Suggest we table this for now. We still have a request to reval. the time shares.... that will take a lot of time and energy

Additional Board comments:

- Not enough market analysis, so how can it be accurately done? Have not been enough sales...that is a concern
- Until things are moving and selling, how can you decide on what something is valued at?
- Scares me that we are comparing other ski towns that have totally different economic viability to ours; this will open up a can of something that may not be able to be fixed
- Anyone can come and dispute their value and you can look at it; these commercial owners can also do their own appraisal
 - If that happens, then you can come to us
- Right now, we are going to spend a lot of money to change a lot of things
- Don't feel there is enough that is sold to warrant it
- We do need turnover which doesn't seem to be happening
 - Stuff that has sold has been distressed property
- What can we do in-house without doing a large appraisal?
- There are more transactions that appear to be happening this year
- Think we need one company to do everything; may cost more money but think it should be done that way; need to be equitable for all commercial properties; spent a lot of time looking at this
- We did not get as far on the negotiation phase; I'm sure there was more to it
- What is the difference in Stratton, Okemo?
- Bottom line is how much money they are making; value of the actual company; a lot of factors
- Maybe it behooves us to do a data analysis
- Still not sold that this is the right time to be doing it
- Going back three years, sales were outside the range

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- Where are the inequities coming from? *The sale price versus the assessment*
- Problem exists because of the sample size; we have three but two of them don't count
- Need to find out why; is there an explanation for the variance?
- Big change of ownership at Mt Snow, does it skew the shape of what is to come?
- New management, how does it affect it? Already seeing massive job layoffs
- RFP preference is for best price on both ski area and all commercial property
- We are all learning on this process
- Sample size is so small, going back 4 years & 4 properties; May have more to go on in future years
- What was the reaction from business owners 10 years ago? Did we get one?
- Suggest tabling this discussion until the 2020 grand list is out

B. Appoint Auditor to Fill Open Position

- Patty Westlake is interested in the appointment & will run for the position at Town Meeting

On a motion by Victoria Capitani, seconded by Sarah Shippee, the Board unanimously agreed to appoint Patty Westlake to open auditor position until Town Meeting

C. Approve 2020/2021 Budget Figures:

1. Operational: \$2,341,442.12
2. Highway: \$1,532,000.18
3. Total: \$3,873,442.30

On a motion by Sarah Shippee, seconded by Victoria Capitani, the Board considered the 20/21 budget figures of \$2,341,442.12 operational, \$1,532,000.18 highway for a total of \$3,873,442.30 (motion amended below)

Discussion:

- Adding in the articles to be voted on: approximately \$60,000, creates a 3% increase if all are approved
- Propose bringing out the Library as a separate warned article; the Library can stand up and talk about what the money is spent on; nobody ever talks about it; it is \$236,000 and no one ever asks any questions
 - The Town Report does include a balance sheet of Library figures
- Capital Building plan was adjusted to reflect the steeple estimate and moved the windows out to 21/22
- Next meeting will approve the Town Meeting warning

Sarah Shippee motioned to amend the figures, seconded by Victoria Capitani, to \$2,105,244.12 for operational, \$1,532,000.18 for highway, for a total of \$3,637,244.30

On a motion by Sarah Shippee, seconded by Victoria Capitani, the Board unanimously approved the amended 20/21 budget figures of \$2,105,244.12 operational, \$1,532,000.18 highway, for a total of \$3,637,244.30

IV. Consent Agenda:

A. Approve Minutes of December 17, 2019

On a motion by Victoria Capitani, seconded by Sarah Shippee, the Board unanimously approve the minutes of Dec 17, 2019

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- B. Approve Warrants of Dec 28 for \$703,819.37
On a motion by Victoria Capitani, seconded by Sarah Shippee, the Board unanimously approved the warrants of Dec 28, 2019

V. FYI:

- A. Next Concerts at Town Hall:
- Open Mic Nights, Jan 8 & 22 from 6-8pm
 - Social Medication, Jan 15 from 6-8pm
- B. Tax Sale, January 9th at 9:30am
- C. WRC Broadband Meeting, January 16th, 6-8pm, Newbrook Firehouse (Josh, Vicki, Steve and Shannon are attending)

VI. Liaison Reports: none

VII. Executive Session as needed: none

VIII. Adjournment at 7:39pm

Respectfully submitted by Jeannette Eckert

Public notices of these minutes have been posted at the following locations:
Dover Town Clerk's Bulletin Board, Dover Town Meeting Bulletin Board, Dover School
Dover Free Library, East Dover Post Office, Town of Dover Website: www.doververmont.com