

**Brandon Select Board Meeting
July 28, 2014**

NOTE: These are unapproved minutes, subject to amendment and/or approval at the subsequent board meeting.

In Attendance: Devon Fuller, Blaine Cliver, Ethan Swift, Dave Atherton, Maria Ammatuna

Also in Attendance: Robin Bennett, Joe Ammatuna, Cindy Bell, Chris Brickell, Richard Baker, Doug Bailey, Dawn Bailey, Delores Furnari, Lois Acinapura, Del Cook, Sally Cook, Christy Gahaghan, Lee Kahrs, Debbie Kirby, Dick Kirby, Tim Mitchell, Bruce Edwards, Sue Gage, Tecari Shuman, Lou Faivre, Arlun Bloodworth, Nancy Leary, Brian Coolidge, Gene Pagano, Kelly Coolidge, Nancy Fisher, Jon Andrews, Jim Leary, Jane Coolidge, Bob Gearwar, Jeff Stewart, Priscilla Mckeighan, Anna Scheck, Gary Meffe, Pete Smith, Patty Smith, Jack Fillioe, Katie Little, Lori Brown, Sarah LaRoque, Audrey Hathaway, William Rounds, Deborah King, Elaine Reynolds, Roman Wdoviak, Barry Varian, Gayle Pilat, Laura Abel, Susan Stone, Tom Kane, Art Doty, Donna Doty, Susan Boswell, Mike Waters, Heidi Young, Molly Kennedy, Jason Mitchell, Bill Moore, Mei Mei Brown, Robert Kinchen, Vince Campbell, Penny Conlin, Richard Jewett, Rhoda Delancey, John Wilson, Lynn Wilson, Steph Chena, Kjell Thompson, Linda Thompson, Dennis Reisenweaver, Norm Milot, Limond Garry, Anthony Peduto, Bob Clark, Mary Bagley, Bill Clausen, Julie Bordeaux, Christine Seymour, Erin Gallivan, Karen Kane, Harvey Smith

1. Call to order

The meeting was called to order by Maria Ammatuna at 7:02PM.

a) Agenda Adoption – Motion by Blaine Cliver/Ethan Swift to adopt the agenda with an addition of Item 17f - Fiscal for an FY13/14 warrant in the amount of \$45,282.16. **The motion passed unanimously – 4 to zero.**

2. Consent Agenda

a) Select Board Meeting Minutes – July 7, 2014

Motion by Dave Atherton/Devon Fuller to approve the minutes of the July 7, 2014 Select Board meeting. **The motion passed unanimously – 4 to zero.**

b) Select Board Meeting Minutes – July 15, 2014

Motion by Blaine Cliver/Dave Atherton to approve the minutes of the July 15, 2014 Select Board meeting. **The motion passed unanimously – 4 to zero.**

3. Public Comments for Items not on the Agenda

There was no discussion held.

4. Town Manager's Report

Robin Bennett stated the waterline project is complete and the town is waiting for the final paperwork and drawings to close out of the project. The grading has been done on Lover's Lane, Richmond Road, Long and Short Swamp Roads, Marshall Phillips Road, Hacks Sawmill Road, Hawk View Road and Rydon Road. The next roads to be graded will be Birch Hill Road, Country Club Road and Old Brandon Road. The Newton Road rock pile has been about two-thirds removed. The Middle Road sewer repair has been completed; there were several tree roots, breaks and bends found in the pipe. There is a sink hole near the sludge tank at the wastewater treatment plant. The area has been backfilled and top soil has been added. The State was contacted as it was an action item from their 2014 Reconnaissance Inspection and they were satisfied with the results. The town received \$30,000.00 grant funding with no match to explore the feasibility of future HMPG applications for Brandon. Ms. Bennett and the DPW gathered information for the grant that will include two generators and flood mitigation for the treatment plant and Bridge 23 located on Wheeler Road. Ethan Swift asked if this covers the current HMPG applications and Ms. Bennett noted it does not.

5. Audrey Hathaway - Gymkhana

Audrey Hathaway stated they have been running Gymkhana on McConnell Road for the past three years. It was in Florence for 30 years prior to that and there was never a problem with the neighbors. This is a family affair and there are many children competing at all ages. During the first year there was a complaint about the noise and the P.A. system was shut off at 10PM. A couple of weeks ago they had a large participation and it ran after 10PM. The house in question is 1000 feet away and they have now cut the P.A. to 50 decibels. She noted this is a non-profit event and is the only place that children can compete in the area. They feel that they are contributing to the best interest of the children and it is difficult to complete the competition before 10PM. The owners were advised there could be a town variance from the Select Board. They have been told the next time the police have to visit, they will be given a citation. An extension of time for the event is being requested. Christine Seymour stated the event takes place on Friday night and is not run throughout the week and is similar to other sports that the children can participate in. The police have advised that it is a well-run event. Devon Fuller asked if it takes three hours to run the event. Ms. Hathaway stated there were 33 riders and they go through 6 events and it does take more than 3 hours. They do not want to turn children away and when turning the P.A. system off, it causes mass confusion. Friday night was chosen because many people have things to do on Saturday and there are other rodeos that they would be in competition with. This program was started back in 1979 in Clarendon and it is not a money-making effort. The P.A. was turned down and if they can keep it at the level they are at, this would work. The event starts at 7PM as earlier would create a hardship for people. There are families that come from New York and several other towns in Vermont. Mr. Fuller stated

with a policy of not turning people away the program will continue to grow and may be a hardship to the neighbors. Ms. Hathaway stated no one has complained and this has been the first person to complain. Everything has been done to work with the neighbor who is complaining and they do not want the police to visit again.

Kelly Coolidge stated she is the neighbor who has been complaining, but she is not the only complainant. There are nine property owners who also have been quietly dealing with this situation. The ordinance states 70 decibels during the day and 60 decibels during the night. She is all for the Gymkhana as she has taught some of the children who participate. She stated her children indicate they cannot sleep due to the loud noise. She has never called the police department until it is after 10PM. Ms. Coolidge questioned how this can take place in a residential area. She chose her home because it sits back from the road and she likes the quietness and they like to use their deck; noting on Friday evenings they cannot carry on conversations on their deck. She would love to see the event happen Saturday or Sunday afternoon. Ms. Coolidge stated it is every Friday night from June 1st through August 30th. If this were a one-time event, such as the 4th of July, she would understand and not complain. She has spoken with people from the Gymkhana and has had one uncomfortable conversation. She stated this is something that has been going on for three years. She feels that 10PM is a reasonable time for the event to be completed and that she is already compromising, as the state statute indicates sun up to sun down and 10PM is an exception. There are people as far as Van Cortland Road who can hear the noise.

Maria Ammatuna stated there is nothing that specifies nighttime hours and the Select Board will have to take this under consideration. Ethan Swift stated Section 608 indicates 60 decibels at the property level. Ms. Hathaway stated after the adjustment to the P.A. system, it was brought down to 50 decibels. It was noted if Brandon truly cares about their youth, this is something that should be allowed, as this is a healthy event for the children. Ms. Ammatuna asked Mr. Andrews what type of permit would be required for an event like the Blue Grass Festival and he noted there is no permit required.

A neighbor living 1 ½ miles from the Gymkhana thinks it is a great event, but she would like to see it close down earlier so that it is not a disturbance to the neighbors. She stated one of the riders is a young man that she cares about and she is all for the event, but 10PM should be the limit. Ethan Swift asked if the police have measured the sound levels and Chief Brickell indicated they do not have equipment to measure sound. Doug Bailey stated he lives right next to the Blue Grass Festival and they have always shut down at 10PM every night that they perform so it is not a good comparison. It was suggested the event use smaller speakers that are lower to the ground rather than a P.A. system to avoid an issue with the sound.

6. FY 14/15 Budget

Maria Ammatuna requested comments from the public on the budget prior to the Board's discussion.

Erin Gallivan thanked the board for all of their hard work. Ms. Gallivan asked the appropriate way to get answers about the budget. Maria Ammatuna stated they could be addressed by email and questions could be asked during the meeting. Ms. Gallivan stated there is a lot of misinformation and it is important to try a different way to get information to people like an open house. Ms. Gallivan asked how many positions are included in the Police Department budget \$855,565.00. Ethan Swift stated this figure was for total expenses that includes personnel and benefits. The salary and benefits figure represents 8 full-time officers that include the Police Chief and the current vacancy. There is also one Resource Officer and two part-time certified officer; one which only fills in on vacations and training times and works approximately 60 hours throughout the year and the other has a full-time job but occasionally fills a shift.

Bill Clausen questioned what type of accounting system is used and it was noted the town uses a modified accrual system.

Maria Ammatuna stated the Select Board has an updated version of the budget from the town administration that includes the actuals for FY13/14 as of July 25th and there are minimal entries remaining. The financials are unaudited and prior to compilation. There will be a request to hire Glenna Pound to do the compilation prior to sending it to the audit firm. Mr. Cliver has provided a series of recommendations after some grass roots meetings. Devon Fuller stated the budget last time was as fair as it will get, with funding taken from the DPW and Police Department and he does not know moneywise where the town is going to go with it. He has spoken to several people and it is no longer logical, it is emotional. Mr. Swift stated it seems with his interactions that there is no one consensus and it appears there are four areas where cuts should be made; the 8th Police Officer position, the full-time Public Works Director position, the full-time Rec Director position and Town Administration. Mr. Swift does not see that anything more can be cut from it, other than cutting positions and he sees things that are not in the budget that need to be added in, such as the site assessment for the former town office and cost-share assistance for the FEMA grant projects. Dave Atherton has been approached by several people concerned about what they are getting, as opposed to the actual increase. He stated the administration side is a big issue. He agrees that some of the cuts made should be added back and he is not comfortable with any more cuts. Blaine Cliver agreed with his colleagues, but after listening to the recommendations made at the meetings that were held, a proposed budget was done eliminating the 8th police officer position, cutting the Public Works Department by one position rather than one and one-half and reducing the Public Works Superintendent position to half time. With these reductions, it would bring the percentage increase from 7% down to a 2.6% increase. This is below a bare-bones budget and is foolish to not have a full time police force, but the Select Board needs to listen to the rest of the town. Mr. Cliver stated Brandon is the only town in Vermont that does not have a budget and it is time to compromise and come up with a budget. Maria Ammatuna stated there are several very active special interests in town. The Board is tasked with building a budget and be sure that the town runs for all 4000+ people.

Julie Bordeaux, a former Vermont Tubbs worker, stated the town needs the buildings to be filled with workers. She noted she is the Treasurer of Forest Brook Development and has never had a problem collecting the taxes. She questioned how the town is going to fill the factories when the taxes are so high and what the town is going to do about collecting the delinquencies. There should be cuts made from the top in cutting the Town Manager's mileage or bonus. Ms. Ammatuna explained the Town Manager receives a mileage allotment to go to meetings outside the town. It has been determined that an allotment versus mileage is a savings to the town. Ms. Ammatuna stated the Nexus building is being occupied by a furniture factory and the Tubbs building is being used for the Woodchuck Cider inventory. Dave Atherton stated the town tried to get Woodchuck Cider to move into Brandon, but Middlebury gave a better rate on water. With regard to collecting taxes, there have been some monies received and the process will be followed through to tax sale. Devon Fuller stated Ms. Bennett created the plan for collecting the delinquent taxes and the taxes going forward. Mr. Fuller stated the town waited five years before collecting and the monies are accounted for in the audit as though they have been collected. It was noted that water cannot be shut off, as the town does not have control over it. Efforts are being made to coordinate with the Water Department.

Karen Kane addressed the group, noting she is one of the delinquent tax payers. Ms. Kane stated Robin Bennett and Sue Gage have done a great job in reaching out and she appreciates that they were tenacious in helping her see the reality of the situation, but not in a condemning way. Ms. Kane is working with the town administrators for the better of the town. Ms. Kane feels that Ms. Bennett, Sue Gage and the Board are working hard to help the town.

Doug Bailey stated one budget ago, there was discussion of limiting hours, but the union had said no. He would like to think the town is in a position of cutting some hours off the hourly employees, rather than cutting a complete position. He has been told the snow plow drivers are driving 60 – 70 hours because the union won't allow part-time drivers. Maria Ammatuna stated there is a clause about laying off the most junior personnel and there has been discussion of an early retirement program, but the union said no. Typically part-time drivers have been doing overnight shifts and the daytime shifts are the full-time people. Robin Bennett stated from 6PM to midnight, the part-time people are driving. It is possible for the full-time staff to have 60 hours in a week during that time. Mr. Bailey stated from everyone he has talked to, they would vote positive if the police department is cut. He does not agree with this, since the town has paid for the training and has not advised the person. Ms. Ammatuna noted the 8th officer has not entered the Police Academy yet and was given a conditional offer based on a passed budget.

Janet Mondlak, a Library Board Trustee, stated there is a proposed 10% cut in the Brandon Library and the Senior Center funding. These are two organizations that serve the overall community, with a minimum of 1,000 people per week that use the services. The town is fortunate that they do not own the library and noted it is self-funding 50% of their expenses. Ms. Mondlak requested the Board consider a 5% budget cut, rather

than the proposed 10%, but asked they consider level funding, as any more would have to come with a decrease in services.

The question was raised where the funding comes from for the retirement package and Ms. Bennett noted it is built into the budget. There has been no provision in the contract for early retirement. With regard to the people who have not paid their taxes, it was questioned whether this is due to people protesting their taxes, and if so, those amounts should be under escrow and what is the penalty. Ms. Bennett has not had anyone say they are protesting their taxes and the penalty is 8%, plus 1% per month. It was also questioned how many unoccupied town-owned properties there are and whether the town office could be moved to a vacant building rather than paying rent. It was noted that currently the insurance claim is paying for the rent. The town manager negotiated with the insurance company for a specific amount of time for renting and the next step is working on a grant for the old town office, however, there is an issue due to a leaking storage tank. Ms. Bennett stated the town office site has been resolved; however, the town hall building had been included in this issue, which had a more compromising issue. Ms. Ammatuna noted there are only two town-owned buildings and the remainder of the properties are land. There was a question of why the Neshobe School gym could not be used for the Rec Department. Bill Moore stated the Neshobe School has been wonderful in allowing the Rec Department to use the building, but he does not have a recreation facility available to create programs to charge admission. Mr. Moore has been tasked with making this position self-funded and if he had building that he could do events, it would help in this effort. He also noted the students are active in fund-raising activities.

Maria Ammatuna stated a determination for the informational meeting and election date needs to be set and whether the Board is prepared to come up with a budget figure. Mr. Cliver provided an overview of some of the changes he proposed that included cutting \$5,500.00 for Economic Development, \$750.00 from Professional Development, \$5,000.00 from the Police, \$500.00 from Personnel Recruitment, \$70,000.00 for the Police Officer vacancy, \$50,000.00 from the DPW to cut the Supervisor's position to ½ time and the elimination of all mowing funds. There would be a change in the DPW to eliminate one position, rather than one and one-half. It was asked how this affects the Workers Compensation and Ms. Bennett stated that would stay the same for about 3 years. Dave Atherton noted the Select Board is looking in the wrong areas when town is now not going to mow the parks. Ethan Swift stated if the town office is going to move out of the Markowski building, the Phase 1 and 2 assessments costing \$8,000.00 and the Economic Development proposal need to be included. There is easily \$20,000.00 that could be added back into the budget. Blaine Cliver stated there has been discussion of someone working part time in Economic Development. Dave Atherton stated there is also a person who has been doing the Zoning Administrator position on an interim basis and that will need to be acted on.

There was a question of what type of legal ramifications would be required for volunteers to help out. A resident of Basin Road indicated he used to trim the trees in one of the parks, however, when Mr. Sanderson started, he was required to get a letter

of release for liability and a letter of intent. He has no problem helping the town out, however, there is a lot of street talk concerning items such as the number of town staff, but those individuals are not coming forth to speak to that subject. He stated the Public Works and the Police Department should not be the things cut.

Devon Fuller stated the Board has cut back and there is nothing left that is extraneous other than the Rec Department. Part of what they are trying to do is look at what is needed to entice people and businesses to come to Brandon. The budget is down to bare bones and to make any difference it has to be staffing.

Gary Meffe questioned whether people knew what the increase would have been on the last defeated budget. For a medium priced home of \$179,000.00, it would have gone up 50 cents per day and for a home of \$200,000.00 it would have increased 70 cents per day. It would be less than a dollar per day for most Brandon residents and the increase would be even less with the income sensitivity.

Harvey Smith stated what he is hearing from people is concerning what they are getting for their money. The roads and sidewalks in town are a disgrace and it is difficult to walk anywhere and there are times when sidewalks do not get plowed for 3 days. There are people that end up walking in the road, which is unsafe. It comes down to what the Select Board is going to show people they are getting for their money.

Erin Gallivan stated the Select Board needs to be do something different and think outside the box. They will have to cut something as the town does not support the budget this high. The people that are coming to vote are saying "no" and they have to do something big or different. She agrees that it is great to have a Class "A" Police Department, but it is a huge amount of money for a town of this size. The town does not have a problem with crime and Ms. Gallivan thinks that two people should be cut. She also agrees with the idea of keeping funds in the budget to move the town forward.

Mei Mei Brown wants a budget passed and wants her town back. Ms. Brown stated Brandon has been her community since 1975. In December the next year's budget will need to be developed and the current budget is still not passed. She has heard from people that they want the Police Department reduced even further. She was a State Police Dispatcher for 14 years and she noted the State Police do not have 24-hour shifts and if the Police Department is cut back to four people; it will put the police officers in danger. She stated it is time to do what is right and pass the budget. This is costing the town money every time there is a vote.

Christy Gahagan spoke on behalf of the Chamber Board. Ms. Gahagan's business was vandalized this summer and there is concern about the drugs in the community. Brandon Cares, a group that addresses issues with the opiate addiction, has been formed. She noted the City of Rutland received a grant to address this issue. Brandon will be unable to address this problem without a full Police Department. There is concern that the property values will go down if the crime rate goes up. Ms. Gahagan did not think four police officers will protect her business or families from crime.

Priscilla Mckeighan asked why the corrections people do not mow the parks. It was noted that Corrections has been mowing the parks, but they are paid for this service to cover the cost of the mowers and gas.

Bob Clark thinks the population needs to see a significant cut, but it is not a good idea to cut the police, however, there may not be a choice. Mr. Clark thought a cut of \$75,000.00 to \$100,000.00 needs to be done.

Devon Fuller stated there needs to be consideration that there are no matching funds for grants. He applauded Mr. Cliver for all his work, but he thinks that the cuts have gone too far. He does not see think the budget would pass with the 8th police officer, but it is not something that he would like to do. Chris Brickell and Mr. Pulsifer have developed a Police Department that is second to none in the state and the town owes Chief Brickell and the candidate an answer. There are more cuts than he would like to see made, but he would be in favor of cutting the 8th police officer. Mr. Fuller did not think that an exact number could be determined tonight. Blaine Cliver stated as far as matching funds, there is insurance money available, but no other matching money. There is a heroine epidemic in town and it does not make sense to cut an officer.

Chris Brickell stated the 8th officer allows fully fund and fully manned 24-hour police protection. The officers are doing it on their own volition now and they are working shifts that are not safe for them; but are doing it as a stop gap measure. The 8th position was grant funded for 8 years. Mr. Brickell stated he has a difficult time maintaining good officers, as he loses them to other positions. If this position is cut, it will impact how the town is protected, as it is unreasonable for the officers to assume the risk. Maria Ammatuna stated Allen Doaner had asked the Sheriff's Department what the cost of 24/7 coverage would be and was advised it would be around \$684,000.00. Mr. Brickell stated this is not an apples to apples comparison, as this would be an agency of part-time officers and traffic duty officers. They could revenue generate with traffic tickets, but they would not be able to research crimes. The state now has three tiers of training for part-time officers with Level 1 handling traffic only, Levels 2 and 3 could handle misdemeanors, but not felonies. Anything over a misdemeanor would require a full-time officer. The Sheriff's Department has 4 to 5 full-time officers and the comparison isn't realistic. Mr. Brickell guarantees this service will not satisfy this community and they will not have the knowledge that his officers have.

Mei Mei Brown stated the Sheriff's Department had already been researched a few years ago. The same officers would not be working in Brandon which would make it difficult to solve crimes. The town would not have the quality of officers that it has now.

Blaine Cliver stated if the Police Officer position is put back in the budget the percentage of increase would be 5.9%.

Doug Bailey stated in 2003 and 2004 the Police Department was in bad shape and the town was considering going out of town for police protection. A committee was formed

and much time was spent researching the Sheriff's Department. They were advised that the Sheriff's Department could not give 24/7 coverage and if an active crime was happening, people would wait perhaps up to 45 minutes. The Vermont State Police would only be in town 2 hours a day and would respond to calls from different areas of the state. The town was provided the information and it was a resounding positive decision to leave the Police Department intact. Mr. Bailey thinks the town could get by with 7 officers, but no further reduction.

Devon Fuller agreed the town could probably be alright with 7 officers, but 8 officers would be better. There was a reduction of the police cruiser and potentially a police officer. If the budget is built with these reductions, the Board needs to build the next budget holding the existing department. The Police Department has been covering shifts that they should not be covering and it is time for the town to quit relying on volunteer service.

Erin Gallivan appreciates all the work the police do, but there has not been major crime in the area and the viewpoints are not being supported by the people that are voting. She noted if the Police Department needs 8 officers, then more information provided about the need would be helpful.

Mary Bagley stated the town needs a full Police Department. She lives on a dead end road and has been broken into twice. She noted that cars are seen driving up and down her road, likely casing out houses of people who are out of town.

Ethan Swift stated with elimination of the 8th officer position, it would affect the code enforcement and health officer duties. Mr. Swift questioned the status of the Zoning Administrator position as this position is required by statute. Robin Bennett advised the position's funding is in Code. Mr. Swift also questioned the place holder for the Economic Development Officer and Ms. Bennett noted it is in Admin. Ethan Swift stated the economic development proposal should also be discussed during Old/Other Business.

Motion by Ethan Swift/Dave Atherton to approve the reduction of the Public Work's Director position to half-time and the reduction in the Recreation Director position to $\frac{3}{4}$ time and the addition of $\frac{1}{4}$ Economic Development to that position.

Robin Bennett stated there was a reserve of \$10,000.00 and 20 hours per week budgeted for economic development. Mr. Cliver's budget version cuts out anything beyond manpower. Mr. Cliver stated the budget he developed has seven police officers, not eight. Devon Fuller did not feel that any budget is going to pass without removing the 8th officer.

With the Rec Director/Economic Development position, the full-time status would be left intact, but duties would be split appropriately depending on the time of year, as there will be greater demands on recreation depending on the time of the year. Bill Moore stated when he started; there was nothing in the way of accountability or programming. The Recreation budget was not reflected in the General Fund and Recreation was

losing \$7,000.00 per year above salary. He has been the full-time Recreation Director for about a year and the program is back in line with 29 programs running and systems in place to make them happen. He does a lot of administrative work and there is software that would automate some of the data entry and on-line registration. There are ways to increase productivity in that role. Ethan Swift stated they are looking at certain cuts and these are areas where reductions are necessary. Dave Atherton stated there needs to be a presence in the economic development area.

The motion passed with one no vote – Devon Fuller.

Motion by Blaine Cliver to approve a total budget of \$2,998,199.00 with an amount to be raised by taxes of \$2,393,524.00, which is a 2.9% increase in municipal taxes and includes seven, rather than eight police officers and a change in the cuts to the Senior Center and Library to 5%, plus various smaller reductions.

The motion was not seconded and failed.

7. Current Expense Note Update

Sue Gage reported that \$250,000.00 has been drawn down for expenses, which would usually be done with a tax anticipation note. The interest is 1.75% on what has been borrowed and she is only borrowing when she absolutely has to.

8. Current Spending

As noted in Item 7.

9. Town Meeting

a. Information Meeting and Election Date

It was the consensus of the Board to hold the voting during the primary voting scheduled for August 26th. It was recommended to do the informational meeting a week earlier than the voting.

Motion by Blaine Cliver/Devon Fuller to set the date for the next vote to August 26th, with the information session to be held on August 18th. **The motion passed unanimously - 4 to zero.**

10. Interim Tax Rate Approval

Maria Ammatuna stated the Board had interim tax rate information provided for their approval. Sue Gage stated there will need to be two tax billings and the interim tax bill will be differentiated by using a goldenrod-colored paper. Once the budget passes, a final tax bill will be sent out. The interim figure will be based on the last budget that did not pass, reduced by where it is thought the budget end up.

Motion by Devon Fuller/Dave Atherton to set the interim tax rate at \$.8646. **The motion passed unanimously – 4 to zero.**

11. Penalty for Late Homestead Filers

Robin Bennett stated the Board needs to decide if there will be a penalty for late homestead exemption filers in order to do the tax billing. Ms. Gage stated most towns waive this penalty, but the town does have the right to incur a penalty.

Motion by Ethan Swift/Dave Atherton to waive the penalty for late homestead filers. **The motion passed unanimously – 4 to zero.**

12. Delinquent Tax Update

Robin Bennett reported there have been some collections made. Ms. Bennett is exploring some avenues of collecting the taxes and has a couple options that she is checking into for additional help. There has been \$37,000.00 of prepaid tax credits collected, \$46,365.20 of delinquent taxes have been paid and \$15,901.90 of delinquent sewer taxes have been paid.

13. Compilation and Audit Proposal

Robin Bennett had thought she would have both the auditor's and Glenna Pound's proposal available for consideration, however, to date she only has Ms. Pound's proposal.

Motion by Devon Fuller/Ethan Swift to accept Glenna Pound's contract, not to exceed \$8,750.00.

Cindy Bell did not understand why an auditing firm can tell the town who to close the books when there is someone in-house that is capable of closing the books. Sue Gage stated time is an issue and a lot of it is doing things that she has not done before. Ms. Gage is agreeable to going through the process with Ms. Pound, which could allow her to do this in the future. Ms. Gage stated the people in the Town Office start at 7AM in the morning and some do not take lunch and the staff goes straight out all day. She stated the issues are broad and there is not a lot of flexibility. She does not think that this year is the time to make this change. Ms. Bell understands that Ms. Gage is out straight; however, she noted the person that is being considered does not get the information to the town timely. Devon Fuller stated the auditing firm noted that Glenna Pound helps in reducing the auditing costs. Anna Scheck stated there is an estimated end date of October for Ms. Pound and it then goes to the auditing firm. Ms. Scheck stated the auditing firm named Glenna Pound; however, it could be another CPA.

The motion passed with one abstention – Dave Atherton and one “no” vote – Maria Ammatuna.

14. Town Office Project

Robin Bennett reported there will be a meeting tomorrow between Robert Black, Blaine Cliver, Devon Fuller and Ms. Bennett in an effort to move this project forward. Ethan Swift stated the Phase 1 and 2 assessments need to be done to meet the state standards. There has been something drawn up, but it would need approval. Ms. Bennett stated the KAS assessment does not talk with the HUD assessment and the town may have to work through Steve LaRosa who is working through VDAT, as they do not want to see the town have to do this twice. Robin Bennett stated the proposal would be covered under the Petroleum Act, but she has been trying to satisfy all of the HUD requirements. Ethan Swift will call in for the 11AM meeting.

15. Waterline/Segment 6/Bridge 114 Projects

The town will be closing out the Waterline project. Ms. Bennett is working on moving forward the paperwork for the appraisals for Segment 6. There will be meetings with several property owners concerning design changes. The letter has not gone out to the total population. Blaine Cliver asked if VTrans concurs with the letter from Bill Burke. Ms. Bennett will ask for concurrence in writing. Regarding Bridge 114, Ms. Bennett will follow-up on the feedback that Mr. Cliver had emailed her.

16. Other Business

Dave Atherton questioned the status of union negotiations. Robin Bennett has not received a response back from the union and she will follow-up. A letter requesting the negotiations be open had been sent.

Ethan Swift asked whether the Board is going to approve the economic development proposal, as it may be time sensitive and could become null and void. Devon Fuller stated the money had been encumbered for this purpose.

Motion by Ethan Swift/Devon Fuller to approve the proposal from DarWin Dynamic Solutions LLC. **The motion passed with one no vote – Maria Ammatuna.**

Ethan Swift stated FEMA will be doing another tour through Vermont and he was asked whether Brandon would be interested in having them tour. Mr. Swift confirmed with them that Brandon would be interested.

17. Fiscal

a) FY 13/14 Warrant – June 30, 2014 - \$9,922.31

Motion by Devon Fuller/Blaine Cliver to approve the warrant of June 30, 2014 in the amount of \$9,922.31. **The motion passed unanimously – 4 to zero.**

b) FY 13/14 Wastewater Warrant – June 23, 2014 - \$9,707.93

Motion by Ethan Swift/Devon Fuller to approve the wastewater warrant of June 30, 2014 in the amount of \$9,707.93. **The motion passed unanimously – 4 to zero.**

c) FY14/15 Postage – July 3, 2014 - \$500.00

Motion by Blaine Cliver/Ethan Swift to approve the warrant in the amount of \$500.00 for postage. **The motion passed unanimously – 4 to zero.**

c) FY14/15 General Fund Warrant – July 28, 2014 - \$15,594.12

Motion by Devon Fuller/Ethan Swift to approve the FY14/15 General Fund warrant in the amount of \$15,594.12. **The motion passed unanimously – 4 to zero.**

d) FY 14/15 Warrant Wastewater Fund Warrant – July 28, 2014 - \$16,119.34

Motion by Devon Fuller/Dave Atherton to approve the FY14/15 Wastewater Fund warrant in the amount of \$16,119.34. **The motion passed unanimously – 4 to zero.**

e) Consider P.O. 23248 to Advanced Emergency Products for Speed Cart Trailer – \$5,845.00

Motion by Devon Fuller/Ethan Swift to approve P.O. 23248 to Advanced Emergency Products for a speed cart trailer in the amount of \$5,845.00. **The motion passed unanimously – 4 to zero.**

This will be at net zero cost to the town due to a \$5,000.00 grant from the Governor's Highway Safety Program and the balance of \$845.00 is covered through the forfeiture of line item 10-5-14-10640.

f. Approve FY 13/14 Warrant - \$45,282.16.

Motion by Dave Atherton/Blaine Cliver to approve the FY13/14 warrant in the amount of \$45,282.16 for the waterline project. **The motion passed unanimously – 4 to zero.**

Richard Baker asked if there is still an eight-man Police Department and Maria Ammatuna noted at the moment, there is still an eight-man Police Department. Blaine Cliver will complete a draft budget to be distributed to the Select Board for consideration. Dave Atherton asked if the town is still in the red and Robin Bennett stated as far as budget to actual, there will not be a deficit for last year. Where the potential problem lies is in the delinquent taxes. If the auditors see those as more of a liability, it could place the town in a deficit position. There was also an accounting error from two fiscal years ago with the small FEMA grants that may also play a part. The town is trying to be as conservative as possible and it appears that the budget is just over \$150,000.00. Ms. Bennett stated it will not be known for sure until the audit is

complete. Mr. Atherton has a hard time approving the economic development contract when it is not known if there is a deficit or not.

Motion by Devon Fuller/Ethan Swift to enter into executive session at 10:27PM for a contract discussion. **The motion passed unanimously – 4 to zero.**

18. Executive Session 1 V.S.A.313 (a) (1) – Contract

Motion by Ethan Swift/Devon Fuller to come out of executive session at 10:40PM. **The motion passed unanimously – 4 to zero.** There were no actions required.

Motion by Devon Fuller/Dave Atherton to enter into executive session at 10:43PM for a personnel discussion. **The motion passed unanimously – 4 to zero.**

19. Executive Session 1 V.S.A.313 (a) (1) - Personnel

Motion by Ethan Swift/Dave Atherton to come out of executive session at 11:45PM. **The motion passed unanimously – 4 to zero.** There were no actions required.

20. Adjournment

Motion by Maria Ammatuna/Blaine Cliver to adjourn the Select Board meeting at 11:46PM. **The motion passed unanimously - 4 to zero.**

Respectfully submitted,

Charlene Bryant
Recording Secretary