

TO: Selectboard March 13, 2014

FROM: Patrick Moreland, Interim Town Manager

SUBJECT: Administrative Report

The following will summarize the proposed motions for those items on the Agenda for the Tuesday, March 18, 2014 Selectboard Meeting. It is anticipated that the Board will meet in executive session beginning at 5:30pm to discuss a contract matter and personnel matter, followed by committee interviews at 6:00pm; the regular meeting will begin at 6:15pm.

7. **LIQUOR COMMISSIONERS**

- A. Liquor & Tobacco License Renewals – Annual Renewals. The Board is asked to approve the annual renewal of liquor and tobacco licenses. The list of renewals is presented noting any violations reported to the Town by the Vermont Department of Liquor Control. There are no reported violations among this group of renewals. Brattleboro Fire and Brattleboro Police have reviewed and approve the application. The Board may approve the list in its entirety or may approve the list with exceptions.

POTENTIAL MOTION: TO APPROVE RENEWALS OF LIQUOR AND TOBACCO LICENSES FOR THE BUSINESSES ON THE LIST.

8. **WATER AND SEWER COMMISSIONERS - None**

9. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

- A. Connecticut River Transit - Memorandum of Understanding. Randy Schoonmaker will be available to discuss the memorandum with the board. Since 2010, when CRT assumed responsibility for bus service in Brattleboro, the municipality has made regular contributions for that service in the amount of \$50,000. In FY 13 the cost to run the three Brattleboro based lines (Red, White & Blue) was \$359,248. Other funding sources includes: Town of Hinsdale, New Hampshire Job Access & Reverse Commute; the School for International Training; Rider Fares/Tokens; and other grants. CRT is a vitally important service for local residents in need of transportation to support employment and obtain medical or other essential services.

POTENTIAL MOTION: TO APPROVE THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH CONNECTICUT RIVER TRANSIT AND TO AUTHORIZE THE TOWN MANAGER TO SIGN THE MEMORANDUM

10. **NEW BUSINESS**

- A. Finance Report – Monthly Report, Finance Department. Finance Director John O'Connor will be present to discuss the monthly financial report for February.

POTENTIAL MOTION: NONE

- B. Staffing Level Review – Fire Department. A vacancy will occur in the Brattleboro Fire Department. After many years of service to the Town, Gregory Seymour will be leaving for a new position with Keene, NH. At the present time, Brattleboro Fire has the following staffing structure: 3 platoons of 7 fire fighters; a fire alarm superintendent; an office manager; an assistant chief and chief for a total of 25 employees. For the purpose

of maintaining safe working conditions for fire fighters, a minimum staffing of 6 is agreed to by the Town in the fire fighters collective bargaining agreement. Even with platoons of 7 fire fighters, it can be difficult to maintain minimum staffing due to the use of sick time from injury or illness or from the use of vacation time. While every effort is made to utilize the assistant chief or fire alarm superintendant in order to maintain minimum staffing, a platoon with 6 members will necessarily increase the need for overtime, paid out at 2.16 times regular hourly rate. Furthermore, lowering the staffing levels will result in a diminished quality of response to emergency situations.

POTENTIAL MOTION: NONE

- C. Farm Tax Stabilization - *Approve Agreements*. In 1974 Representative Town Meeting authorized the Selectboard to enter into tax stabilization agreements in an effort to preserve farming activities in Brattleboro. The agreements, which last for 10 years, are conditioned on the successful participation by the applicant in the Farmland Tax Stabilization Program as outlined in the program guidelines. The property owner must, as an example, provide copies annually of their personal tax return to demonstrate that at least 2/3 of their personal income is derived from farming activity. The board is asked to approve the farm tax stabilization agreements with the following farmers: Thurber; Robb; Hamilton; Chamberlin; and, Bailey.

POTENTIAL MOTION: TO APPROVE THE FARM TAX STABILIZATION AGREEMENTS AS PRESENTED.

- D. Ordinance Amendment – Utility Rates, Chapter 18, Article II, Division 5, Section 18-137, and Chapter 18 , Article III, Division 2, Section 18-163, Second Reading and Public Hearing. The Board is asked to conduct a second reading and public hearing on the proposed amendments to Chapter 18 Water and Sewers and approve the revised tables as presented.

POTENTIAL MOTION: TO APPROVE THE AMENDMENTS TO CHAPTER 18 OF THE TOWN ORDINANCE AS PRESENTED.

- E. Accept and Appropriate Grant– Google/VDOL Videoconferencing Grant, Brooks Memorial Library. The Board is asked to accept and appropriate a supplementary grant in the amount of \$366 from the Vermont Department of Libraries to support video conferencing. The Town was notified that additional funds were being made available to existing participants in the Google Teleconferencing grant. The original grant provided the library with \$3,462.28 worth of equipment, and \$1,269 for training. The additional \$366, will be used to continue video conferencing operations

POTENTIAL MOTION: TO ACCEPT AND APPROPRIATE A SUPPLEMENTARY GRANT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$366 FROM THE VERMONT DEPARTMENT OF LIBRARIES AS PART OF THE GOOGLE VIDEO CONFERENCING GRANT..

- F. Approve SBAP Loan – Adventure Restaurant Group, d/b/a Duo Restaurant. Finance Department. The Board is asked to approve a Small Business Assistance Program (SBAP) loan to Adventure Group Inc., d/b/a Duo Restaurant, a restaurant to be opened later this year in the Brooks House. On February 28th, the loan review committee met and has recommended a \$40,000 loan, at 3% interest, with a term of 10 years. The committee's recommendation is contingent upon a series of conditions that are verified at closing by the Town Manager, with the Town Attorney.

POTENTIAL MOTION: TO APPROVE A \$40,000 SMALL BUSINESS ASSISTANCE PROGRAM LOAN FOR ADVENTURE GROUP, INC. FOR DUO RESTAURANT AT 136 MAIN STREET, IN THE BROOKS HOUSE, WITH THE FOLLOWING TERMS: 10 YEARS/120 MONTHLY PAYMENTS; 3% INTEREST RATE COMPOUNDED MONTHLY; THE MONTHLY PAYMENT BEING \$386.24, DUE ON THE FIRST OF EACH MONTH, FOLLOWING 60 DAYS FROM THE DATE OF DISBURSEMENT. THE LOAN IS CONTINGENT ON THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS: A LOAN FROM MESABI, INC. FOR LEASEHOLDER IMPROVEMENTS, NOT TO EXCEED \$310,000.00; A LOAN AND SECURITY AGREEMENT; A CORPORATE PROMISSORY NOTE AND UCC FINANCING STATEMENT WITH ADVENTURE RESTAURANT GROUP INC.; PERSONAL GUARANTEES FROM STEPHANIE BONNIN AND KEITH ARNOLD; AND, TERM LIFE INSURANCE POLICIES FOR STEPHANIE BONNIN AND KEITH ARNOLD ASSIGNED TO THE TOWN IN AN AMOUNT COVERING THE NOTE.

- G. Additional Sidewalk Plowing – *East Side of Cedar Street to Myrtle Street, Traffic Safety Committee, Department of Public Works.* At the February 25th meeting of the Traffic Safety Committee, a motion passed recommending to the Selectboard that a new section of sidewalk be added to the approved sidewalk snow plow route. The motion also carried the recommendation that the budget be adjusted to account for any additional cost associated with this increase in service. At the present time only 14.36 miles of sidewalk are on the sidewalk snow plow route, out of nearly 38 total miles of sidewalk. There will certainly be a budget impact in fuel and potentially overtime when increasing the route by 650 feet, but the exact number is difficult to calculate. What is clear is that adding additional millage to the snow plow route, will add to the time it takes to clear the sidewalks of snow. Already citizens are frustrated by the slow pace of response after a storm; clean up from a major storm can take 2 weeks. However, adding new staff and equipment to speed up the pace would have significant budget impacts. It should be noted that the driving influence behind the committee's recommendation to the board is to provide for a safe route for children walking to school on Cedar Street.

POTENTIAL MOTION: TBD

- H. Committee/Board Appointments - *Connecticut River Transit Board of Directors, Town Service Officer*

POTENTIAL MOTION: TBD

- I. Holidays Observed - *Town Manager.* The Board is in receipt of communication from Nancy Braus, a shop owner in Brattleboro, with a request that the Town observe Martin Luther King Day held on the third Monday in January. Managing a consistent system of holidays for the town can be impossible. Some departments operate 24 hours per day, other departments are particularly active on holidays (Recreation and Parks on July 4). At the present time, Brooks Memorial Library observes MLK day in place of the day after Thanksgiving. Further complicating matters, each of our three labor agreements spell out a specific holiday schedule, meaning that any change to the list of observed holidays would apply to non-union staff only. A new schedule of holidays would need to be negotiated with each union.

The Town list of observed holidays is included for your review. It includes 10 full day and 2 part day holidays. Putting aside the venerable purpose of each of the existing holidays and any potential new holidays, I do not recommend the board add any

additional days. This leaves a few options; leave the list alone, or replace a holiday with MLK day. I recommend no changes to the current schedule of holidays. As currently structured, holidays are already imbalanced across the year. During a 3 month period between November and February, there are in the current holiday schedule, 6 full day and 2 half day holidays. The remaining 9 months of the year contain only 4 holidays. Adopting MLK day as a holiday during January would only further the imbalance.

If the Board wanted a replacement holiday, I would suggest Columbus Day or the day after Thanksgiving.

POTENTIAL MOTION: TBD

- J. Warrants - *Assign Quarterly Responsibility*

POTENTIAL MOTION: NONE

- K. Assignment of Motions – *Representative Town Meeting*

POTENTIAL MOTION: NONE

- L. Schedule Special Meeting – *Organizational Meeting, March 24, at ____pm*

POTENTIAL MOTION: NONE

- M. Selectboard Goals – *Schedule Meeting*

POTENTIAL MOTION: NONE