

**UNAPPROVED MINUTES
TOWN OF RYEGATE
PO BOX 332
RYEGATE, VERMONT 05042**

**SELECT BOARD ORGANIZES
ADDENDUM TO MINUTES
March 2, 2016**

The meeting was called to order at 12:30 PM at the Town Office by Chairman Claudette Sortino. Other members present: Paul Keenan and Andrew Smith. Also present: Nelson Elder, William Hetu, Cheryl Slayton, Elizabeth Page, Nancy Perkins, Walter Bragg, Alice Allen, William Elder, Fremont Nelson, Marsha Nelson.

Minutes of last year's meeting (March 9, 2015) were read and approved as printed on a motion from Paul seconded by Andy that carried.

Public Comment: Fremont Nelson asked that Zoning Board members be allowed to speak at some point during the meeting. Permission was granted.

Paul Keenan was elected Chairman and took over the meeting. When the Zoning Board segment of the worksheet was reached, Nancy Perkins asked if she could speak. She would like to clear up incorrect assumptions she has heard. 1) The Zoning Board has been accused of "routinely working outside the Open Meeting Law." She said that no one on the Board is intentionally or willfully working outside. She asked that the Select Board either provide training or material to read. 2) She spoke for herself. There were allegations she had only attended two of the Zoning Board meetings. That is not correct. She checked the minutes on the website. Since October of 2014 the Board has met eleven times. She was present at seven of them. She also attended the River Corridors Workshop that was sponsored by the Zoning Board. 3) The Zoning Board knows the solar projects are the impetus for this situation. On the 19th of October Green Lantern and Bruce Nelson met as a courtesy to the Planning Commission with both the Select Board and the Zoning Board. In November Sun Common's project was discussed. There were many concerns about the project. Nancy's understanding is that the Public Service Board has the final say. The next meeting was November 23rd. Fremont Nelson called Nancy before the meeting and suggested she didn't vote as she had not attended the previous meeting. When the Board met and decided to speak out against the Sun Common project, Nancy did not vote. She didn't state she wasn't voting but she didn't and hopes people will take her word for it. Fremont also didn't vote because he is the Chair.

Alice Allen totally agrees with Nancy. After the Green Lantern meeting when Cabot was also there, she emailed them, and her questions were answered. Sun Common, on the other hand, was not an optimal site for solar panels. The Zoning Board's letter did not have any weight. As

to the Open Meeting Law, she called some Planning Board members in other towns. One friend hadn't even heard of the Open Meeting Law. She feels it is projects, not personalities that need to be worked on. The Board is all doing its best, they are all volunteers and trying to come up to speed with how best to proceed with important town matters. Moving forward, she is sure they can learn more about the Open Meeting Law. They are climbing the learning curve.

Walter Bragg said the Zoning Board did have concern for the people that lived on Reservoir Road near the Green Lantern Project. However the Sun Common project was right on Route 5 and the Board did not want that in the public's face. He said there's a place for everything and everything has its place. Paul Keenan said he had voiced his opinion at the Hearing and thought the Zoning Board didn't have any authority.

Claudette spoke to the Open Meeting Law. She said it's a State Law and needs to be followed. Marsha asked how the Board is out of compliance. Paul said the Open Meeting Law is a work in progress for all Town Boards. Andy said Steve Genereaux thought a sub-committee of the Planning Board could attend a VLCT workshop to learn more about the Open Meeting Law. He also said Solar Projects are not a part of today's discussion. He mentioned a rock that had been turned over by a raccoon.

Andy then said we need to move forward in a positive way. He is not looking to criticize anyone but there are six people interested in four positions so he would like to nominate Regina Hazel, Kate Davie, Rick Colby and Paul Coates to fill these positions. Marsha asked if that was really what he wanted to do after all these people had spoken. He said yes.

Paul said those terms expiring on the Board are Walter Bragg, Nancy Perkins, Rick Colby and one vacancy. Andy has nominated Rick Colby, Paul Coates, Regina Hazel and Kate Davie. Alice Allen asked if they were accepting resignations because she had no need to serve on the Zoning Board under these circumstances when she was busy on other boards.

Paul said only the three Select Board members can vote. He suggested keeping the three on for another year and see how things change. He then nominated Walter Bragg, Nancy Perkins, Rick Colby and Regina Hazel to serve for three year terms. Andy said if the sub-committee is a go it is OK.

Walter Bragg said he may not be as educated as some people but He knows what's right and he knows what's wrong and this is wrong. When he was asked to serve on the Board it was hard to find people to go on it. Now that there's suddenly turmoil, there are all these people who want to go on the board. He feels good about being on the Board, the subjects covered are important for Ryegate and he likes being able to help the town.

Claudette said she would say to go ahead with the existing committee if the member's agree with Paul's suggestion. She doesn't see anyone not agreeable to work with the Open Meeting Law. Andy said the Planning Board could choose the Sub-Committee. Claudette moved Paul's

slate of re-appointees. Andy withdrew his motion. Paul seconded Claudette's motion and it carried unanimously.

William Hetu said he attended a few of the Zoning Board meetings and saw that the Committee worked well together. No one tried to take over the meeting. There was a Chairman but he didn't try to run it his way.

The rest of the worksheet followed. Public Comment was again welcomed. Hearing none, Andy moved adjournment at 1:25 PM. Claudette seconded the motion and it carried.

Marsha Nelson, Clerk