



Town of Hermon

Public Safety Meeting Room

APRIL 25, 2019

Town Council Meeting

7:00 PM

MINUTES

Council Meetings may be viewed live online and are archived after the meeting
has taken place – check hermon.net for link.

ALL ITEMS ARE SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATE COUNCIL ACTION

I. CALL TO ORDER BY CHAIRPERSON

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair McCluskey led those in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance

III. ROLL CALL

Members Present: Jeanne Jacques, Steven Watson, Steven Thomas and Timothy McCluskey

Members Absent: Excused: Douglas Sinclair Sr., Donna Ellis, and John Snyder

Others Present: Town Manager Howard Kroll, Town Clerk Kristen Cushman, Bobbie Pelletier, Michael Parady, Frank Roma, Byron Ouelette, Cody Sullivan and approximately 35 residents

Councilor Watson moved to excuse three absent council members. Councilor Jacques seconded the motion. The motion was accepted. Motion passes 4-0.

IV. REVIEW CONSENT CALENDAR: REGULAR BUSINESS, APPOINTMENTS, SIGNATURES, And APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

SIGNATURES. –APPROVE

MINUTES. -APPROVE 4/9/2019 Minutes, 4/11/2019 Minutes

WARRANTS. –SIGN

RESOLVES. –SIGN

Councilor Jacques moved to approve the Consent Calendar as presented. Councilor Thomas seconded the motion. Motion passes 4-0.



V. NEWS, PRESENTATIONS AND RECOGNITIONS

Hank Farrah of RKO will be presenting audit results. **Presented**

Gary Gonyar- Canopy RFP results. **Presented**

Bruce Flaherty – Spirit of America Foundation. **Presented**

VI. PUBLIC ITEMS OR COMMENTS (*Items Not Already on Agenda*)

Donald Page: Resident for 41 years. Picked up the Bangor Daily News (BDN) and saw an article about an incident at the last council meeting. Mr. Page is very disappointed people can't agree to disagree in good manor. He feels people don't get involved at the national level, the state level and the county level a lot of people don't get involved because of similar incidences. He would encourage the council to take 10 deep breaths. We all say things we should not say, we all could do better at it. Mr. Page was equally disappointed in whoever notified the BDN. This isn't news this is ridiculous in his opinion. Mr. Page was disappointed in the journalism department of the BDN that they would even consider something like this. Mr. Page thinks we all need to relax and be gentlemen and gentlewoman and agree to disagree in a better manor.

Mr. Page stated his wife has been very ill for the last 14 years. He has used Northern Light Ambulance Service 5 times since 12-25-2018. The last time Northern Light was contacted, Hermon Fire Department showed up. Mr. Page could not follow the policy of why they showed up, but had good intention. If this is the policy the Page's did not need them. Last time 9 people showed up to help with Mrs. Page. Consistency, Mr. Page asked the first responders to come in.... and it was Hermon Fire Dept. Questioned why they came. Not sure if this is something to look at or not because Mr. Page was confused on the process.

Shawn Clark: Question directed to the BDN article. Looking at expenses 2017 \$245,712, revenue \$ 234,072 and shortfall \$ 11,640. Directed question to Councilor Steve Thomas.

Councilor Thomas: Regarding the \$200,000 that you had quoted annually – elaborate on it please. Councilor Thomas stated Hermon Rescue (HVRS) reported a shortfall but this really does not paint the whole picture. HVRS has been operating on a shoestring budget for the last few years. The Town stopped funding HVRS in 2010 until this last year when the council approved \$50,000 to help until a plan was developed. But when you take that loss \$11,000 and you layer in the dept service requirements of what they owe on the building, ambulances and equipment. When each employee signs up for a shift it is paid at \$50.00 stipend for an 8 hour shift. That equals \$6.25 per hour wage with additional staff putting in incredible hours and they are not getting paid anything. They are doing this to basically help HVRS survive. When you take the total number of hours in the day multiplied by two people 24/7 times 365 and you increase that from \$6.25 to \$12.00 per hour this causes an increase of over \$100,000 expense that should have been on the P & L statement last year. Then when you layer in what the other individuals are not getting paid at all this comes in right around \$200,000 increase. This increase would insure at a minimum, two individuals were getting paid minimum wage. This is where the figure came from.



Mr. Clark purchased his home 3.5 years ago and looked at HVRS and this was a big selling point. HVRS dept \$ 27,200 with a line of credit, \$212,000 mortgage, all the ambulances all the expenses totaling \$ 357,000 back in 2018 \$50,000 was given to HVRS to pay down dept. Mr. Clark stated the possibility of Town of Hermon owning the building, ambulances and 4 acres of land with the possibility of a neighbor giving another acre of land. Mr. Clark wants to hear what he is missing.....where the negativity around HVRS is because Mr. Clark stated he is just not getting it. Mr. Clarke asked Council Thomas to speak on Capitol Ambulance.

Councilor Thomas: Council spoke with Capitol Ambulance last year. Capitol is a great outfit and top notch service and very experienced. They provided a proposal that provided three different levels of service. It would all be based at the Hermon Fire Station. Supply one ambulance, one driver and one EMT or paramedic. Lowest cost option was 1 ambulance, 1 driver and 1 EMT 24/7 and based on the historical call volume as provided by Penobscot Regional Call Center (PRCC). This option was \$293,000. With that one ambulance if we wanted to restrict them to just serving Hermon, but if there was a call in Etna or Carmel they could not go to the call. This came with additional price tag of \$63,000. There was potential savings if the town wanted to provide a driver this was an approx savings of \$98,000 but the town would pay someone full time at least minimum wage, social security benefits and that takes the price back up. The town would still pat \$63,000 if we wanted that team only serving Hermon.

Mr. Clark asked if it was fair to say in approximately three years we would own the building outright if we paid HVRS.

Councilor Thomas: Stated that was a different proposal we were looking at and given what has happened with minimum wages he don't know if this would fix the funding problem. The \$200,000 would probably need to be adjusted for any additional increases in minimum wage or other operating costs. But when you compare to other options it is still probably \$150,000 less than other proposals

Doris Rogerson: Thanked Councilor Thomas for his explanation and the pros and cons of HVRS and other proposals for rescue. Mrs. Rogerson states it seems like the town Council does not want to vote on HVRS. She hopes with the members absent this does not hold up the process for ambulance service. She feels this is another stall tactic that they may want to put into place. Mrs. Rogerson stated \$350,000 is a price to pay to have the local ambulance service in town for emergencies.

Tony Reynolds: Presented a resolve the Council signed for a ten year agreement with HVRS on 10/30/2015. Stated they were going to meet in good faith with HVRS. In order to meet in good faith you have to meet. It's been a year and Council has not met with them. That's a problem. Mr. Reynolds stated he and Doug had a problem the other week because Donnie and I wrote a letter because they have attended meetings and nothing has been said about HVRS and all has been done in Executive Session. This is not the way the Town of Hermon should be run. Paperwork also states they will meet with HVRS within 120 days..... this has gone by twice and headed for a third.



Lois Bice: When can we expect some kind of an agreement on HVRS? Councilor Thomas stated he hopes to come to an agreement within the next month because we have a budget that needs to be finalized and go before the residents shortly. Ms. Bice asked the people who are against HVRS what is the problem? She was hoping someone would here to convince us and change our minds and what is really the argument against it? No response from Council.

Don Pelletier: Asked why Councilor Jacques had to come out of Executive Session and request assistance from an officer last meeting?

Councilor Jacques: Had an incident where Councilor McCluskey decided to use violence instead of his words and I was not comfortable.

Mr. Pelletier asked if this was normal. Or do we expect to see this in regular council sessions?

Councilor McCluskey: Stated he was in the meeting and trying to talk and couldn't get my words out and slapped my hand on the table to for order. Guess I hit it a little harder and I offended Jeanne. I am sorry for doing that, I did not mean to.

Deb Farnham: Stated she has lived in town all her life and is just appalled by what has been going on. Deb addressed Mr. McCluskey.... Mr. McCluskey we had an incident approximately a year ago where you let your temper fly. I happened to be in the room and stepped between you and another citizen. So we have a problem with this Council and I believe it's around this issue. What is the reason we don't hear anything about HVRS. We have an ambulance service that provides a service to this town in a timely manor. Does anyone have an issue with the service we have received from HVRS? If you had to call an ambulance would you not want to call them? Would you not want them to show up? Financially it's the most responsible thing we can do for our community is to invest in a service that is going to help our citizens. Does anyone agree with this? So we need to move on with this....Mr. Chairman I am asking you take care of this....

Councilor McCluskey stated he is sure we will have an agenda item on this in the near future regarding EMS services.

Mrs. Farnham stated we had an agenda item last time and it was moved into Executive Session... can we have your promise that this will not happen again.

Councilor McCluskey stated "Yes".

Bill Scott: Mr. Scott heard a few comments about taking over the ambulance service. Is the \$200,000 + is that going towards buying them out and fully owning the ambulance service?

Councilor Thomas: That was one of the options that were being considered last year. At the time we calculated the short fall was and it seemed the best deal at that time was if we could work out an arrangement with HVRS where if the Town essentially paid off all the dept, took over the real estate and assume some of the operating expenses of the building, that would provide a long term solution. That would have been great at the time but we did not factor in the rising cost of minimum wage. I



think for every dollar it goes up it adds at least \$14,000 dollar expense. This is one option considered last year.

Mr. Scott stated HVRS is a private business and provides a service to the Town of Hermon. If the Town Council starts giving money to private businesses that is headed down a slippery slope. Then any business that provides a service to the Town of Hermon could come in here and ask you for money and at that point you can't say no.

Councilor Thomas: Mr. Thomas is aware of that and feels every member of the Council is aware. If Hermon Rescue were to ask to get paid \$200,000 for the service they are providing, that they have done for 50 years.... for \$200,000 ... we have a proposal from Capitol Ambulance and it was 70% higher so fiscally it would be responsible to try and work out a contract with HVRS. I completely understand what you are saying... basically what we did last year and going thru the process last year that HVRS is a really good value for the town and probably save the town millions of dollars over the past 20 or 30 years and it's still cheaper than going with Capitol Ambulance. So even though it's a separate service Example: it's like how we pay to have the roads plowed. It's a negotiated rate that is what we are looking to do here.

Mr. Scott asked why HVRS is running at a deficit? What's the reason... have you seen the books? Mr. Thomas stated we have seen the books. The proposal that Capitol Ambulance provided... they understand what it costs to run an ambulance service. Mr. Scott said it's up to the Council to figure out which way to go but it's a slippery slope.

Tony Reynolds: Stated HVRS is not a business. Steve does not get to take the business/money home with him, it's a not for profit. Mr. Reynolds understands the slippery slope and we have to be careful what businesses we give money to in the Town of Hermon.

Doris Rogerson: If the Council can not make a decision on HVRS why not put it out to the voters.

VII. PUBLIC HEARINGS

Hold Public Hearing – XL Golf dba The Sports Arena Liquor License

Chair McCluskey opened the public hearing at 7:54PM. No public comments were received. The hearing closed at 7:55PM

VIII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

IX. SCHEDULED AGENDA ITEMS

A. OLD BUSINESS

B. NEW BUSINESS



R18-19-35 Consider approving Application for Liquor License – XL Golf dba The Sports Arena

Councilor Jacques moved to approve R18-19-35. Councilor Thomas seconded the motion. The motion was accepted. Motion passes 4-0.

O18-19-09 Consider approving and holding a public hearing on May 23, 2019 for Municipal Budget.

Councilor Watson moved to approve O18-19-09 Councilor Jacques seconded the motion. Motion was accepted unless doubted.

O18-19-10 Consider approving and holding a public hearing on May 23, 2019 for School Budget.

Councilor Jacques moved to approve O18-19-10 Councilor Watson seconded the motion. Motion was accepted unless doubted.

R18-19-37 Consider setting annual Town Meeting Secret Ballot Election June 11, 2019

Councilor Jacques moved to approve R18-19-37 Councilor Thomas seconded the motion. Motion was accepted unless doubted.

FR18-19-55 Accept and Expend State of Maine Snowmobile Municipal Grant for \$8750.00.

Councilor Watson moved to approve FR18-19-55 Councilor Jacques seconded the motion. The motion was accepted. Motion passes 4-0.

FR18-19-54 Consider awarding contract for Entrance Canopy project at Patricia A. Duran School

Councilor Watson moved to approve FR18-19-54 Councilor Thomas seconded the motion. The motion was accepted. Motion passes 4-0.

R18-19-38 Consider scheduling a Special Town Council Meeting on May 9, 2019 to consider Hermon School Department Budget.

Councilor Watson moved to approve R18-19-38 Councilor Jacques seconded the motion. Motion was accepted unless doubted.

C. WORKSHOPS

D. OTHER ITEMS (from Table Package)

Councilor Watson moved to waive council rules and accept the table packet. Councilor Jacques seconded the motion. Motion was accepted unless doubted.



B. New Business

FR18-19-56 Consider approving the use of School Repair Reserves (HERM07) to pay for replacement of mother board and transducer in the fire pump controller at the Hermon Middle School

Councilor Watson moved to approve FR18-19-56. Councilor Thomas seconded the motion. The motion was accepted. Motion passes 4-0.

FR18-19-57 Consider approving the use of School Repair Reserves (HERM07) to pay for replacement of failed hot air furnace at the Superintendent Office

Councilor Jacques moved to approve FR18-19-57. Councilor Thomas seconded the motion. The motion was accepted. Motion passes 4-0.

FR18-19-58 Consider accepting a donation of up to \$4700 from the Hermon Historical Society to be placed in a trust account.

Councilor Jacques moved to approve FR18-19-58. Councilor Watson seconded the motion. The motion was accepted. Motion passes 4-0.

X. APPOINTMENTS

R18-19-36 Consider appointments to the Recreation Advisory Committee. Kathryn Bartley & Jonathan C. Smith

Councilor Jacques moved to approve R18-19-36 Councilor Thomas seconded the motion. The motion was accepted. Motion passes 4-0.

Council to sign Oath: Consider to appoint personnel to various positions as required by Charter and State Statue. Police – Andrew Whitehouse

Councilor Jacques moved to approve Andrew Whitehouse. Councilor Thomas seconded the motion. The motion was accepted. Motion passes 4-0.



XI. MANAGER STATUS REPORT:

Manager thanked the public for their comments during the meeting. The comments were positive and reflected a good dialogue with HVRS. Manager also informed the public that on Saturday, 27 April 2019 the Boy Scouts were going to do a town wide clean up- pending the weather. Manager indicated that the Town office would be closed on Tuesday, 30 April 2019 for annual safety training.

XII. FINAL PUBLIC ITEMS OR COMMENT (*Items Not Already on Agenda*)

Don Page: Asked if there is a minimum amount of councils that need to be at a meeting to conduct business. Chair McCluskey stated 4 is the minimum. Is there a problem with the bid process where only one contractor will bid on a job for the Town of Hermon? Is it the procedure that is scaring them away? Or do they not want to do business with the Town of Hermon? Chair McCluskey stated there are lots work bids going out right now and it's hard to get people to bid on projects. They have so much work lined up already and of course that drives the price up.

XIII. COUNCIL ITEMS: None

XIV. EXECUTIVE SESSION: None

XV. ADJOURNMENT:

Councilor Thomas moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:19 PM. Councilor Jacques gave seconded. With no objection the meeting was adjourned at 8:19 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

**Howard Kroll and Kristen Cushman
Town Manager and Town Clerk**

Explanatory note #1: All items in the CONSENT CALENDAR are considered routine and are proposed for adoption by the Town Council with one motion without DISCUSSION or deliberation. If DISCUSSION on any item is desired, any member of the Council or public may request the removal of an item for it to be placed in the regular agenda prior to the motion to approve the Consent Agenda.

Explanatory Note #2: In the interest of effect decision-making: At 10:00 p.m., the Chairman shall poll the Council and Town Manager to identify remaining items which shall be carried forward to the next Regular Meeting.

Explanatory Note #3: A Councilor who feels the need for the Council excusing his/her absence will make the request to the Town Manager or the Town Clerk prior to the meeting.