

VMCTA EXECUTIVE BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, April 4, 2017
Barre Town Offices

MEMBERS PRESENT: President Lucrecia Wonsor, Killington; Past President Tammy Legacy, Roxbury; 1st Vice President Donna Kinville, South Burlington; 2nd Vice President Georgette Wolf-Ludwig, Fairlee; Treasurer Audra Girouard, Concord; Secretary Dawn Custer, Hubbardton; Auditor Patti Lewis, Fayston; Members at Large Tracy Borst, Thetford and Karen Richard, Colchester

OTHERS PRESENT: Priscilla Aldrich, Burke

9:37 a.m. – President Lucrecia Wonsor called the meeting to order.

REVIEW AND APPROVE MINUTES OF January 31, 2017

Patti Lewis made a motion seconded by Tammy Legacy to approve the minutes of the January 31, 2017 meeting with corrections. All were in favor. The motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer Audra Girouard reported as of March 20, 2017 the last bill was received for our lobbyist. It is now paid in full. Georgette Wolf-Ludwig noted there was almost \$1,200 in new clerk's training. Audra added new membership money is still coming in. Karen Richard asked how many members there are. Priscilla Aldrich answered 393 members from 189 towns. Audra informed the Board a \$7,757.86 warrant needed to be signed. She explained it was for bracelet mailing and registration for the final lobbying invoice. Karen Richard made a motion seconded by Tammy Legacy to approve the warrant in the amount of \$7,757.86. All voted in favor. The motion carried. An unclaimed property form was completed. Tracy Borst noted people are reporting it cost more to file than the money that they are receiving.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Legislative Committee

Karen Richard reported nothing was done formally. The Vital Records bill passed out of the House. She stated she didn't look to see if it included Rep. Pattie McCoy's suggested amendments. Lucrecia Wonsor noted Pattie would like VMCTA to follow up on it because there is nothing in the bill that says clerks can charge \$1 for an uncertified copy. Karen added they were asked to leave fees off the bill because the legislature is working on a fees bill next year. Lucrecia stated she would let Pattie know. Tammy Legacy suggested including the \$1 for a copy in town policies. Karen reported the Notary Bill will be up this Thursday. There will be more testimony. Pattie is on the list. Georgette asked what was required. Karen answered training. Georgette asked who would be administering the notary test. Karen answered the Secretary of State's (SOS's) office. Instead of everyone renewing their notary every four years they are thinking of staggering it so not all the renewals are processed at once. Chris Winters, the Deputy Secretary, wants this to happen. Georgette asked if this would be done by the fall explaining she was wondering if there should be a seminar on Municipal Law regarding notaries at the clerk's conference. Karen reported the Miscellaneous Election bill is 70 pages long. The intent is to clarify how to handle absentee ballots. It has gone the other way. They are almost encouraging the envelopes not be sealed. They are putting a lot in the miscellaneous bill. Lucrecia noted the gap date is dead. The committee was in favor of it. The SOS's office had a list which made it more confusing. It can be made clear but it was becoming more confusing. She thought the intent would be to allow people to vote absentee until the Friday before the election except for specific circumstances. She noted we live in a world of deadlines. Karen noted she went over it with the Elections Division of the SOS's office before she went on vacation. The person she spoke to said he wouldn't fight the gap day then he went in and fought it. Donna Kinville noted before the Presidential Election she had 450 people come in the day

before to vote in the office. The office is not a polling place and can't handle that. Lucrecia suggested clerks open on Saturday enabling them to have Monday to get everything together for the election. Donna noted there is a difference between big and small town elections. Lucrecia added she is noticing a clear trend of people coming in on Monday to avoid lines on election day. She noted the committee was open and willing to work with the clerks but the SOS's office shut us down. Tammy Legacy stated the Board represents the clerks and if the majority of the clerks wanted it she noted she thought the committee should do what the majority of the clerks want. Karen explained the SOS's office has stated the majority of the clerks are not in favor of it. She noted only information from clerks responding to the questionnaire can be presented. Donna stated it now goes to the senate and they are saying the clerks really need to make a show. Lucrecia suggested clerks call or email their senators. Karen added they are looking at the recount bill one more time. Regarding the bill about appointing town clerk's, everyone may but it is not mandatory. Some small towns don't have a pool of people to choose from. Priscilla Aldrich stated there was an incident with the Victory Town Clerk fraudulently registering voters. Dawn Custer noted as a result Deb Bucknam is asking for tougher residency requirements. Karen stated there is election training every two years. Elections are not allowed to run without training. It reflects on all clerks if someone doesn't know what their job is.

B. Education

Georgette Wolf-Ludwig reported changes have been made to the qualifications for certification. The most notable thing added are points if the clerk has a Bachelor's or Associate Degree. The points are used for the first certification only. It has been cleaned up to be more user friendly. Lucrecia asked about someone who might serve on a Board or committee, what happens if there aren't minutes. Georgette stated an agenda or letter from the chair would be sufficient. Lucrecia noted when she applied for her certification she wound up sending an Excel sheet of the committee and noted where her name was. She suggested other documentation proving time served may be used. Georgette stated a copy of Board minutes or other documentation. Tammy explained the Budget committee discusses everything via email or phone. Lucrecia suggested adding in any other documentation that proves serving on a board or committee. Patti Lewis stated once a certification level is received the applicant would be starting at ground zero for points to reach the next level. Georgette asked for it to be added to the website noting it is a constantly changing document. Donna Kinville made a motion seconded by Tammy Legacy to accept the Certification – Recertification Application Form. All voted in favor. The motion carried.

Georgette reported the agenda is set and there are already 48 registered for the spring training - half and half between each site. There are some new names. This year there are different presenters. She stated she wants to take people through the recording requirements and how digitizing land records work not favoring one system over another. Tracy asked if the report comparing the different vendors was still on the VMCTA website. Lucrecia answered yes. Tracy noted her fear was it may seem like ACS is being pushed. It would be nice to point to the website to show there are the different vendors and their comparisons. Lucrecia asked if the Committee had started thinking about the Annual Meeting. Georgette stated they had discussed the general session speaker. Lee Ann Szelog was at the New England conference. She has IIMC approval and charges \$2,500 for three hours. It is about 500 miles, \$267, plus her room and the cost of the banquet. She is interested in coming to Vermont. The schedule has been changed to have the general session at 8:30 – 10:00 and 10:30 – 12:00 with education classes at the end of the day so attendees would have to stay if they want the points. She stated if the E-Board is fine with it she would get a contract. Patti asked what other speakers we pay for. Georgette stated last year we had Dan Senning. He was \$1,000 and it was paid by LHS. We also had Charlie Merriman. She wondered if we could have Heather Shouldice, the VMCTA lobbyist, for the open session to explain the process. Karen noted it could be more effective coming from her, asking clerks to contact their legislatures and the committees. Georgette stated for the other general session Karmen Bascom, Town Clerk of South Royalton, has someone from Mascoma Bank that will do a presentation on Cyber Security. For the concurrent education session it is hard to get treasurer sessions. She suggested for the municipal clerk sessions – how to look up statutes and notaries. She suggested cash management and tax collections as possible on the treasurer's side. Tracy added the committee is looking at a combined clerk/treasurer session, what procedures could or would look like, possibly a lawyer. The difference between policies and procedures. Lucrecia stated writing a procedure is similar to writing a computer

program. Every step needs to be written down. Georgette asked the Board if they felt comfortable with her obtaining a contract from Lee Ann Szelog. Lucrecia noted she felt comfortable the money would come in to meet the additional expense explaining she would touch base with vendors by midsummer.

C. Membership

Priscilla Aldrich reported there are 189 member towns which is up 8 since last month. There are 393 individual members up 15 since last month. There will be more coming in because of the newly elected clerks.

D. Recording Fee Sub-Committee

Lucrecia reported the committee met once. There won't be a fees bill this year because Governor Scott will veto anything with an increase. She noted she thought the additional time would be beneficial to figure out how much it cost to record including labor, restoration, book and paper cost. In her office it cost 50¢/min. for her and 39¢/min. for her assistant. Other towns calculated it differently. Georgette asked if the software costs were included in the calculation. Lucrecia answered yes. Donna asked if benefits were included. Lucrecia answered yes. The committee will meet again before the IIMC conference. Hopefully it'll be able to keep going so there is an idea of the charges. \$50 for the first page and an additional \$5 is the highest New England state's fee. Montgomery would like a lower first page and \$10 for additional pages. For little towns it will be tough. For larger towns that do a lot of recording it will work out. Patti asked how the change is being justified. Karen answered there hasn't been an increase in years. Only a couple of New England states record land records locally. Others have a large first page fee and an additional page fee. If the intent is to make a restorative reserve mandatory and a computerized system then it needs to be affordable. Lucrecia explained Connecticut charges \$53 for the first page and \$5 for each additional. Rhode Island is \$54 for the first page and \$1 for each additional. If Vermont were to go with \$45 or \$50 then \$10 from the first page could be set aside for restoration. Patti stated clerks working on fees lose. Karen didn't think it would hurt the general fund or clerks on fees. Lucrecia explained PTTRs would be treated as any other document with a first page and additional page cost. Karen believed there should be an exception for municipal recordings. Lucrecia stated Deb Beckett did research on other fees and the committee hopes to have something structured this fall.

E. Annual Meeting

Lucrecia reminded the Board increasing registration fees was discussed. This needs to be decided at the June meeting. She noted it is \$65 for a single day and \$150 for two days now. She suggested not increasing the two day and increasing the one day to \$75 explaining quite a few attendees come only one day. Some come two days and don't stay for supper. They register for two individual days because it is cheaper. Georgette asked how the room rates compare to Stowe. Lucrecia believed they were a little more.

F. Constitution Amendment

Lucrecia stated term limits were amended. She noted she would retype them and put them in a Word document. Patti offered to type them. The amendment was updated online. She stated someone asked if someone serves as a one year Member at Large if they could only serve four years, four one-year terms, or four one-year terms and two, two-year terms. Georgette believed if it is two different positions someone could serve a one-year then move to a two-year. Lucrecia stated the constitution needs to be changed.

Lucrecia announced Tammy Legacy was officially appointed the 4th Vice-President of the New England Association of City and Town Clerks (NEACTC). Patti Lewis was officially appointed a Member at Large.

OLD BUSINESS

A. 2017 Golf Outing

Lucrecia reported she looked at the Adventure Center on Killington. It is \$59 for a day and has bungee jumping, a zip line, tubing, ropes, alpine coaster, disc golf and more. People can do some things individually. Golf usually runs \$45. She noted it was supposed to be a group activity. Donna suggested a big cook out. Tammy noted golf attendance was way down. Lucrecia added it will be the end of the Spartan Race weekend. She suggested going to the top on the gondola then a nice hike to the top. The lodge up there could arrange for lunch at the peak. People could hang out if they don't want to hike. Karen asked if there was a demand to do more on Sunday explaining some people are happy hanging out. Tammy suggested offering an Athenian Dialogue. Georgette stated if Kofile still wants to do dinner it is nice for the people there on Sunday. She suggested the NEMCI&A walk could take place at that time instead of early in the morning. Patti noted the original intent of golf was to raise money. Tammy disagreed noting it was to honor two people. Lucrecia suggested she talk to the resort about gondola rides and a hike to the top.

B. Update Re: Vendor Chair; Scholarship Committee Chair; Constitution Committee Chair

Lucrecia reminded Board members Karen Richard stepped up to be the vendor chair at the last meeting. Sandra Pinsonault, Town Clerk of Dorset, will now be the vendor chair. As Treasurer, Audra Girouard should be the Scholarship Committee Chair. Pattie McCoy will still be on the committee for the upcoming VMCTA and NECTC annual meetings to make sure Audra gets what she needs. She stated she was okay with leaving Pattie McCoy as the Constitution Committee Chair until the next annual meeting. Donna asked if she was the Assistant Town Clerk. Lucrecia answered yes. Pattie suggested Clyde Jenne, Town Clerk of Hartland, serve as chair. Georgette suggested it could be the 1st Vice-President. The 2nd Vice-President chairs a lot of committees.

OTHER BUSINESS

A. New Clerks/Treasurers Notification & Outreach

Lucrecia stated she hoped to get the list of new clerks and treasurers from the SOS's office. Georgette believed sending out post cards works well. The Town of Bradford's clerk received it and she is new. Lucrecia reported Alison Kaiser would like to stay involved. If there is a task or committee that needs help she wants to do what she can. She stated she would reach out to see what Alison could do after registration.

The next meeting is June 20, 2017 at 9:30 a.m. in Barre Town.

Adjourn: Patti Lewis made a motion seconded by Karen Richard to adjourn the meeting at 11:55 a.m. All members voted in favor. The motion carried.

Attest: _____
Dawn Custer
VMCTA Secretary