

VMCTA EXECUTIVE BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, April 25, 2018
Barre Town Offices

MEMBERS PRESENT: President Donna Kinville, South Burlington; Past President Lucrecia Wonsor, Killington; 1st Vice President Georgette Wolf-Ludwig, Fairlee; 2nd Vice President Tracy Borst, Theford; Treasurer Audra Girouard, Concord; Secretary Dawn Custer, Hubbardton; Auditor Deanna Robitaille, Montgomery; and Members at Large - Diane Judd, Holland; Debra Hawkins, Pawlet

OTHERS PRESENT: Sandra Pinsonault, Dorset Town Clerk

9:30 a.m. – President Donna Kinville called the meeting to order.

REVIEW AND APPROVE MINUTES OF February 15, 2018

Georgette Wolf-Ludwig made a motion seconded by Debra Hawkins to approve the minutes of the February 15, 2018 meeting with corrections. All members were in favor. The motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Education Committee Update

Tracy Borst reported the Education Committee is currently between spring trainings. There were 72 attendees in Danville and up to 74 are expected in West Rutland. It is popular because of the one-day format and its affordability.

At the fall conference Joe Powers will hold an Athenian Dialogue and be the general session speaker on the first day. He is doing it for mileage and the hotel room. Chris Polinski is the other general session speaker. He is dynamic and engaging. Two sessions will cost \$600. The overall speaker expenses are inline. Chris is a Professor of Communications, as is Joe. The topics for the sessions are being narrowed. Rich McCoy was approached for the Vital Records session. Tracy suggested Deputy Secretary of State Chris Winters for the elections session. Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT) and Vermont Election Management are putting something together. Shooting incident preparedness was suggested. Heidi Racht, Hinesburg Town Clerk suggested a writing session, Correspondence with the World from Emails to Social Media. She added the Election Division would like to be a vendor and presenter at the conference. The new phone system for elections will be available for them to show how it works. Sandy Pinsonault noted vendor tables are \$125 and it doesn't include meals. Diane Judd stated some vendors have said we don't charge enough for tables. Tracy suggested the Board consider an increase in the vendor fee. Sandy stated she would pull out last year's vendor form for the Board to review and set a price. She noted she would send out a Save the Date notice to vendors and the Board could decide at its next meeting. Donna Kinville informed members she would have the break down on costs for the next meeting including meals and AV. General Code would like to do more the for Association. Tracy reported Heather Law from VLCT reached out to us. They would like options to partner with us on education and are curious about our certification program and training. Tracy asked if we want to split education. It was expressed the Association and our own trainings would suffer. Tracy reported a lot of people pay for the spring training with a personal check. People need to be made more aware of scholarships available. Georgette Wolf-Ludwig suggested VLCT's priority to in helping us should be the Town Clerk and Town Treasurer handbooks.

B. Legislative Update

Donna Kinville reported H.899 includes the clerk restoration fees. It began when first presented at \$40 for the first page and \$5 for each additional page. The Government Operations Committee in the House set it at \$25 for the first page and \$8 for each additional. It changed again in the Ways and Means Committee. The Government Operations Committee in the Senate had it at \$20 for the first page and

\$15 for each additional. It is in Senate Finance. If a clerk's town puts money into a restoration fund, money received from the recordings does not need to be set aside until the recording dollars reach beyond what the town puts into the fund. It was explained to the Legislature that, what the clerks presented had been worked on for years taking into consideration clerks who are on fees and small towns. There was a concern about returning documents if the fee accompanying them for recording is incorrect. Attorneys and the banks aren't happy, and the Association has said it would give a six-month grace period for them to become familiar with the new fees. The clerk would contact the sender, record the document and return it with a bill for the additional amount due. Sandy noted last time the fee increased she inserted a note making the banks and attorneys aware the fees were going to increase. Donna reported if it passes in the Senate the Governor will veto it. There will be a veto session but, if this is the only reason for the veto session, they will not have it. If it passes it will become effective July 1, 2018. Tracy noted the point that is missed is for clerks to be able to collect enough fees to preserve our records. There are also unfunded mandates. A gradual increase was discussed in the Legislature, but the bankers and attorneys were against it. Heather Shouldice, the Association's lobbyist, had her fingers everywhere. The Association will become part of the review cycle for fee increases beginning in 2019.

The Governor is big on block chains. A company is hired to protect your data if a company, like Amazon gets hacked. It is a pilot program and for clerks it would be a kind of document management system in the cloud. If there is a property someone wants to sell it would be put in a block chain. Everything from the listing to selling to recording the sale would be done in block chains. People must be invited to make changes within the block chain and the original always stays. The paper for recording will include a QR code and hash tag. Currently statutes don't recognize it. Companies are pushing for it. They are looking for a couple of different sized communities to be included in the pilot program. Lucrecia stated the best we can do is to try and control how it may affect us. It is inevitable. You must be part of it to put things in place. That will safeguard as much as it can. Everything will be available right away for viewing. Sandy asked how towns would be able to set their grand list and how a clerk would know if a property was transferred.

Deanna Robitaille reported H.922 includes merged assessment districts. The language states it is not merging to one office but merging Common Level of Appraisals.

C. Scholarship Committee

Sandy Pinsonault reported some scholarships have been issued to Region I and NEMCI&A – there are four Vermonters attending year one this year. She asked if a scholarship for IIMC could be issued using money that had not been used. Donna noted there isn't anything on the application form about IIMC and suggested the money be preserved for the Annual Meeting and NEMCI&A, if there is any money remaining maybe IIMC. Lucrecia asked what the scholarship was for noting some might use it to cover room expenses and registration. She suggested it not be restricted but maybe set a cap. Deb Hawkins suggested the IIMC cap might be set at what the scholarship covers for the New England Conference. Sandy explained for NEMCI&A the applicants are asked to cover the \$75 deposit. The Association's Scholarship Committee will pay \$425 to NEMCI&A if it isn't covered. Priority is given to first year students. The entire budget has never been expended. Donna noted our Annual Meeting in September starts our fiscal year. Then next is the New England Conference. We want to make certain there is scholarship money set aside for those. Sandy noted the money left each year is rolled over to fund the following year. Tracy asked if money is leftover each year the question should be why. Sandy explained scholarships are starting to be promoted more and IIMC is being added. Even if \$500 is left at the end of the year it could be rolled over to the next fiscal year. The Scholarship Committee will be held to being fiscally responsible. Donna noted the scholarship application form needs to be updated to include IIMC & Region I. Sandy asked about the Pat Vaillancourt scholarship in honor of Alison Kaiser. Audra Girouard added there is \$1,000 in the Linda Spence Scholarship as well. Sandy suggested \$425 from the Linda Spence Scholarship could be used to cover the Manchester Town Clerk attending NEMCI&A. Deanna suggested a scholarship could be given to people receiving their state certification at the Annual Meeting. Sandy suggested a raffle for those receiving certification adding she would like to see it be for the New England Conference. It was suggested the raffle could include any attendee at the Annual Meeting. Donna suggested the Scholarship Committee could draw up the rules.

D. Membership in VMCTA Listserv and Discussion

Donna reported everyone who is a member of VMCTA can be on the listserv. There was an Assistant to the Selectboard who was a member and no longer is. There is a question about retirees because there was a prior town clerk stalking the current. Deanna asked if there was a process for removing someone who is harassing another individual. The answer is yes, the Rules of Etiquette.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer Audra Girouard reported the warrant for \$9,284.60 consisted of scholarships, lobbying and the deposit for the Annual Conference. The scholarship given in honor of Alison Kaiser has been added to the financial report. Dianne Judd made a motion seconded by Deanna Robitaille to approve the warrant in the amount of \$9,284.60 for February 15, 2018 through April 24, 2018. All members voted in favor. The motion carried. Sandy noted the IIMC Annual Conference will have a balance of \$800 and asked if it could be transferred to scholarships. Donna noted her travel and conference needed to be paid for. She stated she would research it for the next E-Board meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

A. Annual Meeting

Donna thanked Sandy for taking on the role of Vendor Chair. Stacy Jewell will take care of the gifts. Play Dough was suggested. Deb Hawkins explained it was because clerks must conform to what everyone wants, basically making us play dough. Georgette stated she would help with decorating adding Stacy did it last year and may want to again, but she would be happy to help.

B. Proposed Fee Increase

Donna noted the Hampton Inn isn't charging much for the rooms and they aren't charging for AV which helps to keep the expenses down. If it is a state sponsored training, the state is exempt from taxes. She noted she would check with the State Treasurer's office to see if we could get state sponsorship. Entertainment was discussed. Audra noted there aren't enough lanyards for all the attendees, and some will be ordered.

C. Ideas to Promote Vermont Town Clerks

Donna informed the Board she put a request for the card room outside of the Capitol cafeteria. She explained she is looking for ways to promote clerks. Sandy suggested putting certifications received on a Facebook page. Georgette suggested Muninet. Lucrecia suggested a link to our website on Muninet.

The next E-Board meeting was set for June 6, 2018, 9:30 a.m. at the Barre Town Offices.

Adjourn: President Donna Kinville adjourned the meeting with no objections at 11:55 a.m.

Attest: *Dawn Custer*
Dawn Custer
VMCTA Secretary