

**VMCTA EXECUTIVE BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
Friday July 10, 2020
Via Zoom (an online meeting provider)**

MEMBERS PRESENT: President Georgette Wolf-Ludwig, Fairlee; Past President Donna Kinville, South Burlington; 1st Vice President Tracy Borst, Thetford; 2nd Vice President Julie Graeter, Colchester; Secretary Dawn Custer, Hubbardton; and Members at Large – Charles Degener, Woodstock; Deb Hawkins, Pawlet; and Diana Vachon, Shelburne

MEMBERS ABSENT: Treasurer Audra Girouard, Concord; Member at Large Diane Judd, Holland and Auditor Sue Gage, Brandon

OTHERS PRESENT: Lucrecia Wonsor, Killington Town Clerk/Treasurer

10:07 a.m. – President Georgette Wolf-Ludwig called the meeting to order.

AGENDA REVIEW AND MODIFICATIONS

No agenda reviews were discussed

REVIEW AND APPROVE MINUTES OF THE JUNE 5, 2020 MEETING

Charles Degener made a motion seconded by Deb Hawkins to approve the minutes of the June 5, 2020 meeting with corrections. All members were in favor. The motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Georgette Wolf-Ludwig reported Audra Girouard, Tracy Borst and Julie Graeter will have next year's budget prepared by the end of July. Sue Gage will have this year's accounts audited by late summer. It was suggested the budget could be scanned and emailed. A change to consider to the Annual Business Meeting agenda is adding Vermont Government Finance Officers' Association (VTGFOA) as one of the organizations to speak, as New England Municipal Clerks' Institute & Academy (NEMCI&A), as well as other organizations do. She asked the Board if they would be in favor of extending an invitation. The E-Board agreed by consensus to add VTGFOA to the agenda of the business meeting and extend them an invitation.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Committee Update on Land Records ~ H.966 – Lucrecia Wonsor, Land Records Committee Chair

Lucrecia Wonsor reported she, Bobbi Brimblecombe, Marshfield Town Clerk/Treasurer and Deanna Robitaille, of Property Valuation & Review (PVR), developed a rough outline. There is \$2 million to be distributed via a grant. The priority is to get towns with no land records digitization on board. All can apply for up to \$10,000. The three main vendors that serve the state have been alerted that this is coming and they should be prepared with proposals for clerks to see. Towns that haven't done back up scanning can apply. They guidelines and application are being worked on, the money must be spent by the end of the year to be reimbursed by CARES. The contract between a town and vendor must be signed and the grant will be audited to ensure the money was spent the way it was intended. The page Bobbi created and added to the VMCTA website with links to the land records portals used by the different towns helps. For the grant, the documents have to be available online. The goal is to have all images online. Hopefully with the restoration money clerks can apply for the startup costs plus a year's worth of monthly fees. The question is whether clerks are receiving enough in their recordings restoration fees to keep up with the monthly cost. Georgette suggested once towns are online the monthly fee could be added to towns' budgets. Most towns' budgets support money for software used by the treasurers' and listers' office. Some

clerks do a lot of recording and have a strong restoration fund. Many small towns do not. Donna Kinville wondered if the grant is strictly for land records or could listers cards be included. Lucrecia noted what is kept in the vault is the priority. She stated she believed, if a town could show a bona-fide contract with a vendor the clerk should be able to receive grant money. The vendors available in Vermont are also busy in other states. Diana Vachon wondered if a town applies for the grant, signs a contract with a vendor and the vendor isn't available to do the install until 2021, would the clerk receive the money because the contract is signed. Lucrecia stated once the money leaves the state and goes to the town it will be audited. The towns need to be able to prove the money is in a restricted fund if not used. Georgette wondered if the application would be an easy process. Lucrecia reported the application would be easy. The longest part of the process will be deciding which vendor to go to. The vendors need to meet the criteria. If a town does want one of the three, the one chosen must be able to meet the criteria. Deb Hawkins wondered if towns whose records aren't online would be given priority when selecting recipients. Lucrecia answered yes.

B. Membership Committee – Diana Vachon, Membership Committee Chair

Georgette informed members Diana Vachon is now the Membership Committee Chair. Diana noted Sara Haskins, Morristown Town Clerk/Treasurer and Patti Lewis, Fayston Town Clerk/Treasurer also serve on the committee. Sara maintains the listserv and Patti keeps up on membership spreadsheet information. There are 192 paid towns, 58 unpaid. There are 384 on the listserv, 33 are unpaid members. She asked how long the listserv should remain open to non-members. Georgette suggested letting the 33 unpaid know dues are due in October. Donna asked how the membership application will be distributed this year wondering if it would be available on the listserv and VMCTA website. Diana answered it would be available on both the listserv and website. She added she was going to use the Secretary of State's email list as well and distribute it using that distribution list. Georgette stated we need to encourage the unpaid to join the Association noting \$35/year is reasonable. Tracy suggested a motion was needed to have the listserv available to paid members only again. Deb Hawkins made a motion seconded by Donna Kinville to end open access to VMCTA's listserv and once again make it a benefit to be received by paid Association members only. All members voted in favor. The motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

A. Education Committee Update – Julie Graeter, Education Committee Chair

Julie reported the committee met last month and had a lot of difficult discussions. There were questions about Andy Masters' presentation. He usually does four hours with two fifteen-minute breaks. It is interactive and there are exercises. The information has been submitted to the International Institute of Municipal Clerks (IIMC) for credit approval. He is available the week of September 14th. He does not do his own registration or fee collection. A conversation was had about election training and the courses needed for Vermont certification. The Elections Division is holding webinar trainings in August and September. The Education Committee will help with making the webinar more specific to clerks. Donna Kelty, Barre Town Clerk/Treasurer put together a three-part training regarding elections specifically for the November General Election. It regards VEMS (Vermont Elections Management System), how to set up an election, maintain candidates, the balloting process and closing the polls. She stated Will Senning, Director of Elections, needs to be contacted to see if clerk input can be added to their training. The Committee has learned there are a lot of training formats. Participation needs to be tracked and a lot more time needs to be spent learning the tools that are available. The Committee needs to figure out how to use the tools they will be using to conduct trainings. She suggested learning how to do this for the Andy Masters and elections sessions is the limit for now. The required courses for clerk certification are Elections and Vital Statistics this year. She noted it is hard to do vitals training every other year and suggested it be changed. It was agreed the Andy Masters session and Elections is enough for now. It was suggested that after November's General Election and before the end of the year a webinar could be offered for the other mandated courses. Changing certification criteria has been discussed in the past. Tracy Borst noted NEMCI&A put on a lot of online courses this summer. They were interactive with video and PowerPoint. They are available for IIMC and CMC (Certified Municipal Clerk) points. There are other options. Georgette noted it was important to have something available for treasurers. Julie noted

Andy Masters awards both clerk and treasurer points. Donna asked about VTGFOA. Julie stated they had a virtual annual meeting in May. Donna wondered if VTGFOA would be able to put something together for the Annual Conference so there is another offering for treasurers. Julie noted if VTGFOA isn't available Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT) can help. There may be an associated fee. Tracy suggested Vermont State Treasurer may do something for us. Julie suggested topics such as, Principles of Banking, Municipal Accounting and General Ledger Basics. It was suggested the Annual Meeting take place on September 14th and Andy Masters on the 15th. The Elections will be a component on its own. Andy would be on Tuesday. There will be a fee and registration needed for Andy Masters' session. Community National Bank said their vendor donation could be used to help offset the cost of Andy's session. Tracy noted for the session to be eligible for CMC points there needs to be an assessment. Julie noted the Committee hasn't discussed the assessment or how to roll call participants yet. A cost of \$25 was discussed to encourage attendees to take it seriously.

B. 2020 Annual Meeting Preparations

Review Annual Business Meeting Agenda

Georgette informed Board members a draft agenda was sent. She suggested lunch for the Annual Meeting be at 12:00 p.m. followed by the Business Meeting at 1:00. All presentations will be via Zoom. The lifetime membership presentation hasn't been scheduled. The Awards Committee will be sending nomination requests for assistant clerk and treasurer of the year, as well as clerk and treasurer of the year. The Certificate of Appreciation does not need to be given yearly. She noted she wasn't certain if Secretary of State Jim Condos would be available to swear in the newly elected E-Board. The officers will be voted as a slate and someone will be needed to swear them in, or perhaps, they can be sworn in at a separate time in front of the membership if Jim is not available, maybe Deputy Secretary of State Chris Winters could swear in the Board.

Fees & Registration for Annual Business Meeting

Georgette noted fees and registration for the Business Meeting are not needed. The Meeting is open to all members. There are points to be obtained for attending the Annual Meeting. The Zoom meeting will be recorded.

Postcard Mailing or Listserv Announcement for Annual Business Meeting

Georgette reminded Board members that last year it was decided to send a postcard this year. She asked the Board if a listserv announcement would be okay. The announcement could be sent noting the Business Meeting is for VMCTA members only. Andy Masters' presentation is for everyone. Deb Hawkins suggested a link to VMCTA's website be added in lieu of attaching documents. Donna wondered if the fee for attending sessions should be added. Julie believed Andy Masters was the only session with a charge. A motion was made by Deb Hawkins seconded by Donna Kinville to hold VMCTA's Annual Business Meeting virtually on Monday, September 14, 2020 with a virtual lunch at 12:00 p.m. and the Business Meeting at 1:00 p.m.; the education portion will be held on Tuesday, September 15, 2020; the Andy Masters session will have a registration fee of \$25 with a scholarship option for those in towns with frozen budgets. All members voted in favor. The motion carried.

OTHER BUSINESS

A. Mentor List

Georgette expressed she would like to see mentors from every county in the state. She asked the Board for suggestions. She suggested the list be given to Lucrecia to add to the website. The Board reviewed and discussed the list of clerks and treasurers to find those who could potentially serve as mentors for the various counties.

B. Democracy Fund

Georgette stated Democracy Fund has links to very interesting websites that help election workers. She stated an email would be sent on the listserv which would include links to the sites.

The next E-Board meeting was set for August 21, 2020; 8:00 a.m. via Zoom.

Adjourn: Georgette Wolf-Ludwig adjourned the meeting with the consensus of the Board at 12:12 p.m.

Attest: _____

Dawn Custer
VMCTA Secretary