

**VMCTA EXECUTIVE BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, May 27, 2021
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 Diane Judd, Holland; Treasurer Susan McNamara-Hill, Essex; Secretary Dawn Custer, Hubbardton; and Members at Large – Charles Degener, Woodstock; and Deb Hawkins, Pawlet

MEMBERS ABSENT: Members at Large Anita Sheldon, Manchester; Diana Vachon, Shelburne; and Auditor Sue Gage, Brandon

OTHERS PRESENT: Carol Dawes, Barre City Clerk/Treasurer; Tim Arsenault, Vernon Town Clerk; and Heidi Racht, Huntington Town Clerk

9:38 a.m. – President Georgette Wolf-Ludwig called the meeting to order.

AGENDA REVIEW AND MODIFICATIONS

Georgette noted the agenda needed to be modified to add a couple of additional points of business in the Annual Meeting portion of Old Business

NEW BUSINESS

A. Legislative Committee Update

Carol Dawes reported the legislative session adjourned last week. There is no planned summer session but a veto session is possible. There were three main bills this session. H.151 (Act 15) was signed by the governor in late April. It adds grandchildren to the list of those eligible to request vital statistic documents. It becomes effective July 1st.

H.436 is a miscellaneous tax bill. It was approved. It cleans up the oversight in recording fee amounts for tax sale documents. They are now \$15/page, the same as other documents received for recording. It becomes effective July 1st.

S.15 is the election bill. It has been approved but has not been assigned an Act number. The governor intends to sign. It does a lot to codify emergency provisions for elections that were put into place last year – outside voting, drive up or drive thru voting, lock boxes etc. There is language which closes drop boxes for ballots the day before an election unless the town’s board of civil authority decides otherwise. The Secretary of State’s office will mail to all active voters, ballots for general elections. This is not true for primary elections. There was a small group of legislatures who wanted to make it mandatory to mail ballots to all active voters for Town Meeting as well. That did not get included in the final bill. There is an option for communities to mail all Town Meeting ballots but it is not mandated. There is a process for curing defective ballots. Requirements have been set for data entering ballots. The outer envelopes may be opened to determine if a ballot is defective. The Secretary of State will provide postcards to mail to a voter which will inform them that their ballot is defective for such and such a reason. It will include instructions as to how a voter can cure the defect. There may be electronic fixes on the My Voter Page. There are still a lot of fine details to workout. A question was asked about how to cure ballots received without a return address and no signature. Carol noted there needs to be more public education by the Secretary of State on how to process a ballot to prevent it being returned to a voter as defective. The Secretary of State’s office will provide envelopes for their elections. All costs associated with local election absentee ballots is at the municipalities expense. The Secretary of State will develop language for the certificate envelope. One carryover from the emergency legislative session is being able to process ballots thirty days before and

election. There is language included which notes candidates and campaign workers cannot return ballots except for their family members. No individual can return more than twenty-five ballots. Clerks are not required to be the return police. The election bill is effective upon passage. Much of the bill depends on the Secretary of State putting systems in place. There is no system in place for curing defective ballots. She noted she has an election in two weeks and there are still communities who have yet to have their Town Meeting.

H.313 passed. It allows municipalities to assess a \$50 fee to process stand-alone 3rd class liquor licenses. There are not too many of them. There are a lot of changes coming regarding liquor licenses and how they are processed. There is a steep learning curve but it will be nice and paperless. The process will use a portal.

An item being considered for the next legislative session came about because New Hampshire and Massachusetts veterinarians automatically send rabies certificates to town clerks' offices. It will help towns find animals not registered.

Carol informed the Board it was a fun legislative session. There were pros and cons. One of the cons being not being able to go to the state house. There were missed opportunities; not being able to run into people in the hall. The pro was being able to log into a session within five minutes and immediately be back in her office at the end of the session.

B. Public Relations Committee

Georgette noted Tim Arsenault and Heidi Racht were present on behalf of the Public Relations Committee. Heidi is the chair and Tim a member of the committee. She asked for ideas to promote the 85th VMCTA Annual Conference suggesting a slide show with pictures of members in their town halls and offices. Tim suggested starting with the listserv. He suggested the slide show could be accompanied by music and narration. Heidi suggested including a deadline date for pictures to be due. A current membership list is available from Diana Vachon, Chair of the Membership Committee. Discussion followed regarding the time that would be best to show the slide show. The banquet seemed to be the best option because it did not include the time restraints of the Annual Meeting which is immediately followed by education sessions. Heidi agreed to do the leg work. Tim agreed to work the technical aspect of the project. The VMCTA display set up with the vendor tables could have a copy of the first minutes and possible old pictures. It was suggested more than one camera be available for photos and the award photos could be taken outside of the area the meeting is held in to achieve better lighting.

REVIEW AND APPROVE MINUTES OF April 29, 2021 MEETING

Diane Judd made a motion seconded by Donna Kinville to approve the minutes of the April 29, 2021 meeting with corrections. All members were in favor. The motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Charles Degener made a motion seconded by Dawn Custer in favor of appointing Susan McNamara-Hill of Essex to serve as Treasurer of the VMCTA. All members voted in favor. The motion carried. Susan McNamara-Hill reported the warrant was for \$2,220. This includes a \$2,000 to the New England Association of Town and City Clerks for the Vermont Conference, \$163 to CAN Surety for a \$20,000 surety bond for the treasurer and a \$53 Zoom fee. The Zoom fee was charged to increase the maximum allowable attendance at Zoom meetings. Tracy Borst made a motion seconded by Deb Hawkins to approve the warrant in the amount of \$2,220.00. All members voted in favor. The motion carried. Because of the change in Treasurer there is paperwork from the bank that needs to be completed. The signature needs to be changed. The credit card needs to be in the name of Susan McNamara-Hill. The Business Card Resolution Form for the VMCTA needs the secretary's signature. Charles Degener made a motion seconded by Diane Judd in favor of Secretary Dawn Custer signing the Business Card Resolution Form for the VMCTA, which acknowledges and certifies the resolutions contained therein were adopted by the Governing Board of the Association as of today and the

resolutions are now in full force and effect. All members voted in favor. The motion carried. Susan reported Sue Gage is still working to complete the audit for the transition of one treasurer to the next. She noted she is happy to be able to serve and give back to the Association.

OLD BUSINESS

A. VMCTA 85th Annual Conference September 23 – 24, 2021

a. Education Committee

Diane Judd reported the committee has not met recently. There are irons in the fire. Andy Masters is available the first day but it is \$3,500. That is a lot of money for an hour and a half. There are other presenters being considered. There may be an Athenian Dialogue the day prior. Possibly something to energize ourselves after a year of COVID. She noted she needs to touch base with Julie Graeter, Colchester Town Clerk-Treasurer to find out what classes are required this year. Georgette, Donna, and Tracy offered to be of assistance because all have had experience with the education portion of Annual Meeting.

b. Commemorative Pins/Gifts/Vendors/DJ

Georgette wondered if the logo would be available as a PDF to be used for other things such as invitations, table tents, etc. A vendor lunch table was suggested then decided against noting vendors like to mingle with the clerks and treasurer. The champagne glasses suggested previously are \$4/glass. 2” – 3” glass ornaments are being considered. The DJ has confirmed. He has been asked to play music from the 1930’s and 1940’s as background. Georgette informed the Board that all beverages and alcohol must be purchased from the venue. A champagne toast would be \$5/person not including tax and service charge. A sparkling cider toast is \$3/person.

OTHER BUSINESS

Georgette noted she would be using the VMCTA Zoom account for the next Board meeting. This morning two entities in Fairlee scheduled a Zoom meeting using the town’s account, at the same time.

The next E-Board meeting was set for June 23, 2021; 2:00 p.m. via Zoom.

Adjourn: President Georgette Wolf-Ludwig adjourned the meeting at 11:13 a.m.

Attest: _____

Dawn Custer
VMCTA Secretary