

**VMCTA EXECUTIVE BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, April 7, 2022
Via Zoom (an online meeting provider)**

MEMBERS PRESENT: President Tracy Borst, Thetford; Past President Georgette Wolf-Ludwig, Fairlee; 1st Vice President Diane Judd, Holland; 2nd Vice President Diana Vachon, Shelburne; Secretary Dawn Custer, Hubbardton; and Members at Large – Karmen Bascom, South Royalton; Charles Degener, Woodstock; Sara Haskins, Morristown; and Anita Sheldon, Manchester

MEMBERS ABSENT: Auditor Sue Gage, Brandon

OTHERS PRESENT: Carol Dawes, Barre City Clerk and Treasurer

9:05 a.m. – President Tracy Borst called the meeting to order.

AGENDA REVIEW and MODIFICATIONS

Tracy noted the agenda would be revised to include discussion about the Fair Haven situation under New Business.

REVIEW AND APPROVE MINUTES OF February 17, 2022, MEETING

Charles Degener made a motion seconded by Anita Sheldon to approve the minutes of the February 17, 2022 meeting as presented. All members were in favor. The motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Susan McNamara-Hill presented the warrant for \$1,685.45. She noted \$2,000 needs to be transferred from the scholarship fund which will bring the Financial Summary balance of -\$1,867.12 back to the positive. A motion was made by Charles Degener and seconded by Dawn Custer to approve the warrant in the amount of \$1,685.45. All members voted in favor. The motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

A. 2022 Annual Meeting & Conference

Tracy noted Susan McNamara-Hill put together the 2022 pricing with the expected income and expenses. It was wondered if prices need to increase. The Education Committee needs a clear understanding of what their budget is for the conference. Community Bank donates \$3,000. Discussion followed regarding the speaker line item and if the Community Bank donation is in addition to the line item. It was decided the donation from Community Bank is applied to the \$3,500 speaker line item to offset the cost and not in addition to. The Conference currently cost \$150 to attend both days and the banquet or \$80 per single day. The revenue from the vendors helps to offset the cost of the venue. The average number of attendees is 152. Not all attendees attend both days. Georgette Wolf-Ludwig made a motion to increase the two-day conference fee \$15 for a total of \$165. Karmen Bascom seconded the motion. It was wondered if the per day rate would increase as well so it remains a cost savings to attend both days. Georgette Wolf-Ludwig made a motion to amend the original motion to include the single day rate increasing to \$90. Karmen Bascom seconded the amended motion. All members voted in favor of the amendment to the original motion. The amendment carried. All members voted on the original motion as amended. The amended original motion carried. The 2022 VMCTA Annual Meeting and Conference rates are \$165 to attend both days and the banquet or \$90 to attend a single day.

B. On-line Registration

Tracy noted that Sara Haskins has agreed to oversee the on-line registration process for the Conference. It worked well last year, and she did a fantastic job.

C. Secretary of State Candidate Debate

Tracy noted Deputy Secretary of State Chris Winters is out campaigning for the position of Secretary of State. He has been active getting signatures and letting the clerks and treasurers know he is running. VMCTA does not endorse candidates but would host a debate if possible. It was well received last time. Discussion pertained to when to hold the debate. Charlie suggested the candidates could come to the Conference as vendors. The Legislative Committee could take the leadership role regarding rules and questions. Tracy suggested the Education Committee could continue planning the Conference and let us know if there is room to add the debate. Carol Dawes suggested the debate be in early October if it does not fit into the Conference.

D. Fair Haven

Tracy informed those present she attended the Fair Haven select board meeting online. She believed the Town Clerk Danielle Roberts would be okay. There was an amazing show of support from the clerks. Part of the struggle was Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT) was called when the conflict began. The response from them noted they work to represent select boards. There are clerks who serve on the VLCT board. They have reached out to Executive Director Ted Brady to find out what that response was about. He has reached out to clerks and treasurers to ask what can be done to support us. We are equally elected. The select board holds the budget. The towns pay dues to VLCT. How does that give them more reason to give the select boards their support but not other elected officials? Georgette noted as a clerk representative on the VLCT board she noticed it is more directed to town managers and select boards. They should be able to direct clerks and treasurers to entities for help. Some E-Board members noted when they have called VLCT they receive wishy washy answers. It is hard to get firm answers and direction. Carol noted the VLCT Advocacy Team works collaboratively with the VMCTA Legislative Committee.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

A. Legislative Committee – Carol Dawes

Carol Dawes noted the legislative session is past the crossover. There are two items being followed. First is the proposal to allow people to apply for a marriage license with any town clerk. Currently one of the applicants must be a resident in the town in which they apply. A resident's copy is sent to the clerk in the town of the other applicant. It is waiting for the governor's signature. Carol noted as soon as it becomes law, she would reach out to the Department of Health noting it is their responsibility to reach out to clerks and treasurers. She noted it is their responsibility because VMCTA does not represent all clerks and treasurers. If signed by the governor it becomes effective July 1, 2022.

HS.512 Land Records – the proposal was put together by bankers, attorneys, and realtors. A land records commission was created whose goal was to be heavy handed on clerks. Thankfully VLCT, the Secretary of State (SOS) and archives helped. The Commerce Committee was not as sympathetic as they hoped. The SOS had a version that was much shorter –

1. Uniformed Records Act – regards recording electronic documents and will bring Vermont in line with other states. Electronic documents do not exist on paper unless they are printed for your records. It is not intended to be mandated.
2. Universal Remote Notarization – allows for remote notarization. It is believed most clerks would choose not to. There are strict identification rules. It must be video recorded and kept ten years.

3. A staff position is to be created in the SOS office. It will be a land records resource and based in archives. It will be a resource for clerks regarding all things land records related. The Land Records Committee is working to update the Best Standards & Practices. It is hoped COTTS, Kofile, etc. will be reached out to for potential state contracts which will offer economy of scale contracts.

Carol reported the SOS version passed out of the Commerce Committee and passed the House Government Operations. It is currently in the Senate Gov-Ops. Both sides have been present arguing for a particular version. Carol noted the next round of new bills begin in January. The VMCTA lobbyist will be at the Annual Conference.

B. Certification and Continuing Education – Diana Vachon

Diana Vachon reported there are 160 registered to attend the Spring Training including presenters. If the trainings are recorded and accessed remotely the Committee suggest people will only receive credit toward certification if sessions are attended in person. It was suggested VLCT could help with remote access.

C. Membership Committee – Diana Vachon

Diana Vachon noted a question which needs clarification has arisen. Who owns the membership, the individual or the town? Diane Judd suggested if a member moves from one town to another, the town owns it. Georgette noted it needs to be clarified in policy. Tracy noted she believed IIMC is person specific. The Membership Committee could investigate it and come back with an idea. It will need to be a Constitutional change. Charles Degener made a motion seconded by Sara Haskins in favor of the Membership Committee deciding if the membership follows the member or belongs to the town and to ensure the Constitution Committee receives the change. All members voted in favor. The motion carried. Diane suggested changing the membership fee schedule to a flat fee of \$35 rather than having it tiered and retirees could be \$20 or \$25. Tracy wondered what the basis for the increase was. Sara noted to simplify things. A member is a member. The same benefits are received whether a clerk, treasurer, or assistant. It was wondered if the increase would help with free online training even though points are not received. Tracy noted the E-Board is not ready to say it is increasing the membership fee and offering free online education. She suggested something could be in place by the Annual Meeting. She noted she likes the direction it will just take a bit of time to get there.

OTHER BUSINESS

A. Book Announcement

It was suggested that the announcement be put on the listserv and a booth be available at the Annual Meeting to allow clerks and treasurers a place and opportunity to jot down stories.

The next E-Board meeting was scheduled for May 19, 2022, at 9:00 a.m. via Zoom.

Adjourn: Georgette Wolf-Ludwig made a motion seconded by Diane Judd to adjourn the meeting at 11:18 a.m. All members voted in favor. The motion carried.

Attest: _____
Dawn Custer
VMCTA Secretary