

## SELECTBOARD MINUTES

August 25, 2008

This informational meeting was called to order at 6:00pm at the Town Hall in the lower level of the Congregational Church in Dummerston, Vermont.

Members Present: Chair Lewis White, Jack Manix, Wayne Emery and Cindy Jerome

Absent: Vice Chair Andrew McFarland

Also Present: EMD Dawn Hubbard, Mark Gilmore from Entergy and about 40 citizens

Dawn presented an overview of the Town's efforts to get emergency notification sirens and how it came to be that Dummerston was offered five rather than the three that had initially been approved. She identified on a map the proposed location of five sirens. She then introduced Ed Anthes who described the six-year history of the Town seeking sirens and the apparent shortcomings of other notification systems, including the promised automated telephone message systems. He also described the different tests of sirens, including a growl or burp test and the annual full test.

Questions from those present elicited the following information. Dummerston officials would control siren activation. The sirens are 100 – 120 decibels and rotate to distribute sound. They must be near a power line. Sirens can be mounted on a standard telephone pole or a dedicated pole of greater height. Once installed the sirens could be moved but it may cost the Town money to do so. Brattleboro recently converted its monthly siren tests from the full noise to a "burp" test. Mark compares the volume of a burp test to the starting of a generator or a diesel motor. We can hear it the first Saturday of the month at noon at the Brattleboro Municipal Center, Fairview Rd. garage or at the Putney Rd. The annual test lasts three minutes.

Larry Cassidy believes it's ludicrous for a small town to have such an intrusive warning system. Zeke Goodband also spoke against the planned placement of the sirens. Larry Lynch, former Dummerston EMD, recommended a return to the three sirens originally planned for town property at Johnson's Curve Rd., the Town Garage, and the gravel pit on the West side. Senator Jeanette White confirmed that it has been a six year process to get sirens for certain EPZ towns, a fight won only when the Legislature forced the issue by requiring Entergy to fund the requests. Many citizens felt we should do sound studies or tests before committing to a certain number of sirens or their location. Wayne believes a siren on his land would be audible from West Dummerston to Putney but must get the OK from his better half before making an official offer. Larry Cassidy advocates for notification by telephone tree, and neighbors taking care of neighbors.

A show of hands indicates most present do not want five sirens but just over half of those present would try three on town land. It is apparent that most are more comfortable with sirens on town land rather than in the town right-of-way on private property and with sirens placed on existing telephone poles rather than much higher poles. We must, however, find locations that are not compromised by tree canopy cover.

There is general agreement among citizens present that the Town should try sirens on Town land, then consider more only if the volume of tests is acceptable and significant areas of Town are not covered.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:03 pm.

September 10, 2008

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Approved

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Lewis White, Chairman

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Cynthia Jerome, Clerk

Submitted by Cindy Jerome, Clerk