

GRAND ISLE SELECTBOARD

9 Hyde Road, Grand Isle, VT 05458

MINUTES of the Special Meeting Monday July 29, 2019

- I. **CALL TO ORDER:** AnnaMarie DeMars called the special Selectboard meeting to order at 7:00 and turned the meeting over to Jeff Parizo

Board Members Present: AnnaMarie DeMars – Chair, Eric Godin – Vice Chair, Jeff Parizo, Diane Cota and Rachael Griggs

Amend Agenda For Matters Not Listed: Fire Alarm at the Annex

- II. **GUESTS:** Several Grand Isle Residents and the following:

Wrenegade Sports:

- Tyler Wren, Founder/Principal
- Jim Beebe-Woodard, Director of Operations
- JT Glover, Event Manager
- Sarah Mutrux, Community Relations Manager & Wrenegade Foundation Executive Director
- Hayes Gilman, Operations Associate

Lieutenant Maurice Lamothe – VT State Police

Douglas DiSabito – Grand Isle County States Attorney

Representative Mitzi Johnson, Speaker of the House

Ray Allen - Grand Isle County Sheriff

Dave and Julie Lane – Snow Farm Vineyard / Crescent Bay Farm B&B

Shawn Mercy – G.I. Planning Commission

Ben Ingalls – EMD & Grand Isle/North Hero Rescue

Todd Boutin – G.I.V.F.D. Chief

Darren Lawrence – Grand Isle/North Hero Rescue Chief and G.I.V.F.D.

- III. **NEW BUSINESS:**

- **Discuss Bicycle Tour in the Town of Grand Isle (July 20 & 21, 2019):** Approximately 30 people attended the meeting. Everyone who wanted to speak was allowed to do so. There was a lot of frustration about the number of bikers that disobeyed the rules. This was a very informative and respectful meeting and below is some of the discussion that followed.

Thank you to Jim and Lake Champlain Access TV for filming the meeting.

To see the video of this meeting in it's entirety go to LCATV's website or the Town of Grand Isle VT's website and click the Selectboard section to watch Selectboard videos.

Jeff Parizo thanked everyone for coming. He said this meeting is not about the frustration of the bicyclers even though there is frustration in the towns. This is more a meeting of trying to learn to co-exist, about public safety and safety about residents and

bicyclers on our roads. There were many times on several side roads bikers took over both lanes of the roads.

Jim Beebe-Woodward said he and Sheriff Allen instructed the bikers at the beginning of the race to obey all rules of the road and it's heartbreaking to see the picture of bikers breaking the two abreast rule.

John Lafayette, who owns Phelps farm on East Shore North Road, said he was not aware there was going to be a bicycle tour on Sunday. He said at the aid station on East Shore North Road bikers had the road completely blocked. Jeff said they have to consider safety. Douglas DiSabito, G.I. States Attorney said the stories he is hearing at the aid stations and the circumstances he is hearing here is not just a civil violation, obstructing vehicle traffic is a crime.

Grand Isle Fire Chief Todd Boutin said he is very concerned because if there is a fire call the fire department has five trucks that may need to respond. North and South Hero fire departments may also respond. Bikers have got to have respect for sirens and lights. This should be brought up to the bikers as well.

Ben Ingalls said one very unsafe incident happened while he was responding to a rescue call. Some of the bikers refused to move over and let him through even though he had his siren on and his lights flashing. This could have ended with a person in need of medical attention dying.

Tyler Wren said Wrenegade Sports team has met and are working to improve safety by making six or seven changes. This is the only event they hold in Vermont. They had 1001 bikers register and a little under 1000 attended. Often other bikers who have not registered mix into the group.

Jeff said there is a frustration here. We understand there will be more bikers out here and we, as a Selectboard want to work it out and try to co-exist.

Representative Mitzi Johnson said she is encouraged hearing the Selectboard say they are trying to come to an agreement and hearing the event organizers being receptive to suggestions and already having a list of possible improvements. People come to Grand Isle County for experiences and enjoying our county. This is the base of our economy here.

Eric said going forward we need to make it safe for everyone and more law enforcement is need. He also mentioned how important keeping the communications going is.

Dave Lane said they hold several events and Wrenegade is an exceptional group. Rachael thanked Dave and Julie Lane and Gayle Horn for their generosity and support their businesses provide to the Islands.

Lack of signage was discussed and suggestions that businesses and local residents might be willing to put out signs on their property. Signs in the right of way of the state roads are not allowed.

The Selectboard thanked everyone for attending the meeting and look forward to more meetings to work together. Sheriff Allen offered to hold a meeting early next year and inviting all the Towns in the Islands.

- **Fire Alarm at the Annex:** A fire alarm at the Annex was malfunctioning off and on. D.C. Energy was called and the problem has been fixed.

IV. ADJOURNMENT: Jeff Parizo motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:17PM. Eric Godin seconds the motion. No further discussion, all in favor and the motion passes.

Respectfully submitted,

Rachael Griggs, Selectboard Clerk

AnnaMarie DeMars, Selectboard Chair

Date: _____

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