



**Town of Whitingham
Office of the Selectboard**

MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 27, 2019

These Minutes shall be accepted into the public record (with any corrections noted) at a future meeting of the Whitingham Selectboard.

The Whitingham Selectboard held a regular meeting on Wednesday, February 27, 2019 at 7:30PM in the Selectboard Office of the Municipal Center, 2948 VT Route 100, Jacksonville, VT.

Selectboard members present: Allan Twitchell and Robin Kingsley. Keith Bronson, Chair, attended via Skype. (Vice Chair Greg Brown reviewed the payables and payroll warrants before the meeting and signed off.)

Others present: Gig Zboray, Selectboard Office Administrator; Almira Aekus, Treasurer; Listers: Wayne Wood and Jenepher Burnell; Stanley Janovsky, Jr., Road Commissioner; Wayne Corse, Richard Lemaire, and Seth Boyd, residents.

Call to Order. Additions or Changes to Agenda

Keith Bronson called the meeting to order at 7:35PM. There were no changes or additions to the agenda.

Hearing of Visitors Seth Boyd questioned if there was a hearing date set yet for the 732 Sadawga Lake Road property. Gig Zboray responded no. That property is still under Vermont Shorelands Protection review.

Address questions related to the 2018 annual Town Report

Seth Boyd questioned if there were any changes or corrections found in the Town Report. Gig Zboray responded that the report was proof read and published very recently.

Wayne Corse questioned who was providing police coverage. The answer is that we have no contracts with any policing agencies, the money is put into the budget each year in case coverage becomes available. All law enforcement agencies across the state have a difficult time finding qualified officers.

Sewer Department There is an invoice on the Payables Warrant for Weston & Sampson for \$10,415.40. That amount brings us to 65% completion of Phase 1 of the project. Gig cannot submit this invoice for reimbursement until we hold a 60% meeting with the engineers and the state.

Transfer Station none

Education Funding Litigation Keith Bronson noted that the Town of Cabot Vermont will be voting at town meeting whether or not to close their school.

Animal Control Dan Hollister, Animal Control Officer, informed the Selectboard Office via email that there are issues with a dog roaming in the vicinity of Sawyer Bentwood. The dog has been enough of a problem that a school bus stop was relocated. Dan spoke with the dog owner at least twice, but nothing has changed. Dan called for advice on February 21st and Gig advised him to start issuing tickets in accordance with the Animal Control Ordinance. All Selectboard members responded to an email that they approved of this action.

Gig received an email tonight from Dan Hollister reporting that a resident was bit by her own dog on her own property. This is not an issue that requires a Potential Vicious Dog hearing.

Prepare for Town Meeting The Selectboard discussed who would read which articles of the Warning and reviewed a “cheat sheet”. Article 9 was discussed in more detail, if unnecessary to fund this “Hazard Mitigation Fund” with \$66,000 for replacing the culvert in front of the Municipal Center it is still a good idea to create a fund and start putting money into it because there are many flood hazards to mitigate in the future. VTrans told Gig that they would be announcing who won the grants before town meeting and that would indicate whether we need to fund the account with \$66,000 or if it could be less.

Sherry Adams has contacted all the agencies that have petitioned for funds requesting information and suggested that they have a representative at town meeting to answer questions. She does not want the agency articles lumped together.

Approval of Payroll Warrant – February 28, 2019

A motion was made by Robin Kingsley to approve Payroll Warrant W1935 dated February 28, 2019, seconded by Allan Twitchell, all in favor with Keith Bronson casting his vote.

Approval of Payables Warrant – February 28, 2019

A motion was made by Allan Twitchell to approve Payables Warrant W1936 dated February 28, 2019, seconded by Robin Kingsley, all in favor with Keith Bronson casting his vote.

Approval of Minutes of February 13, 2019

A motion was made by Robin Kingsley to accept the Minutes of February 13, 2019 as written, seconded by Allan Twitchell, all in favor with Keith Bronson casting his vote.

Other business / Office Administrator – as needed

Address questions that have come before the Selectboard Office:

Resident complained that Selectboard meetings are unwelcoming but did not make any suggestions or offer any examples. Gig just wanted to let the Selectboard know, she noted that this resident has not attended a Selectboard meeting since early 2016. Tea and crumpets, cookies and beer were suggested as ways to make the meeting more welcoming.

New website was not announced The new town website was launched quietly on February 7, 2019 on purpose. It’s called a “soft launch”. The purpose of a soft launch is

to make sure any bugs are worked out before drawing a lot of attention to it. Mention of the debut of the new website was mentioned in the EDG report of Town Report and EDG sent an email to all local business owners.

Keith Bronson noted that his old phone number is still listed on the Town Hill Committee webpage. He also indicated that Alan Hadley is no longer a member of the Town Hill Committee.

Backhoe dumping snow into the water way A resident questioned if it was OK for a backhoe that was cleaning up snow to dump it into the river in front of the Municipal Center. Stanley Janovsky, Jr. noted there was no law against it.

Resident suggested a "meet the candidates" night Gig thought it was a great idea and tried to put one together for this year but there wasn't a night that all candidates were available.

Resident suggested putting biographies of candidates on the town website Gig and Almira Aekus were uncomfortable with this suggestion because there is no controlling what a candidate might write.

Resident complained that information from Selectboard meetings and things happening in town is not more available to residents Gig noted that agendas and Minutes of all Selectboard meetings (all town departments actually) are posted to the website and paper copies are posted in the Jacksonville post office, in the Municipal Center hallway and in the Town Clerk's office. Gig is unsure what more could be done, and the complaining resident did not make any suggestions. No one at the meeting had any suggestions.

Stormwater We received an email that the state will begin testing for Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination of our stormwater. The emailed seemed to be some sort of reminder but it is not familiar to Greg Brown, Keith Bronson, Gig Zboray or Dave DiCantio. Stanley Janovsky, Jr. noted that this had to do with drop inlets and storm water drainage on Routes 100 and 112 and a few of the bigger ones on town highways. Mr. Janovsky noted that he received copies of maps and he responded that the maps covered state roads (not local), he informed them that they are very much neglected and not in good shape. The state acted like they were surprised by his comment.

Grant Writing Workshop The BDCC is hosting a grant writing workshop on March 22nd in Bellows Falls. It's a full day event (9-3) with a cost of \$30. Gig is planning to attend.

Junk Issue Richard Lemaire questioned the status of the junk at 7849 Route 100. Gig responded that she wrote a letter as Health Officer asking the resident to clean up the junk or put up screening so it cannot be seen from the road or the abutting property. The letter has not been returned in the mail due to insufficient address. The next step is for the Selectboard to write a letter, certified mail return receipt requested, if no response within 30 days we can forward the complaint to the Agency of Transportation to address the vehicles on the property. Gig noted it is difficult to make them clean up the junk, it will not be a fast fix.

Resignation Allan Twitchell submitted his letter of resignation from the Selectboard effective immediately.

Adjourn

Although Allan Twitchell just resigned effective immediately, he did make a motion to adjourn which was seconded by Robin Kingsley. Due to lack of a quorum at that point no further business could be conducted anyway.

Keith Bronson adjourned the meeting at 8:01pm.

Respectfully submitted,
~Gig Zboray