



**Town of Whitingham  
Office of the Selectboard**

**MINUTES OF MAY 8, 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, May 8, 2019 at 6:30pm in the Selectboard Office of the Municipal Center, 2948 VT Route 100, Jacksonville, VT.

Selectboard members present: Robin Kingsley, Chair; Wayne Corse; Wayne Wood; Craig Hammer; and Scott Reed.

Others present: Gig Zboray, Selectboard Office Administrator; Almira Aekus, Town Clerk; Stanley Janovsky, Road Commissioner; Mike Eldred, Deerfield Valley News. Attorneys Robert Fisher; James Valente and Adam Waite. Residents: Sherry Adams, Greg Brown, Butch Jillson, John and Johanna Robohm, Richard Lemaire, Jim Kidney, Seth Boyd, Jenepher Burnell, Phil Edelstein, and Allan Twitchell.

**Call to Order. Additions or Changes to Agenda. Welcome newly elected Selectboard members, appoint Vice Chair**

Robin Kingsley called the meeting to order at 6:30pm. There were no additions or changes to the agenda. Robin Kingsley welcomed Craig Hammer and Scott Reed to the Selectboard. **A motion was made by Robin Kingsley to appoint Wayne Wood as Vice Chair of the Selectboard, seconded by Craig Hammer, all in favor.** Mr. Kingsley explained that Mr. Wood has served as a Lister, is the current EMD, is a member of the fire department and has been working on HHW.

**Hearing of visitors (for concerns not on the agenda)**

Johanna Robohm questioned what the town is planning for the collection of compost which is required this coming July. She asked about a compost bin at the transfer station or if the town will require clear bags. Robin Kingsley answered, the state does not allow us to store it on the property, it cost \$90 per week to have it hauled away. We are mandated to offer it, and we can set our own price. We have met the state requirement. The rural nature of the town allows residents to compost in their own yards. Mrs. Robohm said it was hard for seniors to put their compost out in the winter. Martin Farm of Greenfield, Massachusetts might come and pick it up for us, offered Craig Hammer.

**Open and possibly accept Municipal Center mowing bids**

Robin Kingsley opened the bids for mowing and weed whacking and any necessary spring and fall cleanup of the Jacksonville Municipal Center and Eames Village Park for a term of 3 years:

A&W Property Services, LLC \$800 per year.

Tyson Dix \$850 per year.

**A motion was made by Scott Reed to accept the Tyson Dix bid because he has done it for years and does a good job, seconded by Wayne Wood, all in favor.**

### **Municipal Center Security and Maintenance**

Replacing windows in the Municipal Center was discussed at the April 24<sup>th</sup> meeting. Stanley Janovsky has since approved of Peter Bernard installing the new windows. Price quotes for the replacement windows will be requested from Leader Home Center (by Almira) and WW Building Supply (by Scott).

Gig should contact Tim Hunt of First Choice for security options for all municipal buildings and Town Hill.

Sherry Adams asked if there have been any problems with senior meals or in the kitchen, and she thinks everything is running swell and will take off her hat as the last remaining kitchen committee member.

### **Junk complaint – review and sign letter to VTrans**

In accordance with our Junk Ordinance and State Statute a letter was drafted to the VT Agency of Transportation (Joe Flynn, secretary of VTrans) to notify them of the abandoned vehicles on property at 7849 VT Route 100. **A motion was made by Robin Kingsley for the Selectboard to sign the letter to VTrans as written, attaching the photos, seconded by Wayne Wood, all in favor.**

Group discussion ensued regarding junk, how to prevent it and what steps can be taken to clean it up. Mr. Fisher indicated that the town could pursue steps that could eventually lead to a court order and placing a lien on a property.

### **Overnight parking at Eames Village Park**

After the last meeting Peter Bernard, Municipal Employee, contacted the owners of the vehicle that had been parked in the Eames Village lot all winter, the vehicle was moved, and no letter was ever sent. There are a number of other vehicles that regularly park overnight. This is another situation that is difficult to enforce. Discussion ensued but no decisions were made.

### **Transfer Station, follow up on HHW events**

Our first in-house Household Hazardous Waste event was run by Wayne Wood on Thursday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>. we had four customers. The second event was run by Clean Harbors on Saturday, May 4<sup>th</sup>. They set up in a different location this year and it worked out much better. The biggest take away that Mr. Wood found during these events is that there is no bathroom available for the Transfer Station attendant. **Wayne Wood made a motion to order a port-a-potty for the Transfer Station, seconded by Scott Reed, all in favor.**

We will wait until after the October HHW event to request the \$3,000 SWIP grant funds.

At the May 22<sup>nd</sup> & June 5<sup>th</sup> meetings we will have an agenda item called “SWIP and Waste Management Ordinance-Public Information and Feedback” as required in our SWIP. Gig has provided the Selectboard a copy of the SWIP and the Ordinance for their review before the next meeting.

### **Sewer Department**

Discussion about water meters. If a customer has a problem with their water meter, they should call a plumber to remove it. The sewer department has not ever paid for the plumber, it has always been the customers responsibility.

Greg Brown suggested to the Selectboard to come up with a plan to reduce the burden of running the sewer department on 130 households. A penny on the tax rate would raise approximately \$26,000, and that would give townspeople with a septic system the ability to have their septic tank pumped, paying only for the trucking and labor but the effluent they would not be charged for. This plan would lower the average sewer user fee by about \$200 per year, the sewer budget would stay the same, and all the towns people would have "stock" in the sewer system. Robin Kingsley noted that there definitely needs to be a plan to bring in more money to the sewer system. Our discharge permit will likely need to be amended.

### **Highway Department, culvert bid discussion**

Stanley Janovsky, Jr. provided copies of the "municipal culvert price list" and asked the Selectboard if they want to accept the state culvert bid? The Highway Department spend on average \$7,000 or \$8,000 per year on culverts. Robin Kingsley asked him to shop around.

The grader is back; the paving bids have gone out.

The purchasing policy was brought up again. Mr. Corse asked if we ever got a legal opinion of what the purchasing policy says or if we have been following it. He indicated that he would like the town attorney to look at the policy and give a legal opinion. Phil Edelstein noted that VLCT offered us a model policy that was adopted a year ago. It is a suggested policy, it is not a law, an ordinance or a statute. He suggested that we update the policy as this new board sees fit. Others agreed that the policy needs to be updated, working with department heads to clarify the policy and make sure everyone understands it. Mr. Fisher indicated that the policy can be updated to include special situations that might come up such as the need to lock in fuel oil prices, repeat purchases, or piggybacking on a state bid for example.

### **Listers, if any**

Howard Dix reported to Gig that he has been working with NEMRC and things seem to be going smoothly. They should be ready soon to mail out the change of appraisal notices shortly.

### **Appoint Seth Boyd to Economic Development Group**

Seth Boyd attended the April 25, 2019 Economic Development Group meeting. He expressed his interest in joining the EDG. EDG members recommended the Selectboard appoint Seth Boyd as a member. **A motion was made by Wayne Corse to appoint Seth Boyd as member of the Whitingham Economic Development Group, seconded by Wayne Wood, all in favor.**

### **Education Funding Litigation, executive session with attorneys**

8:10pm **A motion was made by Wayne Corse to find that premature general public knowledge regarding the town's education funding litigation would clearly place the town at a substantial disadvantage if its legal strategy was made public, seconded by Robin Kingsley, all in favor.**

**A motion was made by Wayne Corse to enter into executive session to discuss education funding litigation under the provisions of Title 1, Section 313(a)(1)(A) of the Vermont Statutes to include Gig Zboray, Robert Fisher, Seth Boyd, James Valente and Adam Waite, seconded by Robin Kingsley, all in favor.**

With no decisions made executive session was exited at 9:09pm.

**Approval of Payables Warrant – May 9, 2019**

**A motion was made by Wayne Wood to approve Payables Warrant W1946 dated May 9, 2019, seconded by Wayne Corse, all in favor.**

**Approval of Payroll Warrant – May 9, 2019**

**A motion was made by Robin Kingsley to approve Payroll Warrant W1945 dated May 9, 2019, seconded by Wayne Wood, all in favor.**

**Approval of Minutes of April 24, 2019**

**A motion was made by Wayne Wood to approve the Minutes of April 24, 2019 as written, seconded by Craig Hammer, all in favor.**

**Other business / Office Administrator – as needed**

Gig Zboray reported that she has been feeling harassed at work and feels that her job has been threatened. Mr. Kingsley noted that he has spoken with other employees who feel uncomfortable also. The Selectboard was provided with a newsletter regarding Workplace Bullying prepared by the Employee Assistance Program of VLCT. Mr. Fisher suggested that this new Selectboard all get on the same page and show that they are going to support the town employees who do their jobs as best they can, if employees need training then get them the training. Its time for everyone to work together and move forward and don't look back. Lawsuits over hostile work environments are a real drain on a town and should be avoided.

The Windham Regional Commission suggested minor changes to the Local Emergency Management Plan that was adopted on April 24<sup>th</sup>, Gig will make the changes and resubmit.

On Thursday, May 23<sup>rd</sup> there is a Vermont Local Emergency Management Director Course at the Wilmington Fire Department from 8am – 4pm. Gig plans to attend. Craig Hammer indicated his interest in attending also.

Also, on May 23<sup>rd</sup> is the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Southern Vermont Economy Summit at Mount Snow from 8:45-5:30, the cost is \$75 and you should pre-register if you are interested in attending. Gretchen Havreluk and Jenepher Burnell plan on attending.

The library will be hosting “Stories in the Park” at Town Hill from June-September at 11am on Saturdays.

**Adjourn**

**A motion to adjourn was made by Robin Kingsley, seconded by Wayne Wood, all in favor.**

Robin Kingsley adjourned the meeting at 9:41pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
~Gig Zboray