



**Town of Whitingham
Office of the Selectboard**

MINUTES OF AUGUST 14, 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, August 14, 2019 at 6:30pm in the Selectboard Office of the Municipal Center, 2948 VT Route 100, Jacksonville, VT.

Selectboard members present: Wayne Corse, Craig Hammer, and Scott Reed.

Others present: Gig Zboray, Selectboard Office Administrator; Jenepher Burnell, resident/Somerset Lister; Stanley Janovsky, Road Commissioner; Seth Boyd and Allan Twitchell, residents.

Call to Order. Additions or Changes to Agenda.

Wayne Corse called the meeting to order at 6:30pm. There were two additions to the agenda- Somerset lister services and under "other business"- parking at Eames Village Park.

Hearing of visitors (for concerns not on the agenda) none

Somerset Lister Services

For several years (4 or 5) while Jenepher Burnell was a lister for the Town of Whitingham she also served as lister for Somerset with an agreement in place allowing her use of a Whitingham computer and program to do the Somerset work. When our Board of Listers was voted out the agreement with Somerset became null and void and they were promptly notified. Gig received a call this afternoon from Cy Bailey of the Vermont Tax Department today requesting that Jen be allowed to use a Whitingham computer and the program for one more year to produce their grand list and tax bills. Almira Aekus informed Gig that the program is on our network so Jen does not have to use a listers computer, she could use Marylee's or the public computer in the Town Clerk's office. Somerset had been charged \$500 per year for this benefit in the past. Wayne Corse questioned if there would be grievances? Jen responded that there probably would be. Mr. Corse questioned if she would just be in working during regular Town Clerk hours and Jen responded yes. **Craig Hammer made a motion to allow Jenepher Burnell to do the Lister work for Somerset and to appoint Wayne Corse to sign a contract allowing use of Whitingham computer and software through January 15, 2020 with an updated cost of \$1,000, seconded by Scott Reed, all in favor.**

Request from "Kayla's Playground"

Brad and Erin Lackey sent a request for permission to engrave a bench at Town Hill with "Kayla's Playground", the bench and the equipment were installed years ago by the Lackey's in memory of their daughter. **A motion was made by Scott Reed to allow the Lackeys to engrave the bench with the words "Kayla's Playground", seconded by Craig Hammer.** Discussion: Mr. Allan Twitchell provided a little history of a denial in the past, recalling that it was proposed to be a large plaque, this request is only to engrave the bench. Mr. Boyd agreed with Mr. Twitchell's recollection. **All in favor.**

Highway Department

Discuss funds needed for flood resiliency project(s)

On August 7th there was another meeting of the “Stanley Committee” to discuss flood resiliency projects in Jacksonville Village. The main topic was removing the cement bridge and replacing the culvert in front of the Municipal Center which will also require widening the river to “bank full width” and a possible FEMA buyout of the Kingsley property. There are many pieces to this large puzzle and different funding opportunities. However, it is estimated that these projects could cost up to a million dollars and many of the grants out there require a 20% local match. We currently have \$25,000 in the newly created Hazard Mitigation Fund that was voted on at town meeting 2019. An article for Town Meeting 2020 will be needed to recommend increasing the balance of that fund. We will know more as the project, hopefully, moves forward.

Discuss reclassifying entrance to Municipal Center as a road

VTrans has suggested several times that we reclassify the culvert (driveway) into the municipal center as town highway. One benefit of doing so is that we would qualify for the “Town Highway Structures Program” which, if all criteria is met, only requires a 10% match in grant funds. The state would also do annual inspections of the structure. The process according to the “orange book” is:

- Hold a public hearing, giving 30 days’ notice to the public and the planning commission. View the highway in question.
- Receive testimony from interested parties. Generally, board members should refrain from carrying on a discussion with the parties, except to clarify facts and issues.
- Render a decision, giving the public good, necessity and convenience of the inhabitant’s proper consideration. The decision should set out the reason or logic behind the action taken.
- The action should occur at a duly called meeting of the Selectboard, and within 60 days after the hearing. A person not satisfied with the decision may appeal to the district court.

Other, if any

Mr. Corse stepped away from the table due to a conflict of interest while Mr. Janovsky discussed the idea of closing Sprague Brook Road (giving it up). Mr. Corse noted that the two mortgage holders and the two property owners on the road do not have an issue with the town’s discontinuance of the road.

Mr. Janovsky will begin looking into the two issues above.

Transfer Station

Gig participated in a tele-conference with waste districts across that state. One interesting piece of information gleaned from the call is that we could possibly contract with a Hazardous Waste hauler to pick up our HHW once per year and not have them come to host a collection event, which should be significantly less expensive.

Sewer Department

The highway crew cut down trees at the Jacksonville plant. The Selectboard asked Mr. Janovsky to get the pine needles off the Jacksonville plant roof.

Review and sign Consolidated Communications contract

It is time to renew the telephone lines and DSL contract with Consolidated Communications. They are offering a three-year contract with no change in pricing. Mr. Corse mentioned that Matrix Design Group is working with Readsboro to provide fiber optic lines and they are interested in working with Whitingham. If that comes about it could take years. **A motion was made by Craig Hammer to appoint Gig Zboray to sign the contract documents for Consolidated Communications, seconded by Scott Reed, all in favor.**

Approval of Payables Warrant – August 15, 2019

A motion was made by Craig Hammer to approve Payables Warrant W2008 dated August 15, 2019, seconded by Scott, all in favor.

Approval of Payroll Warrant – August 15, 2019

After discussion of bereavement pay the Selectboard agreed that a step in-law would be covered and noted that it should be added to a future update of the Personnel Policy, **a motion was made by Craig Hammer to approve Payroll Warrant W2007 dated August 15, 2019, seconded by Scott Reed, all in favor.**

Approval of Minutes of July 31, 2019

A motion was made by Scott Reed to approve the Minutes of July 31, 2019 as written, seconded by Craig Hammer, all in favor. Mr. Corse noted that the School Board met last night, Seth Boyd was appointed to a committee to oversee the school playground. Mr. Boyd shared that one piece of equipment designed for younger children should be disposed of and the second piece could easily be moved to Town Hill. Wood chips seems to be the only thing that the main piece of equipment needs to be approved by the school's insurance company.

Other business / Office Administrator – as needed

Discuss having a strategic planning session Gig participated in a strategic planning session that Seth Boyd implemented for the Economic Development Group and was impressed and felt it would benefit the Selectboard. After discussion the Selectboard agreed to participate in their own session, to be scheduled when Mr. Wood is in attendance.

VLCT Annual Business Meeting

The VLCT Annual Business meeting will be held Wednesday, October 2 at Killington. We received a "delegate designation form" to appoint an individual to vote at the meeting on behalf of the town. In prior years this was never addressed. The board agreed that VLCT is a fabulous resource, but we are not informed enough about their officers to vote. Seth Boyd noted that it was a good idea to appoint a delegate in case an issue comes up that the town would like to vote on. Gig will add it to the next agenda.

Parking at Eames Village Park

Gig received a complaint about the same people always parking at the Eames Village Park, most notably the old blue truck, but others as well. They seem to be there near 24/7. Mr. Boyd indicated that he thinks that the "No Overnight" parking doesn't affect the businesses it is the cars that park there all the time during business hours that impact the availability of parking.

Gig will look into purchasing new signage (2-hour parking from 7am to 7pm) and whether or not we need a parking ordinance. The Selectboard would rather send out a friendly letter to request compliance than issue parking tickets

Other

- Mr. Corse noted there will be an ice cream social on September 24th at 6:30pm to discuss how to save the General Store, it would be a shame to lose this asset to the community.
- Mr. Corse noted that on Ginny Morse Road near Henry Millett's property is a 30 MPH sign that has been covered with brush. Mr. Corse will ask Mr. Janovsky to have the highway crew cut back the brush.
- Mr. Hammer noted that Bennington County (Stamford) is now on the Emerald Ash Borer tracking map. He will provide Gig with some information on how to identify ash trees and the beetle and other information so that she can create an informational flyer.
- Coming Up The sewer engineers will be here August 28th. Sheriff Anderson and Karen Horn of VLCT Advocacy will be here September 11th.

Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by Scott Reed, seconded by Craig Hammer, all in favor.

Wayne Corse adjourned the meeting at 8:08pm.

Respectfully submitted,
~Gig Zboray