



**Town of Whitingham  
Office of the Selectboard**

**MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 9, 2020**

*These Minutes are considered a DRAFT until accepted into the public record (with any corrections noted) at a future meeting of the Whitingham Selectboard.*

The Whitingham Selectboard held a regular meeting at 6:30pm in the dining hall of the Whitingham Municipal Center on Wednesday, September 9, 2020.

Selectboard members present: Wayne Wood, Scott Reed and Craig Hammer. Phil Edelstein attended remotely.

Others present: Gig Zboray, Selectboard Office Administrator, Stanley Janovsky, Road Commissioner; Almira Aekus, Town Clerk; Richard Lemaire and Chris Walling, residents; David Mahoney, VT Connections. Ryan Sanderson of VT Cyber attended remotely. Bill Bartels, resident arrived at approximately 7:30pm.

**Call to Order. Additions or Changes to Agenda**

Wayne Wood called the meeting to order at 6:30pm reading the remote meeting script. There were a few additions to the agenda since it was posted. Executive Session with the attorneys was deleted because they are not available tonight.

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

Mr. Lemaire thanked the Selectboard for addressing junk, he has noticed some properties cleaning/cleaned up.

**Cyber Security/IT Services**

David Mahoney of VT Connections explained his pricing structure.

Ryan Sanderson of VT Cyber explained his pricing structure. He provided the quote back in May, since then several of our computers have been updated and would change his quote.

David Mahoney and Ryan Sanderson exited the meeting.

After discussion, **a motion was made by Phil Edelstein to accept the proposal from VT Cyber, seconded by Craig Hammer, all in favor.**

**Fiber internet connection for Municipal Center, discuss quote received**

**A motion was made by Scott Reed to go with fiber as proposed by Consolidated Communications, seconded by Phil Edelstein, all in favor.** Fiber is \$150 more per month than DSL but our speeds should be significantly better.

**Highway**

**Paving update** paving is done, they did a nice job. They are currently shouldering 8A.

Review draft uniform policy The draft policy was reviewed, discussed and edited. Gig will provide a final document for adoption at the next meeting.

**Personnel: carry over of vacation and/or sick leave**

Mr. Wood did some research and found that some employers offer buy back of vacation time at a discounted rate. It is better for the employees to actually use their vacation time but with the amount of time some of the long time employees get for vacation and the highway's schedule it is understandable that it is difficult to use it all each year.

Discussion ensued around 50% buy back starting now, no going backward.

A motion was made by Craig Hammer that any outstanding leave balance, beginning July 1, 2020, may be "bought" at 50% of hourly rate of employee, seconded by Scott Reed. Discussion ensued, Ms. Aekus noted that this policy can kill a budget, especially if there are 6 highway employees selling back 2 weeks of vacation for example. Ms. Aekus suggested settling with Mr. Janovsky and then offering this buy back for the future. Right now, Mr. Janovsky is the only employee that has a significant amount of unused vacation time.

The motion was changed to say max carryover of 240 hours as stated in the current Personnel Policy; up to 80 hours of vacation can be bought back by the town at 50% pay before the final pay period of the fiscal year.

**A motion was made by Wayne Wood to table this matter so that we can get the proper wording for a new policy, seconded by Scott Reed, all in favor.**

**Junk on Route 100** Mr. Lemaire indicated that the property owner of 7849 VT Route 100 is taking some things away from the property.

**Corona/COVID-19:** Both Gig and Almira submitted grant applications in the past week for reimbursement of COVID expenses.

**Approval of Payables Warrant – September 10, 2020**

**A motion was made by Craig Hammer to approve the Payables Warrant #W2112 dated September 10, 2020, seconded by Scott Reed, all in favor.**

**Approval of Payroll Warrant – September 10, 2020**

**A motion was made by Scott Reed to approve Payroll Warrant #W2111 dated September 10, 2020, seconded by Phil Edelstein, all in favor.**

**Approval of Minutes of August 26, 2020**

**A motion was made by Craig Hammer to accept the Minutes of August 26, 2020 as written, seconded by Phil Edelstein, all in favor.**

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

**Discuss organizing a Meet the Candidates event**

Craig Hammer suggested the event for the Special Election to fill the Selectboard vacancy. Ms. Aekus suggested sending out a newsletter rather than a meeting due to COVID-19. She will check with the Secretary of State's office to make sure it is legal. The candidates can write up a profile and we can provide them with specific questions to answer.

**Cannabis Tax Legislation S.54** Discussion ensued regarding whether or not to support either the house or senate proposed legislation regarding Cannabis. The board agreed that they do not need to address the issue.

**Discuss new resident's firearms request**

Bill Bartels recently moved to Whitingham from Colorado, in order to continue with his Federal Firearms License he needs to provide a letter from the town to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms. Mr. Bartels indicated he will not stock firearms, he accepts firearms from out of state dealers, does background checks and delivers the gun(s) to the buyer. **A motion was made by Craig Hammer to allow Gig Zboray to write and sign the letter of support of Mr. Bartel's business on behalf of the Selectboard, seconded by Wayne Wood, all in favor.**

**Adjourn**

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

Wayne Wood adjourned the meeting at 8:09pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
~Gig Zboray