



**Town of Whitingham  
Office of the Selectboard**

**MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 25, 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, September 25, 2019 at 6:30pm in the Selectboard Office of the Municipal Center, 2948 VT Route 100, Jacksonville, VT.

Selectboard members present: Wayne Wood, Vice Chair; Wayne Corse, and Scott Reed.

Others present: Gig Zboray, Selectboard Office Administrator; Town Attorney Robert Fisher; Almira Aekus, Treasurer; Howard Dix, Lister's Clerk; Brian Decesare of Green Mountain Appraisers; Phil Edelstein, resident; Stanley Janovsky, Jr., Road Commissioner.

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

Wayne Wood called the meeting to order at 6:30pm. There were no additions or changes to the agenda.

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

Phil Edelstein came to the table to request that the shed out behind the Jacksonville fire house be leveled so that the Lions Club could store their supplies after the Hungry Lion Bike Tour on Saturday, as previously approved. Mr. Janovsky will have his crew level it tomorrow.

**Great River Hydro tax appeal**

Town Attorney Robert Fisher and Howard Dix, Lister's Clerk, came to the table. **A motion was made by Wayne Wood to find that premature general public knowledge regarding Great River Hydro's litigation would clearly place the town at a substantial disadvantage if its legal strategy was made public, seconded by Wayne Corse, all in favor.**

**A motion was made by Wayne Corse, to enter into executive session to discuss Great River Hydro's litigation under the provisions of Title 1, Section 313(a)(1)(A) of the Vermont Statutes to include Attorney Robert Fisher, Gig Zboray, and Howard Dix, seconded by Scott Reed, all in favor.**

With no decisions made executive session was exited.

**Delinquent Sewer Account**

David Ranslow refuses to pay his sewer bill in full. The Selectboard informed Mr. Fisher of the situation. In the normal course of events Mr. Ranslow's property will end up in tax sale. If Mr. Ranslow cuts his sewer line as threatened a Health Order will have to be issued immediately and an injunction to disallow use of his property will be immediately sought.

### **Reclassification of entrance to Municipal Center as a town highway**

The process is similar to laying out a town highway from the intersection of Route 100 a particular number of feet into the municipal center lot. First recommendation is to have it surveyed. Next steps would be a legal warning and a public hearing. Attorney Fisher will help us through the process. The survey should determine what is there now and what we are planning with the Flood Resiliency project. Gig questioned if we need to get Requests for Proposals, it was suggested to get at least three price quotes. Stanley Janovsky suggested waiting until the next StanCom meeting because VTrans has surveyors and one will most likely be at that meeting.

### **Listers Office – meet with Green Mountain Appraisers (GMA)**

Brian Decesare came to the table to get an idea of what it would look like to have GMA take over (with Howard Dix acting as Listers Clerk). Mr. Decesare asked if we are willing to switch over to ProVal software, in prior discussions it was agreed that we would. Our numbers (CLA and COD) have not changed much from last year to this year, we are still in a good position. GMA will need to set up the software, build the models, do market analysis work. The clerk would be involved in data entry and field work. In 2.5 years they would have a great deal of work done and ready to do a “run”. They do valuations based on market value. Mr. Decesare thinks if they work one day a week for two years would get all the properties into the new system.

Mr. Decesare and Mr. Dix will discuss things further so that Mr. Decesare can work up a price to present to the Selectboard within the next three weeks.

### **Town Treasurer-discuss changing banks**

Almira Aekus, Treasurer, came to the table. Our current bank, Community Bank, stepped up and offered the town better interest rates and fee forgiveness. After comparing their offer to other banks Ms. Aekus determined that it is more beneficial to the town to stay where we are.

Ms. Aekus will purchase a remote capture machine that would scan checks and deposit them into the bank right from her desk, the cost is approximately \$800. She also questioned if the town would like to accept credit cards. She has not looked into it too deeply yet but indicated that the taxpayer would pay the processing fee, whatever that might be. The benefit to the residents would be that if they didn't have funds to pay their taxes, they could use a credit card, they would have to pay 2.5-3% for the use of the credit card but not have to pay 8% penalty plus 1% interest for a late payment.

Ms. Aekus provided the board with the preliminary Education Funding Cash Flow documents that would have to be paid in December.

### **Sewer Department, discussion about redundancy**

Dave DiCantio will be meeting with the sewer engineer and many officials from the state on October 2nd. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss redundancy. He would like to clarify before that meeting that the town highway crew would be available if necessary, to help replace any parts that might go bad. Having replacement parts on hand and the ability to install them is a much cheaper option to meet the redundancy requirement than having a second RBC system at each plant. Mr. Janovsky and the Selectboard all agreed that the highway crew would help in an emergency situation.

### **Transfer Station, if any**

Gig heard back from two contacts at the State of Vermont that we would not have to amend our SWIP or Certification to allow Halifax residents to use the Transfer Station. Ms. Aekus noted that the Town of Whitingham subsidizes the Transfer Station. Mr. Janovsky noted that the attendant is already busy with our residents, she probably couldn't handle it smoothly if many Halifax residents started using the Transfer Station. Mr. Corse would like to know what the subsidy amount currently is.

### **Possible review and approval of Municipal Planning Grant application documents**

The "Stanley Committee" was formed with members from the ANR, VTrans, WRC and town staff to work on Flood Resiliency in the Village of Jacksonville. StanCom is pursuing two grants at this time, one is a Municipal Planning Grant (MPG) for \$22,000 to hire a manager to oversee the entire project, this requires a 10% match. The second grant application is a VTrans Environmental Mitigation Grant (EMG), for possibly \$150,000 to cover a scoping study and engineering, this grant requires a 20% match. The Selectboard reviewed the Municipal Resolution for the MPG. **A motion was made by Scott Reed to approve and sign the "Municipal Resolution for Municipal Planning Grant" as long as the town is not locked in to accepting the grant if the matching funds are not approved at Town Meeting, seconded by Wayne Corse, all in favor.**

Gig noted that the MPG is due October 1<sup>st</sup> and the EMG is due October 4<sup>th</sup>. If it becomes necessary for a Selectboard member to sign documents, she would like a motion made tonight to allow a Selectboard member to sign. **A motion was made by Wayne Wood to allow any individual Selectboard member to sign documents for the Municipal Planning and/or Environmental Mitigation grants mentioned above, if necessary, as long as we are not locked into accepting the grant if the matching funds are not approved at Town Meeting, seconded by Scott Reed, all in favor.**

### **Approval of Payables Warrant – September 26, 2019**

**A motion was made by Wayne Corse to approve Payables Warrant W2014 dated September 26, 2019, seconded by Scott Reed, all in favor.**

### **Approval of Payroll Warrant – September 26, 2019**

**A motion was made by Scott Reed to approve Payroll Warrant W2013 dated September 26, 2019, seconded by Wayne Corse, all in favor.**

### **Approval of Minutes of September 11 and 19, 2019**

**A motion was made by Wayne Corse to approve the Minutes of September 11 and 19, 2019 as written, seconded by Scott Reed, all in favor.**

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

Mr. Wood finally received a return call from Lt. Mosher of the Shaftsbury State Police Barracks, but he was at work, they still have not connected by telephone.

Gig noted that traditionally the Selectboard and other positions that get paid by stipend are paid in October, they will be on the next payables warrant.

Gig provided copies of VLCT Property Valuations Options and 2020 Property Schedule for the board members to review before the next meeting. All of these property values were reviewed thoroughly by the Selectboard in 2015. The Selectboard would like Vicky Abare of VLCT to meet with them for a current review.

Gig will be attending Town Fair on October 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>. Household Hazardous Waste collection is Thursday and Saturday, October 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>. Dave DiCantio will be in Montpelier on October 2<sup>nd</sup>.

**A motion to adjourn was made by Wayne Corse, seconded by Scott Reed, all in favor.**

Mr. Wood adjourned the meeting at 8:37pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
~Gig Zboray