



**Town of Whitingham
Office of the Selectboard**

MINUTES OF OCTOBER 9, 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, October 9, 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, Craig Hammer, and Scott Reed.

Others present: Gig Zboray, Selectboard Office Administrator; Almira Aekus, Treasurer; Stanley Janovsky, Jr., Road Commissioner; Vicky Abare, VLCT; Dave DiCantio, Chief Sewer Plant Operator; Linda Donaghue, Deerfield Valley News.

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)

none

Review and approve Property Valuation Options with Vicky Abare of VLCT

Vicky Abare came to the table. The last time a vendor came down to appraise our buildings was in 2013, but with an inflation factor the values are usually pretty accurate. We are slated for reappraisal in 2020. The wastewater plants haven't been valued in years but will be soon. The historic buildings are valued at agreed value rather than guaranteed replacement cost with the thought that they would not/could not be replaced if destroyed. The VLCT rate schedule has not been finalized yet. Ms. Abare is hoping for flat rates or maybe a slight drop. Our current deductible is \$1,000. Ms. Abare will provide a price quote using current rates with various deductibles to see what the savings might be if we increase the deductible.

Gig should take a video inventory of contents of all buildings.

Sewer Department

Dave DiCantio came to the table to report on meeting with state officials. The engineers have come up with a plan to get the sewer plants through the next 20 years. The state feels that we need redundancy (two RBC units) at each plant. We are already underfeeding our RBC units if we have 2 smaller units it will become a daily problem. Two units at each plant will increase the price of the project by \$1.3 million. During the meeting with the state it came to light that two of the deciding officials had not even read the engineering report yet but had basically made up their mind that 2 smaller units will be required. The state officials are slated to come down and tour our sewer plants, a date has not been scheduled yet.

The board would be interested in meeting with Mr. DiCantio on a bi-monthly basis or so to be informed on what is going on at the plant, what his budget status is, what is working, what is not working, etc.

Transfer Station, if any

Two Household Hazardous Waste collection events were held in early October. About 20 people attended over the 2 days. They dropped off mostly paint, some used motor oil.

The per ton amount for the trash compactor and C&D went up from \$89 to \$99 per ton. Gig spoke to Trevor Manse and he mentioned that their costs went up \$12-13 per ton. Mr. Manse will attend the November 6th Selectboard meeting to discuss waste collection with the board and give the option of a contract or not. We have not had a contract with TAM since 2012; the waste tonnage price has remained the same; the hauling had gone up \$20 per haul at some point since 2012. The commodities market for the recycled materials has been and continues to be very volatile.

Highway Department

Review and approve access permit for Kate Follett

A motion was made by Craig Hammer to approve the access permit for 3375 VT Route 100, seconded by Scott Reed, all in favor. They are moving the access to allow better line of site around the corner for safe egress.

Discuss memo about the Cross Road

A resident of the Wilmington Cross Road attended the June 19th Selectboard meeting to complain about speeding among other things. At that meeting he was told that a speed sign given to the town from Wilmington would be installed on the Cross Road. It has not been installed yet. He questioned when that sign will be installed and the status of getting police coverage in the town. Mr. Janovsky will install the sign. (See "Other Business" below for discussion on police coverage.)

StanCom update

Gig submitted the application for a Municipal Planning Grant for a total project cost of \$21,163 (grant of \$19,239/matching funds of \$1,924) for a manager to oversee our very complicated flood resiliency project. The BDCC thinks they can fund the required match.

Gig submitted a VTrans Environmental Mitigation Grant application for a total project cost of \$165,000 to cover scoping and engineering of the flood resiliency project. That application was immediately denied because it did not include any construction costs.

At the StanCom meeting yesterday we seemed to have clarified that the River Corridor Plan is actually a scoping study. VTrans had been denying that. At this point Gig is unclear if we will be applying for a VTrans Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) grant, which would be due November 22nd. We will definitely need engineering but due to the complicated nature of the project Gig is unsure when that will be required.

The FEMA buyout of the Kingsley property seems to be on track. The WRC is waiting for confirmation that matching grants can be secured before the FEMA grant application is filed.

Mr. Janovsky had questioned StanCom if the committee had a Plan B or C if we can't get the funding. Plan B is do nothing, let the culvert collapse and replace it. VTrans said yes you can replace it as is on a temporary emergency basis, but it will eventually need to meet the Hydraulic Study recommendations.

We will need a surveyor to layout the "new highway" at the Municipal Center entrance. VTrans does not have licensed surveyors and the Orange Book indicates that a licensed surveyor is required. We can save some cost of surveying if we find other surveys in the land records and put flags on the prior pins. Gig should contact Brad Lackey and ask for a price estimate for a survey to layout the road. (Post Meeting Note: Brad Lackey should have a price estimate for review at next meeting.)

Paving has started, working on the base right now, seems to be going ok. Sand bids have been mailed out; they will be opened at the October 23rd meeting.

Mr. Corse asked Mr. Janovsky to provide a report of what is going on, what's happened in the last 2 weeks, what might be coming up in the next 2 weeks. Ms. Aekus noted that Brattleboro department heads submit a written report to the Selectboard for each meeting if they are unable to attend a meeting. Mr. Janovsky has been at every Selectboard meeting since March and has kept the board informed, he plans to continue to do that.

Town Hill, update on camera discussion

The cameras purchased in 2015 for Town Hill do not have night vision and cannot see very far. It was suggested that we purchase at least one new camera with night vision. Based on prior proposals from two providers the board has decided on using JC Electric. There are problems with the electric service at Town Hill, JC should fix that while installing the cameras. Mr. Janovsky will talk to Seth Boyd, Chair of the Town Hill Committee to inform him of the camera plan. Two to three cameras with night vision should be installed at Town Hill.

Mr. Janovsky informed the board that in the past it was agreed that a generator would be installed on Town Hill below the communications tower to provide power in a power failure situation. He is still working toward that plan.

Town Treasurer, discuss accepting credit card payments

Our current interest rate is at .7%, the new interest rate will be 1.5% as a result of Ms. Aekus questioning other banks about providing services to the town.

Ms. Aekus noted that police coverage has always been in the budget to be able to hire coverage if needed. If not used it goes back into the fund balance.

Ms. Aekus also noted that more and more often people are coming in to purchase a dump sticker and don't have cash or a check, they would like to use their credit card or debit card. If the service is offered the town might lose a little interest on late payment of taxes however she feels it would be a benefit to the taxpayers. She is proposing using a company called GovPayNet.com to process credit/debit card transactions. She is requesting permission to pursue. The only thing the town would have to pay is for the town attorney to review the contract. In her research she found this company charges the lowest transaction fee and there would be no equipment to purchase. A Community Bank affiliate would charge \$60 per month and the town would have to pay \$399 for the swiper machine with a higher transaction fee charged to the taxpayer. **Wayne Corse made a motion to allow Almira Aekus to proceed**

with getting a contract from GovPayNet.com to send to the Town Attorney for legal review, seconded by Craig Hammer, all in favor.

Ms. Aekus attended a seminar at Town Fair for the new state Grand List system. She is concerned about switching our lister services to Green Mountain Appraisers at this time because this new state system is coming to lister offices on July 1, 2021. She feels it might be a “perfect storm” of two large changes happening at the same time to overwhelm the Lister Clerk.

For clarification purposes Ms. Aekus informed the board that NEMRC has been used by the town since 1995 for software only. The terrible appraisal that happened in 2010 was NOT performed by NEMRC. In 2016 NEMRC did a statistical appraisal, and those values are what is in the system now and our “numbers” are on target. The current use program is updated by NEMRC, Jenepher Burnell had done it for the town in the past. Ms. Aekus suggested finding out the actual cost of conversion to the ProVal software if the board intends to move appraiser services to Green Mountain Appraisers.

Approval of Payables Warrant – October 10, 2019

A motion was made by Scott Reed to approve Payables Warrant W2016 dated October 10, 2019, seconded by Craig Hammer, all in favor.

Approval of Payroll Warrant – October 10, 2019

A motion was made by Craig Hammer to approve Payroll Warrant W2015 dated October 10, 2019, seconded by Scott Reed, all in favor.

Approval of Minutes of September 25, 2019

A motion was made by Wayne Corse to approve the Minutes of September 25, 2019 as written, seconded by Craig Hammer, all in favor.

Other business / Office Administrator – as needed

Lions Club – the Lions would like permission to install a new lock on the shed door and to build shelves in the shed. The board approved both requests.

History The Historical Society is presenting “History of the Harriman Dam and Reservoir” on Wednesday, October 16th at 7pm.

Plowing the School The Selectboard approves of the town highway crew continuing to plow the school.

The Selectboard would like to meet with Wilmington Selectboard to discuss the condition of the state roads, fiber optic/dsl, policing, and the school.

Wayne Wood had a voice message from Lt. Moshier saying that he would like a phone conversation before he came all the way down here to have a discussion with the Selectboard. The board approved of Wayne Wood letting go of pursuing police coverage.

The Selectboard approved of Wayne Wood meeting with the Wilmington Police to see if they now have enough staff at this time to provide some coverage for Whitingham.

Craig Hammer asked when petitions are due for Selectboard seats. They are due January 27, 2020.

A motion to adjourn was made by Wayne Corse, seconded by Wayne Wood, all in favor.

Mr. Wood adjourned the meeting at 9:04pm.

Respectfully submitted,
~Gig Zboray