



**Town of Whitingham
Office of the Selectboard**

MINUTES OF OCTOBER 21, 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, October 21, 2020.

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

Others present: Gig Zboray, Selectboard Office Administrator, Stanley Janovsky, Road Commissioner; Almira Aekus, Town Clerk; Richard Lemaire, and James Weber, residents. Christy Betit of BDCC and Seth Boyd, resident, attended remotely.

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 changes to the agenda since it was posted.

Hearing of visitors (for concerns not on the agenda)

James Weber, resident of Jacksonville, received the letter about the sewer rate increase. He thanked the Selectboard for the feedback he has received about the board trying to minimize the cost of the project. Some background information was asked for and provided. *Zoom meeting was bombed, shut down and restarted at this point.* Mr. Weber questioned expansion plans and it was explained that we can't address that at this point. He questioned if the board was considering an advisory board and he volunteered; the board has never discussed the idea. Mr. Weber mentioned that he completed the MHI Survey, Gig asked him to speak with his neighbors to encourage them to respond to the survey also. Gig also asked the Selectboard members to share her post on Facebook about the survey so that it reaches more sewer users.

Richard Lemaire questioned what happened with the crosswalk at the General Store and near the Jacksonville Church. Near the store does not allow enough line of sight and near the church there is no sidewalk to cross to.

At the October 7th meeting Mr. Lemaire mentioned that he heard a rumor that the Brochu residence is not using the sewer, they are relieving themselves in the yard. He asked what the status of that is. Gig spoke with Kevin Brochu by telephone and Mr. Brochu indicated that they are using the toilet in the trailer, which is pumped out as needed, only the dog is using the yard to relieve itself.

BDCC annual update:

Christy Betit of BDCC thanked the board for allowing her to participate tonight and for dropping the requirement for funding petitions this year due to the pandemic. SeVEDS is

requesting \$4,071 dollars again this year. An example of how our money is put to work is the Pipelines and Pathways program to train and connect students to career opportunities in their own backyard.

Ms. Betit also spoke about other programs going on at the school.

Highway:

Road Commissioner's vacation pay:

Mr. Janovsky questioned if the board made a decision about his over abundant vacation time available. He provided some historical background: When he first became Road Commissioner, he was told he would be granted comp time in lieu of overtime pay, he didn't use much of the comp time earned. In 2005 and 2006 he earned 662 of comp time, VLCT then said that was not legal, the Selectboard at the time changed it to 250 hours max comp time and then paid 1.5 times hourly rate as overtime pay after the 250 comp hours in 2007. VLCT then said that was illegal also so in 2008 the board just paid time and a half for all overtime. Mr. Janovsky's comp time was taken away from him (902 hours valued at just under \$29,000). A prior employee handbook stated that vacation leave may carryforward a maximum of 45 days, with approval 60 days could have been carried forward. Now Mr. Janovsky is on the verge of losing again. He currently has 650 hours of vacation time banked. Per the current Personnel Policy he is allowed to carryforward a maximum of 240 hours. He would like 208 hours reimbursed at 50% pay (he would really like full price for it, but he is willing to work with the board). Mr. Janovsky calculates that the total would be \$3,221.92. Mr. Lemaire suggested that the board pay him half of all the hours in his bank. Mr. Janovsky noted that he has until June 30, 2021 to use remaining balance. The board feels that Mr. Janovsky does a great job and wants him to be happy.

Seth Boyd questioned if the Road Commissioner was salary or hourly. He is salaried with overtime paid.

A motion was made by Scott Reed to award a vacation buy out check in the amount of \$3,222 to Stanley Janovsky, Jr. to bring his current vacation balance to 442 hours, seconded by Craig Hammer, all in favor.

Personnel: Review and adopt Vacation Sell Back Policy

This had been postponed until we had a full 5-member board. Phil Edelstein questioned if it would cover all employees or the highway employees and the Municipal Employee, the policy states it is just for the highway department and the Municipal Employee. Mr. Edelstein questioned if the cost has been calculated. No, it has not been calculated yet, Mr. Janovsky will have to add it to his next budget. Ms. Aekus guessed about \$18,000 but Mr. Janovsky noted that it would be at 50% so about \$10,000 for the 6 highway employees for a year if they all could not take all their vacation time earned.

A motion was made by Chris Walling to adopt the Vacation Sell Back Policy as an addendum to the Personnel Policy, seconded by Phil Edelstein, all in favor.

Jacksonville Dam:

The State inspected the Jacksonville Dam on October 6th. They recommend the complete removal of a very large oak tree that is on the edge of the laid stone wall, it is leaning over and if it goes over completely it will knock out the stone wall. Mr. Janovsky suggested that a professional tree removal company be engaged to do the dangerous work. He is not sure

what fund the money will come out of. Mr. Janovsky asked for suggestions of companies to request a bid from, Mr. Hammer noted that a crane would be required. If the tree company takes it down the town crew will clean it up. Mr. Hammer will provide Mr. Janovsky with some company names.

Flood Hazard Mitigation:

Select engineering firm for scoping study

The Selection Committee made a recommendation to the Selectboard to accept the proposal for performing the Scoping Study of the river in front of the Municipal Center by MSK Engineers. MSK ranked the highest in meeting the criteria of the 4 proposals received and their cost estimate of \$44,998 is within the grant budget. The Selection Committee will discuss their price with MSK after they have been engaged to perform the work, it might come in a little lower.

A motion was made by Phil Edelstein to accept MSK Engineers' proposal to prepare a scoping study at \$44,998 as recommended by the Selection Committee, seconded by Scott Reed, all in favor.

Review and sign contract for ARA

At the October 7, 2020 meeting the Selectboard selected Hartgen Archeological Associates to perform the Archeological Resource Assessment (ARA) of the Kingsley property for the FEMA buyout (\$2,550). The board reviewed the contract from Hartgen.

A motion was made by Craig Hammer to appoint Wayne Wood to sign the contract with Hartgen Archeological Associates, seconded by Chris Walling, all in favor.

Corona/COVID-19: Mr. Wood noted that most of the outbreaks in the state seem to be from college kids. There are some new regulations in the state around hockey teams. Other outbreaks seem to be from carpooling. Masks on is important in the next few weeks/months.

Mr. Walling will act as a liaison between the school and the Selectboard.

Sewer Department: review and sign loan documents for phase 2

The board reviewed the documents for the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) loan for phase 2 of the sewer improvement project in the amount of \$283,636. Repayment shall commence 5 years after the execution of the loan. If the loan does not result in a constructed project by the anticipated repayment start date, repayment shall commence immediately. It's a 10-year loan term with 0% interest and 0% administrative fees. Documents say that the first payment of \$14,891.80 is due January 1, 2026 but this loan will be half forgiven, and the balance rolled into the construction loan/bond.

A motion was made by Scott Reed to approve and sign the loan documents for phase 2 of the sewer improvement project, seconded by Phil Edelstein, all in favor.

Agency of Transportation Paving companies contacted Mr. Janovsky asking if he would like millings from the repaving project of Route 100 schedule for next year. Mr. Janovsky said he would accept it all.

Approval of Payables Warrant – October 22, 2020

A motion was made by Scott Reed to approve Payables Warrant #W2118 dated October 22, 2020, seconded by Craig Hammer, all in favor.

Approval of Payroll Warrant – October 22, 2020

A motion was made by Craig Hammer to approve Payroll Warrant #W2117 dated October 22, 2020, seconded by Chris Walling, all in favor.

Review and approve Minutes of October 7, 2020

A motion was made by Craig Hammer to accept the Minutes of October 7, 2020 as written, seconded by Scott Reed, all in favor.

Other business / Office Administrator – as needed

Appoint Selectboard member to sign Warrants as needed if regular Selectboard meeting is cancelled due to weather or illness **A motion was made by Wayne Wood to allow any one Selectboard member to review and sign Payables and Payroll Warrants if a regular Selectboard meeting must be cancelled due to illness or weather between now and March 12, 2021, seconded by Scott Reed, all in favor.**

Political signs at Town Hill Gig heard a comment of political signs being posted at Town Hill. There is currently no ordinance forbidding such a thing. Shall we leave them up or take them down? Mr. Boyd responded saying he thought kids stole the signs and put them at Town Hill as a joke, he will take the signs down tomorrow.

Junk do we want to go out and look again? Gig heard a complaint about lots of travel trailers on a Poverty Row property. The board and Gig will go out and look at the town before the next meeting.

Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by Scott Reed, seconded by Chris Walling, all in favor.

Wayne Wood adjourned the meeting at 7:51pm.

Respectfully submitted,
~Gig Zboray