



**Town of Whitingham  
Office of the Selectboard**

**MINUTES OF JANUARY 26, 2022**

*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 Selectboard Office of the Whitingham Municipal Center on Wednesday, January 26, 2022.

Selectboard members present: Scott Reed, Chair; Craig Hammer, Vice Chair; Chris Walling and James Weber.

Others present: Gig Zboray, Selectboard Office Administrator; Tyler Lederer of Deerfield Valley News; Almira Aekus, Clerk/Treasurer.

Cory Ross of Natural Resources Conservation District and Cindy Hayford of Deerfield Valley Community Partnership attended remotely.

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

Scott Reed called the meeting to order at 6:32pm. There were a few changes to the agenda since it was posted.

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

None

**Hazard Mitigation: Cory Ross of Natural Resources Conservation District to discuss buffer plantings along river at sewer plant.**

Mr. Ross addressed the board. There is a lack of a riparian buffer along the riverbank on the Jacksonville sewer plant property. There is only a 9 foot vertical rise between the river and the building. They are proposing buffer plantings along the river. They typically use hardwoods but have had some luck with white pine. This project would be part of our WISPr projects (funding from ANR in connection with our sewer project).

**A motion was made by Chris Walling to support the buffer planting project along the river at the Jacksonville sewer plant, seconded by Craig Hammer, all in favor.**

**Cindy Hayford – presentation on Act 164, Retail Cannabis law**

Mrs. Hayford addressed the board. She made a presentation on retail cannabis, Act 164 and the Cannabis Coalition. Deerfield Valley Community Partnership's main goal is to prevent substance use. They are working on education and skill building to keep kids away from cannabis. Towns could create a Local Cannabis Control Commission; she recommends members be a cross section of the community. The town would only be involved in retail licensing, not for growing or processing. If we created a commission, Mrs. Hayford would be happy to help us. We should have something in place by the fall of 2022 when the retail end opens up.

### **Highway: request to plow 443 East Road**

Emmett and Judy Delgaizo property owners of 443 East Road sent an email request asking that East Road be plowed to the bottom of the steep hill. The town currently doesn't plow that far. Gig found Selectboard Minutes from August of 2007 noting that the Delgaizo's request additional maintenance of the road. The administrator at the time was to inform the Delgaizo's that the road is a Class 4 road that receives maintenance during the summer months but is not maintained in the winter. The road has been Class 4 since before they purchased the property there. Gig will write a letter to the Delgaizos, there is a process to upgrade a section of the road from Class 4 to Class 3.

### **Cell Tower – review and sign agreement for SBA to buyout their lease**

The board reviewed an option to enter into an exclusive, perpetual communications easement for the cell tower at the Transfer Station. SBA Communications currently has a lease on the area, they would like to buy-out their lease for a one-time payment of \$270,000. The execution of this option agreement comes with an Option Payment of \$1,000 once fully executed, they will then conduct their business to proceed with the easement agreement.

**A motion was made by James Weber to appoint Scott M. Reed to sign the Option Agreement with SBA Communications, seconded by Scott M. Reed, all in favor.**

### **Sewer**

The Selectboard told Gig to notify Smitty that we are clear on his email and want this to move forward to the bidding process so that the bids go out by February 18th.

### **Twin Valley Youth Sports**

While youth basketball was happening at the old High School a part of the ceiling collapsed. Mr. Hammer would like to know why youth sports can't be played at the new school. Mr. Walling responded that there are middle school and high school teams that play games or have practices at the new building. TVYS has 9 programs, it would be difficult to get that much court time at the new building. They pay a fee to use the building.

### **Ballots – how to disburse**

The board made a decision at the special meeting on Monday January 24<sup>th</sup> that they would like the town ballot for Town Meeting 2022 mailed to all registered voters. Because the topic was not specifically warned on that agenda Gig thought it should be ratified tonight. Ms. Aekus spoke to the board. Because we are a joint school district with Wilmington the school ballots must be handled the same in each town. Wilmington will NOT be mailing ballots, therefore we cannot mail the school ballot. Ms. Aekus believes it will be less confusing to all if she sent a letter to active registered voters telling them they can request ballots to be mailed to them or they can vote in person at Town Meeting. She said there are several items of importance on the School Warning such as \$797,040 fund balance to a tax stabilization fund, \$300,000 fund balance to a maintenance reserve fund and a \$10,177,905 budget for the next fiscal year. Ms. Aekus did note that the school warning had not been signed yet. **A motion was made by James Weber to rescind the decision of January 24, 2022, to mail out ballots for Town Meeting, 2022 and to send a newsletter to all active registered voters instead, seconded by Craig Hammer, all in favor.**

### **Transfer Station**

The paper compactor froze over the past weekend. To alleviate the problem it was recommended that heaters be used as needed. Two outlets will need to be installed (one near each compactor). Gig called JC Electric. The board suggested that we read the rental agreement to see what it says. Mr. Weber is concerned that TAM/Casella is not maintaining the equipment that we are leasing. Gig will call Trevor Manse to discuss maintenance. Gig will call JC Electric and tell them not to install the outlets. Using a heater opens up other concerns.

Gig noted that the monthly rental cost of the paper compactor is now \$310.50 (up \$23) and the metals container is now \$74.52 (up \$5.52). The other costs (hauling and tonnage) remain the same.

### **Approval of Payables Warrant – January 27, 2022**

**A motion was made by James Weber to approve Payables Warrant #W2232 dated January 27, 2022, seconded by Scott M. Reed, all in favor.**

### **Approval of Payroll Warrant – January 27, 2022**

**A motion was made by Craig Hammer to approve Payroll Warrant #W2231 dated January 27, seconded by James Weber, all in favor.**

### **Approve Minutes of January 12, 14, 19 & 24, 2022**

**A motion was made by James Weber to accept the Minutes of January 12, 14, 19 & 24, 2022 as written seconded by Craig Hammer, all in favor.**

### **Other Business**

Gig spoke with Chris at NEMRC to discuss different job responsibilities, she will schedule a meeting to include Gig, Chris, Almira, Howard and any board members available to hammer it all out. The board agreed.

### **Adjourn**

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

Scott Reed adjourned the meeting at 7:42pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
~Gig Zboray