



**Town of Whitingham  
Office of the Selectboard**

**MINUTES OF APRIL 8, 2020 as corrected**

*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, April 8, 2020 at 6:30pm in the Municipal Center, 2948 VT Route 100, Jacksonville, VT.

Selectboard members present: Wayne Wood, Scott Reed, Craig Hammer in person. Wayne Corse and Phil Edelstein via Zoom.

Others present: Gig Zboray, Selectboard Office Administrator and Stanley Janovsky, Road Commissioner in person. Joe Berard and Mike Cole of Readsboro ATV Club the Jack Pines Pirates; Chris Lynch of Matrix; Almira Aekus, Town Clerk; and Seth Boyd, resident, via Zoom.

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

Wayne Wood called the meeting to order at 6:30pm.

**Hearing of visitors for concerns not on the agenda** no comments

**Ratify all actions taken at March 25<sup>th</sup> meeting and approve Minutes of March 25, 2020**

**A motion was made by Phil Edelstein to ratify all actions taken at the March 25, 2020 meeting and to approve the Minutes of March 25, 2020 as written, seconded by Scott Reed, all in favor.**

**Readsboro ATV Club**

Phil Edelstein doesn't understand the legalities of the ATV Club, but he is impressed with the hard work done by the Jack Pines Pirates. Mr. Fisher reviewed the Readsboro ATV Ordinance but they suggested Whitingham engage him to do it for our proposed ordinance. The three roads they are looking to access is River Road and Bosley Hill Road down by Readsboro and Lone Pine Road.

They are trying to create a trail that will run from Readsboro to Cherry Creek.

**A motion was made by Craig Hammer to have the draft ATV Ordinance reviewed by the town attorney and discuss it after the attorney's review, seconded Wayne Corse, all in favor.**

**Sewer Department, if any**

Wayne Corse has been reading the Preliminary Engineering Report and would like to get a meeting set up as quickly as possible with the engineers. Phil Edelstein questioned if we are close to violation and the answer is no. Mr. Wood noted that the repairs made to the RBC in Jacksonville are holding strong. Gig will try to schedule the engineers for the first meeting

in May. Mr. Corse would like the RBC covers removed from the sewer plant properties. Mr. Janovsky said the highway crew will take care of it.

### **Highway Department**

#### **Review and sign Annual Financial Plan, Town Road & Bridge Standards, and Certificate of Compliance**

Mr. Janovsky indicated these documents are required every year so the state can verify that the town is putting enough money into all the highways that we are responsible for. The Financial Plan must be signed before the state will give us any grant funds. Mr. Corse questioned if the high paving budget would hurt us on grant applications. Mr. Janovsky doesn't think that we actually have a high paving number, he indicated that our per mile price is less than most area towns. We have 32.6 blacktop miles of town roads in Whitingham so that is \$12,269 per mile in the blacktop budget. Wilmington's average per mile was \$14,486, Dover's is \$21,666 per mile.

Mr. Edelstein commented that a higher percentage of the road budget should be allocated to dirt roads and that high use thru dirt roads should be focused on and Stanley should decide how to devote more time and money to dirt roads. Mr. Reed and Mr. Hammer drove the roads recently and feel the dirt roads are in good shape. Mr. Reed questioned what Mr. Edelstein feels is bad on the dirt roads. He mentioned culverts but requested more team effort on the dirt roads. Mr. Janovsky explained we have less dirt miles than other towns, our gravel per mile cost is second most than any surrounding towns at \$2,064.56 per mile. Halifax is \$1,152.73 per mile; Dover is \$1,764.00 and Readsboro is \$485.75.

**A motion was made by Wayne Corse to sign the Annual Financial Plan, seconded by Scott Reed, all in favor.**

**A motion was made by Wayne Corse to sign the Town Road & Bridge Standards, seconded by Scott Reed, all in favor.**

**A motion was made by Wayne Wood to sign the Certificate of Compliance, which was approved last year, it just needs to be signed this year, seconded by Scott Reed, all in favor.**

#### **Open paving bids**

Mr. Janovsky opened paving bids. Mr. Corse questioned if there was anyone Mr. Janovsky was not interested in hiring before he opened the bids. The answer is no. 4,874 tons needed.

Sunapee Paving, formerly Springfield Paving \$68.57 per ton. Dover had trouble with this company last year because they couldn't get the topcoat, so the job was not completed.

Bazin Brothers \$78.65 per ton

Peckham Road Corp. shim \$86.48 and top \$85.45

Vermont Roadworks \$95.29 per ton

All States Asphalt \$69.68 per ton

Last year's winning bid was \$69.48 which is a dollar more than Springfield this year. The price per ton of liquid asphalt is \$515 this year and was \$557 per ton last year., all these bids seem to be coming in higher than they should be based on the current price of oil. Mr.

Janovsky suggested rejecting all the bids received and request new bids again. However, that is a “crap shoot”.

Mr. Reed would feel better accepting a bid from a company that owns their own plant because there is no one they can blame any problems on.

**Scott Reed made a motion to accept All States Asphalt bid of \$69.68 per ton for bituminous concrete in place, seconded by Craig Hammer, all in favor.**

Open reclaim bids for reclamation of Dam Road

All States 69 cents per square yard

Peckham 66 cents per square yard

Bazin Brothers 85 cents per square yard

Garrity \$1 per square yard

Mr. Janovsky recommends Peckham.

**A motion was made by Craig Hammer to accept Peckham Road Corp. bid of 66 cents per square yard for the reclamation of Dam Road, seconded by Scott Reed, all in favor.**

Other

We received an email on April 1<sup>st</sup> noting that due to the Stay Home, Stay Safe order that no Grants-in-Aid projects will be moving forward until the order is lifted. This might affect the Reed Hill Road project.

**Transfer Station, review and approve draft SWIP to submit to state**

After review, **Wayne Wood made a motion to approve the draft Solid Waste Implementation Plan (SWIP), as written, for submittal to the VT ANR, seconded by Scott Reed, all in favor.**

Last week we had received information that it was OK to change Transfer Station hours, this week we received information that we must notify ANR of the change. It seems like it would be a simple email.

The ANR expects us to continue “pay as you throw” but we have suspended fees at the Transfer Station.

Transfer Station Hours The Transfer Station will be closed Easter Sunday. Jennifer Herzig suggested a change of hours to 11:30-4 on Sundays beginning April 19. Phil Edelstein suggested that cars wait at the bottom of the hill until the car ahead leaves. Mr. Corse suggested that cars wait closer to the top of hill so they can see if there is anyone ahead of them. Cars should be served one at a time for social distancing requirements.

**A motion was made by Wayne Corse to return Transfer Station hours to the normal hours, to continue to waive the fee, and to put a stop sign at the top hill to control overcrowding, seconded by Craig Hammer, all in favor.**

Household Hazardous Waste Collection Due to social distancing requirements we cannot hold our HHW collection event as scheduled for May. When this Corona Emergency is over we will have to find out what the state will require of us, probably just one event in the fall.

**Broadband, if any**

In two weeks, Consolidated Communications will be at the Selectboard meeting.

Phil Edelstein responded to Almira Aekus' very thoughtful memo to the Selectboard about Broadband strongly urging the project go out to bid. He now noted that the Broadband Committee will talk to every company that can provide broadband service to Whitingham.

Discussion ensued around a draft letter to all property owners and addresses in Whitingham, it was decided that we would wait on sending the letter.

**Corona/COVID-19 updates**

Daily SitRep the Vermont curve has flattened greatly. Our in-place medical is adequate for the number of infections the state is dealing with. The Stay Home order and social distancing is working for Vermont.

Mrs. Aekus noted there is at least one Corona case in town, there might be another in Halifax.

RFI is now cleaning the Municipal Center and the Fire Houses.

Animal Control Issue We received an email saying that a cat might need to be removed from a home of a Corona patient. Neither our Animal Control Officer nor Health Officers have been trained to address exposure of this sort nor do they have personal protective equipment (PPE). The board members agreed that the Animal Control Officer is not authorized to perform such a task.

Delinquent Tax and Sewer Bills due to the current financial situation that many residents may be in Mrs. Aekus did not send out delinquent tax bills and Marylee Putnam will not send out delinquent sewer bills.

Current Taxes due November 1<sup>st</sup> Mr. Corse was questioned by two people if the property taxes will still be due November 1<sup>st</sup> and if interest will be charged on delinquent accounts. Mrs. Aekus answered that the town voted at town meeting to enact this, however we could hold a special town meeting to change the due date and to not charge interest. Mrs. Aekus suggested not changing anything at this time. There are many unemployed who might be making more money with Unemployment Insurance than they did working.

**Approval of Payables Warrant dated April 9, 2020**

**A motion was made by Craig Hammer to approve the Payables Warrant #W2042 dated April 9, 2020, seconded by Scott Reed, all in favor.**

**Approval of Payroll Warrant dated April 9, 2020**

**A motion was made by Scott Reed to approve Payroll Warrant #W2041 dated April 9, 2020, seconded by Craig Hammer, all in favor.**

**Approval of Minutes of March 30, 2020**

**A motion was made by Craig Hammer to approve the Minutes of March 30, 2020 as written, seconded by Scott Reed, all in favor.**

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

**Confidentiality Agreement** Bob Fisher forwarded a Confidentiality Agreement for the Great River Hydro tax appeal, he needs board approval to sign it on behalf of the town. **A motion was made by Wayne Corse to allow Attorney Robert Fisher to sign the Confidentiality Agreement in regard to the Great River Hydro tax appeal, seconded by Scott Reed, all in favor.**

Mr. Corse spoke to Mr. Fisher today about the Great River Hydro tax appeal, he questioned where a value number came from, Mr. Edelstein noted that it came from the sale price when Great River purchased TransCanada approximately three years ago.

**Adjourn**

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

Wayne Wood adjourned the meeting at 8:27pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
~Gig Zboray