

**TOWN OF WESTMINSTER
SELECTBOARD MEETING
January 27, 2016**

Members Present Selectboard: K. Sheldon Beebe (Chair), Paul Banik (V. Chair), Toby Young, Craig Allen and Nancy Dalzell

Others Present: Russell Hodgkins (Town Manager / ZA), Karen Astley (Recording Clerk), seven members of the public as signed in, and FACTV.

1. CALL TO ORDER: The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

2. ADJUSTMENTS TO AGENDA: None.

3. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES: January 13, 2016 minutes: The Chair questioned the timing of the beginning of the “Friends of the Westminster West Town Hall” committee as written and thought he heard the same dates from Peggy O’Toole. He requested no change in the minutes, but requested the Town Manager to ask Peggy O’Toole to be at the next meeting with clarification of facts that she presented. Nancy Dalzell requested the word be changed on the second to last sentence (pg.1) from “feasible to feasibly”. **Toby Young made a motion to accept the minutes with the correction from January 13, 2016. Craig Allen seconded the motion. Motion passed.**

Minutes from January 15th, 2016: With no discussion – **Paul Banik made a motion to accept the Emergency Selectboard Minutes from January 15, 2016 as written. Nancy Dalzell seconded the motion. Motion passed.**

4. COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC COMMENT:

RT Brown – BDCC & Alex Beck – SeVEDS: The two gentlemen spoke about their programs as they relate to Westminster and requested the Towns support as the programs grow in Windham County. Alex Beck mentioned that they have petitioned for an Article at the Westminster Town Meeting for \$9,534.00. Toby Young asked how that number was arrived at and Mr. Beck replied that it was \$3.00 per person for the entire Westminster population. Continuing her quest for the answer of how the figure was established, Toby Young said how was the \$3.00 figure arrived at? Mr. Beck said that this was just the number that all Towns are requested to give in support of SeVEDS. The presentation lasted approximately 25 minutes.

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS (Discussions/Action):

A. FEMA Buyout – update: Town Manager (TM) reported - No further information was available at this time.

B. Barrett Property- update: TM reminded the Board that this Friday he is meeting a VTrans person to talk over the new proposed Route 5 access if the parcel is purchased. He also mentioned the February 1st visit by the Structural Engineer that was hired for \$1300 to look at the Barrett house. Because of the request from the Fire & Safety inspector, the Engineer when finished with the Barrett house will go to the Westminster West Town Hall to inspect that building as well. All of this information will be important for the Town Meeting.

C. Fire & Safety Report: Russell Hodgkins reported that the inspection reports were not finished yet, but he received assurance that the reports would be ready for their next meeting. The TM went on to say that he did receive information from the VLCT insurance representative, Wade Massure, and he gave him samples of the recommended models for facility use and policy. The Manager passed out his compilation of the models as they pertained to Westminster. The three documents will be discussed at the next meeting, after the Board has a chance to review them and make changes as necessary.

D. Discussion for Town Meeting: In the packet that the Board members received, the Manager explained the letter to the Gazette was written by Alice Caggiano supporting the purchase of the Barrett house. At this time, the TM requested that the Board members choose their Articles that they would read at Town Meeting and speak to with help from the Manger. Articles were chosen as follows:

Articles 1 & 2 - Sheldon Beebe, Article 3 – Craig Allen, Articles 4 & 5 – Paul Banik, Articles 6 & 8 – Toby Young and Articles 7 & 9 - Nancy Dalzell.

E. Sign Warning for Articles at Town Meeting: The Warning was signed with no further discussion.

6. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Sign Highway & Bridge Restrictions: The Manger explained that these are the same documents that the State of Vermont expects each Town to adopt each year. Nancy Dalzell made a motion to the accept and sign the two documents as supplied by the TM. Craig Allen seconded the motion. Motion passed.

B. Sign Certificate of Highway Mileage: Toby Young made a motion to the accept and sign the Highway Mileage Certificate. Craig Allen seconded the motion. Motion passed.

C. Tree Ordinance – Draft: In the Packet for the Board, the Manger drafted a new “Tree Ordinance” by the request of the Chair and Road Foreman. The Board discussed the reason for the need and it was agreed that this would be wise. Toby Young asked about the effective date at the bottom of the document and it was agreed to change this date and bring it back to the Board for approval.

D. North Westminster Operating Budget – Fire District #5: John Jones (the Chair) for the District explained the circumstances of the Districts need for a budget. He showed details of the request and the amounts proposed for the users be added into the Towns tax bill for the residents of the North Westminster Fire District. The Board was leery of this request to add monies to the Towns tax bills and explained that without legal advise, they would not be able to give him an answer this evening. The Board at that time requested that the Town Manager get ahold of legal counsel and have him report back to the Board with his recommendations.

E. New Time Card Draft – Road Crew: The Manger explained why the new time card was needed. When the timeline was being put together for the past Audit, the Executive office had a very difficult time resurrecting the event so that the Town could be reimbursed by the State and FEMA to its fullest degree. This new time card will show amounts of materials used and where they came from, so that all the spent money will be accounted for and hence reimbursable. It also removed the Class 2 and 3 distinctions because they are no longer needed in the accountability of grants and/or State funds.

7. MANAGER’S REPORT:

1. 45 day Notice for Solar Array: Russ Hodgkins handed out the last notice for the remainder of land in the Industrial Park. He explained that this is no longer an Industrial Park because this request will take the rest of the available land in the Towns Planned Unit Development. Upon reading the notice, Nancy Dalzell asked if the location of Guilford Center Road was correct? She requested that the correction be given back to the proper authorities and resubmitted. TM to look into this.

2. Meeting at the State House with the Senate & House Solar Siting Task Force (Net Metering): Russ Hodgkins thanked the Board for his opportunity to visit the State House because he has never been. He gave a brief overture of the visit and mentioned that he did testify at both the House and Senate committee sessions. The Board asked if it is going to do any good and Russ explained that he thought so. Through conversation, the committees are leaning towards giving this task of siting renewable energy to Act 250. Act 250’s review process has in place already that local ordinances, Zoning Bylaws and Town Plans will be looked at in any decision that is made by them. “This seems like a move in the right direction”, Russ said.

3. **Windham County Budget Meeting:** The Manager said that he went to this meeting and there was a major concern by all of the visitors about the budget that was posted and placed in the paper. The Budget Committee explained that there was a huge mistake in the budget paperwork that was posted and put in the newspaper. The tax rate was posted at .0692, when it was supposed to be .00692. A new sheet was handed out and the Judges declared with information received as late as the morning of the meeting, the budget rate will be close to level funded at .0076.
4. **“Things To Do List:** The Manager was given 10 items to do from the last meeting and wanted to assure the Board that all had been addressed or resolved.
5. **Mailbox Ordinance and Street Sign Ordinance:** The Manger requested the Board grant him permission to create new ordinances for these items because they are becoming issues within the Town. The Board granted permission for him to create the drafts and bring them back to the Board at a future meeting.
6. **Hartley Hill - update:** The Manager reported that he has started the discussion with legal counsel about what has been done in the past years and the costs that are estimated to follow such an action as to take over this section of road. “Very expensive” is what Larry Slason described. The Board gave instruction to the Manager to set up a meeting with the care taker of the Bond property to see if this can be resolved without a law suit.
7. **DEC’s Municipal Roads General Permit:** Russ Hodgkins informed the Selectboard that there is a mandate in place (Act 64) which requires towns to get permits and annual inspections to comply with the storm-water runoff into waterways. The handout further explains the procedure and further discussions will be needed.
8. **Auditor’s Report:** The Manager handed out the new report that landed in the Town Hall the morning of the meeting. This was accompanied by a letter addressed to the Selectboard. Sheldon Beebe asked Alison Bigwood (Town Clerk) about the timing of the report and the date of the letter that was addressed to the Selectboard. Alison responded that it came into the mail today. He asked about the electronic copy and she replied about a week ago. Paul Banik asked about the deficiencies that the letter states exist. Alison stated that Doreen Woodward had deficiencies also and that they were not a big deal. She will supply the Town Manager with a copy of the transactions when they become available.

8. BOARD’S AND COMMISSION: NONE

9. OTHER BUSINESS: None

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: February 10, 2016.

11. ADJOURNMENT: Toby Young made a motion to adjourn at 8:55 p.m. Nancy Dalzell seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Signature of Clerk

Date

Prepared by: Russ Hodgkins, Town Manager