

**TOWN OF WESTMINSTER
SELECTBOARD MEETING**

January 13, 2015

Members Present : Nate Stoddard (Chair), Craig Allen (Vice Chair), Toby Young, Paul Banik
Peter Barrett (by phone)

Others Present : Russell Hodgkins (Town Manager), Millie Barry (Clerk), and attached list
of participating residents

1. **Call to Order** : The meeting was called to order by the Chair at 7:00 PM. in the Westminster Town Hall. He requested that all who wished to speak sign in and to identify yourself before speaking.
2. **Adjustments to Agenda** : The Town Manager requested that a recommendation by the Planning Commission be added as 5. (B-1)
3. **Acceptance of Minutes (December 23, 2014)** : Paul Banik made the motion to accept the minutes as printed, Craig Allen seconded. Passed unanimously.
4. **Communications and Public Comment** : Alisa Allbee Daigneault asked if questions and answers were going to be excepted later in the meeting about the proposed Quarry. The Chair assured her that she would have her chance to speak along with anyone else that wanted to. The Town Manager introduced the new Deputy Sheriff for our Town – Trevor Dickerman.
5. **New Business** :
 - A. **Information & Update on Possible Land Purchase (Cote Property)** : Discussion started from the public stating fears and concerns. The history of the “Pit” was brought up and was asked if the Selectboard had reviewed the old objections and State rejections of this project from 30 years ago. The Board answered no and asked the Town Manager to look into the archives for this information. Ms. Daigneault stated that she wouldn’t have purchased her property if she had ever thought that this would be brought back up. Fran Renaud asked about the minutes and why were they not complete with the decisions of this purchase on the website. Toby Young explained the process of the land being held for the Town through a bidding process and that’s why it could not be publicly displayed because of the fear of competitive pricing driving up the cost. The vote was made out of executive session to hold the land for a nonrefundable \$5,000 and she is not sure why it’s not in the minutes. She asked the Town Manager to find out this information for the next meeting. Stacey Lindell spoke in length about traffic concerns, money spent without taxpayer approval, noise, dust, timing of information, bridge capacity, and house appraisals going down because of this. From the others that spoke, noise, dust, clay slides, traffic, damage to their homes, and aesthetics were discussed.
 - B. **Discuss, Approve and Sign Articles for Town Meeting** :
 - 1.) The Town Manager read a recommendation from the Planning Commission which stated that they would like the Selectboard to reconsider the tabling of the taxation change on renewable energy sources that are generating profit and place it on this years’ Town Meeting Article list. Discussion from the Selectboard deemed that they still do not

have enough information from the Listers and the State to know how to proceed legally, so they stayed with their original opinion to wait a while longer.

As for signing the Articles: Nate spoke to the fact that the public has until the 20th of the month to submit new Articles and wants to wait until next meeting to address and sign.

The Board unanimously decided to table the signing.

C. Address New Solar Project in the Westminster Business Park : The Town Manager explained the location of the existing solar array recently completed in the Business Park and showed the Selectboard where the new proposed array was going to be in relation to the remaining portions of the Business Park. Discussion from the Board led to the Chair asking the Manager to draft a letter for the Selectboard to approve and send to the Public Service Board.

D. Town Meeting Prep (if any) : Town Manager showed the board wrist bands which will be requested of the registered voters to wear at the Town Meeting this year. Susan Roman asked why the change. “We have not ever done this before”. The Manager explained that the Town Clerk received a formal request to have pre-registration and she agreed for this meeting it would be a good idea for there is forecasted many floor votes for school and town. Susan then said and backed by Toby Young that the Civil Board of Authority was not informed of this and that they have to approve this change. The Manager requested that Toby call Alison Bigwood directly and straighten out this matter.

6. Unfinished Business :

A. Report from Conservation Commission about Monies Requested : Steve Major sent the Town Manager a breakdown of the proposed Town Forests kiosks & markers. With little discussion, Toby made the motion to spend the \$800 requested by the Conservation Commission for the Kiosks and markers as presented. It was seconded by Craig. Passed unanimously.

B. Approve and Sign Highway Mileage Certificate : The Manager explained that this is done every year and this year there is 3.69 miles of class 4 highway additions as per all of the work done by the Board with “Ancient Roads”. Susan Roman asked which roads are being added and Nate read off the four roads as follows: N .Thompson Bypass, Athens through Young, Rockingham to Kimball Hill, and Athens to Thompsons. The Board then signed the document for adoption.

7. Manager’s Report : Russ Hodgkins told the Board that the Planning Commission is doing the final look see of the new Town Plan and that copies will be forwarded for their approval.

Hodgkins gave the Board a handout that summarizes the Grand List comparisons that will be posted in the Town Report.

Hodgkins inquired about the letters sent to the Governor’s office from the Selectboard. He had only received two and his own.

Lastly, Hodgkins spoke about the salt reduction and maintenance proposed for this year on our Town roads because of the salt price going up substantially and throwing our present budget out of reach. He explained that sand is being used while the storm is going on and that the salt is only used when absolutely necessary by Mark Lund’s (road

foreman) judgment. So far, we are within budget and will reach our goal of safe roads as well as watching our budget. Paul Banik stated that he approved of the efforts and applauds our Road Crew and their dedication.

8. **Boards and Commissions :** No information given
9. **Other Business :** None
10. **Date of Next Meeting :** January 27, 2015
11. **Adjournment :** Meeting was adjourned at 9:00 PM

Signature of Clerk

Date

Prepared by : Mildred Barry, Recording Secretary