

## Town of Westminster

### Select Board Meeting October 28, 2015

**Present:** K. Sheldon Beebe-Chair, Paul Banik-Vice Chair, Toby Young, Peter Barrett and Craig Allen-Clerk  
**Others Present:** Russell Hodgkins (Town Manager), Millie Barry (Recording Clerk), Rebecca Arnold, Laz Scangas and Jay White

**1. Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by the Board Chair

**2. Adjustments to the Agenda:**

TM-To add under New Business, 6C - Quit claim deed for cemetery plot

**3. Acceptance of Minutes:**

Toby Young moved, Peter Barrett seconded to accept the amended minutes of the public hearing of October 6, 2015. The TM noted this was a public hearing with recorded minutes. As a public hearing, the minutes are approved for record keeping purposes. Toby Young and Sheldon Beebe approved as amended with Peter Barrett, Craig Allen and Paul Banik abstaining.

Peter Barrett moved, Toby Young seconded a motion to approve, as printed, the minutes of the October 14, 2015 Select Board meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

**4. Communications and Public Comments** - Interview with two architects:

Second interviews were with Arnold and Scangas Architects and Jay White Architect.

*Arnold and Scangas:* Toby commented she was impressed with the awards Arnold and Scangas have received from the Preservation Trust. Responding to questions concerning the amount of dollars for architectural services, Laz Scangas told the board that as architects they work for the Town and Board to put the wants of the Board/Town and needs of the Town Hall into drawings, giving options and advice. A budget is created based on issues/what can be done. Rebecca Arnold continued they would sit with staff and everyone involved in a team effort figuring out a direction to go. Scangas confirmed old buildings are a challenge to keep character and in the case of Westminster having no property makes the renovation more difficult. There is no right or wrong answer as to what they can do to make the building and a renovation work. Their design and information is so that the Board can make decisions. Arnold - An historian and engineers (mechanical, electrical, etc.) are used as needed. Scangas believes the wainscoting probably cannot stay within the lift but can be kept outside. Their quote is based on hours. In addition, if there are issues with the State or other problems regarding codes, their role is to do a code analysis bringing in a fire marshal so all are on the same page. Scangas told the board, "old buildings talk". They try to take as much guess work/unknowns out as possible and put dollars aside in anticipation of a problem. They will advise if costs out-weigh practicality regarding historic value.

*Jay White:* In response to spending dollars for services and having the Town's needs met, he offers a true historic preservation architectural balance with what is needed in a Town Hall. He watched the video of the Board's prior meeting. He has multiple references from other clients. He told the Board he listens to their needs and interests guarantees his work and is not finished until Board is satisfied and happy. Mr. White believes it is important the public be brought in so they buy in to the project.

Two major aspects of project are: 1. Historic preservation and 2. Function of Town Hall as a business. The layout of the space does not work as it can or should, he believes this is a team project so listening and bringing the Board in with how the flow works, showing the furniture, equipment and layout. An entire team would be on board. He has been in contact with Lyssa Papazian (preservation consultant) has a proposal from her and noted she believes her price would be less as Mr. White has more historic experience. He presented a revised fee structure. Ann Cousins is another historic preservation consultant active previously with The Preservation Trust of VT. He believes the Town should apply for a VT Community Fund Grant and Ann Cousins would pursue a \$75,000.00 grant. His fee has been reduced to reflect the full cost of a preservation consultant of \$2200.00. Engineering Services of VT is on board to analyze heating and ventilation on both floors. He does not believe a structural engineer will be needed but is available if they run into problems. His hourly rate is based on time he estimated would be involved and added contingency. He now believes his first proposed rate was too high based on value. He presented a revised fee proposal, less than before, wanting to be sure the Board was comfortable with proposal. He is comfortable making the space practical, well lit, efficient, taking into consideration the past. He added the second floor is beautiful with a lot of space and with handicap access the space could be used for meetings as well as historic use. The value of this space for Westminster should be enhanced. Confirmed the total fee is \$34,660.00.

**5. Unfinished Business:**

- A. Sign New Ordinance on Driveway Maintenance: The Board signed the ordinance as presented (in packet) and at their prior meeting. TM- Culverts and fee structure will be done on a case by case basis.
- B. Sign Adoption Page for Town Plan 6.2: The Board accepted the Plan (in packet), signing the acceptance page.
- C. Adoption of Town Pace Program. TM-The loans for this program are made at a low interest rate for residents making energy improvements to their home. The Town has a community loan program with a wider spread to make home improvements (not just energy improvements). There is \$100,000.00 in this program to loan. Paul Banik moved, Peter Barrett seconded to deny the implementation of the "Pace" program at this time. The motion carried with Toby Young abstaining.
- D. Craig Allen moved, Paul Banik seconded to go into executive session to discuss a contractual matter about architects, where premature public knowledge would place the Town at a substantial disadvantage. The motion passed unanimously.
- E. Clarification on Gifted Land/Tax Abatement: TM-Packet contains correspondence from Jeff Dunklee with clarification he is not the executor of his parents estate but is power of attorney for his mother, Martha Dunklee and her sister, Laura Bahre regarding a gift of land to the Town. Toby Young moved, Peter Barrett seconded to abate taxes on this gift of 15 acres from Martha Dunklee and Laura Bahre. The motion passed unanimously.

**6. New Business (Discussion/Action):**

- A. Appointments to the "Community Improvement Program" Commission:  
TM - Kendall Gifford and Fran Renaud are presently members. Craig motioned, Peter Barrett seconded to appoint Peter Stamm to the Community Improvement Program commission. The motion passed unanimously.

- B. Filling Post Office land: TM - This will take a permit and historic review. Craig moved and Paul Banik seconded that the TM investigate filling the Post Office property for additional parking. The motion passed unanimously.
  - C. Toby Young moved, Paul Banik seconded to sign a quit claim deed to authorize and approve sale of cemetery plot for Richard Hoose. Motion passed unanimously.
7. **Manager's Report:**
- 1) The Bridge money in the amount of \$289,911.69 was received. The Board directed the dollars to go into 'rainy day fund'.
  - 2) Meeting and walk of the 200 acre Town Forest with Forester, Tim Morton shows there is a lot of young growth in Town forest that needs to be cleared for good forest management. The timing is good and selective cutting could be done in summer of 2016.
  - 3) Information from emergency management conference shows Westminster is in great shape especially compared to other towns regarding mitigation, flood resiliency plans, street and road manuals all approved. The emergency management centers are the fire station and Town Hall.
  - 4) Regarding FEMA buyout of Sandra Dupres property, the Town Highway Dept. believes they can take the building down and possibly complete the buyout before the end of the year.
  - 5) Paving is complete for this year. Projects to complete in the spring (inch overlay) are Kissell Hill, the hill on School Street and where Patch Road and Kurn Hattin Road meet at Morse Brook Road. It is possible money saved with this year's paving will cover remaining projects.
  - 6) A decision needed by December for dedication of Town report.
  - 7) Packet contains introduction on drones and other town's responses. Information is to read so the board can decide in what direction (if any) to move.
  - 8) Clarification of Fran Renaud's question is a quorum was not needed for public hearing.
8. **Boards and Commissions:** None
9. **Other Business:** None
10. **Date of Next Meeting:** November 11, 2015 confirmed as the date is Veterans Day.
11. **Executive Session:** The Board moved into executive session at 8:25 PM. Upon coming out of executive session at 8:45 PM, Craig Allen made a motion to hire Arnold & Scangas Architectural firm to design the needed changes to the Town Hall. Toby Young seconded. The motion passed 4-1 with Peter Barrett voting no.
12. **Adjournment:** Craig Allen moved to adjourn at 8:49 p.m. with Paul Banik seconding. The motion passed and the meeting was adjourned.

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Signature of Clerk

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Date

Minutes prepared by Millie Barry 10/31/2015