

## Town of Westminster

### Select Board Meeting November 11, 2015

**Present:** K. Sheldon Beebe-Chair, Paul Banik-Vice Chair, Toby Young, Craig Allen-Clerk, and Peter Barrett

**Others Present:** Russell Hodgkins (Town Manager), Millie Barry (Recording Clerk), Nancy Dazell and Cole Streeter

1. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 6:30p.m. by the Board Chair
2. **Adjustments to the Agenda:** TM-Add 6G under New Business- To discuss personnel matter. The Board Chair noted the addition.
3. **Acceptance of Minutes:** Toby Young made the motion, Paul Banik seconded to accept the minutes of October 28, 2015 as printed. The motion carried.
4. **Communications and Public Comments:** Cole Streeter spoke about the conflict and his outdoor furnace. At the present time, he is not heating with his outdoor furnace and it had not been run since Memorial Day. Mr. Streeter stated the furnace was an EPA phase 2 boiler that smoked a little when first started. It was a legal installation meeting all regulations. He welcomed the board to come to his home, at any time, to look at the outdoor boiler. He added, if Don Slie came to his home again the sheriff would be called as Mr. Slie had previously harassed his family. The TM noted Mr. Slie had recently called and complained about Cole Streeter's outdoor furnace.
5. **Unfinished Business (Discussion/Action):**
  - A. **Buyout from FEMA- update:** TM-The first round of paperwork has been completed for the State. Three appraisals of the property are required but none of the companies are available to complete an appraisal until mid-December. Required is a pre-Irene value and a value now. The Town would like to move the process along as quickly as possible for the Dupuis family.
  - B. **PACE Program versus Community Improvement Plan-discussion:** TM-CIP (Community Improvement Program) is alive and well. At present there are 12 loans with four or five becoming delinquent. The Commission is to help people get back on line and the loans current. The TM noted the Commission or "Board" overseeing the loans is complete and the identity of recipients is not public knowledge.
  - C. **Gifted Land update:** TM-Jeff Dunklee is acting as power of attorney for his mother, Martha Dunklee and her sister, Laura Bahre regarding a gift of 15 acres to the Town. No formal closing is required on a gift of land. Salmon and Nostrand are handing the specifics of the land transfer and closing.
  - D. **Drones and Our Response (if any):** TM-Other Towns are also pressing the issue of drones. Legal counsel can help the Town word an ordinance that states the privacy of the Town's citizens is of the utmost importance and flying over private residences or (spying) is not acceptable. The Board thought the discussion of creating an ordinance is a little early. They will wait to see what the Vermont Legislators are going to do to address this problem.
6. **New Business (Discussion/Action):**
  - A. **Errors and Omissions:** TM-Previously Tara Reed and Nicholas Hodson and William Hodson grieved land and buildings assessment on their separate parcels. The previous Listers never finished the grievance, so AI (NEMRC representative) visited the sites and deemed the value was over assessed on both parcels. It should be noted that the request for grievance was submitted in a timely manner but was dropped inadvertently in the transition of Listers. An added step in this process was that the joint lands were being taxed incorrectly per acre, but that will be addressed at a later time. Craig Allen motioned and Peter Barrett seconded to correct the grand list on Parcel; 015064.000 (William Hodsden) from \$184,000.00 to \$124,400.00, the motion carried.

On a second parcel correction (Tara & Nicholas Hodson), Craig Allen motioned, Toby Young seconded to correct the grand list on Parcel 015060.000 from \$568,000.00 to \$299,900.00, knowing that the total deduction will not all be lost from the grand list because of the acre reallocation. motion carried.

- B. **Creation of Private Road for E911-Hodson:** TM-Nick and Tara Hodson are requesting their private road to be named White Oak Way off Quarry Road. The reason is, that at present, the two homes have the same E911 address and they are planning a third home that extends into Putney. With the change, each resident will have their own number off White Oak Way which is off Quarry Road. Toby Young motioned, Craig Allen seconded to create a private drive, named White Oak Way, off Quarry Road, motion carried.
- C. **Post Office Parking Lot Extension Permits:** TM-First step in the process is to go before the Historic Review board which will be on Tuesday, 11/17/15. Packet contains permit, maps etc. to create 40 parking spots (36 new and six existing) on .9 acres. This proposed parking are is not in the Agricultural Overlay District, just the Historic Preservation District of the Town's Zoning Bylaws.
- D. **FY 16-17 Budget Discussion:** TM-Packet contains 1<sup>st</sup> draft of budget with projected increases, areas remaining stable and anticipated budget deductions. Discussion included a slight employee insurance increase, office equipment, listers office, NEMRC fees, maintenance of municipal buildings, sheriff's department new rate and expectation of revenue from sheriff. The TM also presented previous year's (2002, 2007, 2012 and 2016) budget funding for the highway department including stone/gravel, sand/salt, retreatment and new equipment. He noted the budget has not gone up, but the prices of salt, sand and equipment continue to rise and requested the Board consider more dollars for the highway department budget. Also noted was the significant funding decrease from 2002 to 2016 for solid waste. The Board also discussed reviewing health and welfare funding requests and distribution. Consensus of the Board was to ask for a report from those agencies requesting and receiving dollars from the Town. The last note was information (in packet) regarding the County Tax Collector rate. The tax bill is about \$400.00 more than the TM believes should be charged. Russ will follow up on this tax bill.
- E. **Discussion on "Natural Burials" in Westminster {ordinance?}:** TM-Included in the packet the State definition of "Green Burial" and the new State Law voted on in July, 2015. Due to a recent request for a "green burial" in Westminster, legal counsel was contacted and advised, "as the Town of Westminster does not have a written ordinance, green burials can be done in the Town". Vermont law states a green burial plot must be recorded in the landowner deed. This item will be re-visited at a later meeting.
- F. **New Articles for Town Meeting:** TM-Requested the Board consider items for discussion at Town Meeting such as solar taxation, ancient roads, Westminster West Town Hall and North Westminster Community Hall maintenance and funds to maintain these buildings. Russ to create a mock Warning about renewable energy taxation to be discussed at the next meeting.
- G. **Personnel Matter:** Craig Allen motioned, Paul Banik seconded to move to executive session at the end of the meeting to review a personnel matter and invite the TM to join the discussion. Motion passed.

## 7. Manger's Report:

- 1) Packet includes trash and recycling information since July 1, 2015, all very positive. In addition, the contamination rate of recycling at the Town Shop is very good and it looks like we will have the use of them for a while longer.
- 2) Rebecca Arnold (architect) from the newly hired Arnold and Scangas Architectural firm visited to get building measurements.
- 3) Reminder about dedication of the Town Report. The report information goes to the printer after the Boards December break.
- 4) The new highway truck is in operation, being run in fleet every day.

**8. Boards and Commissions:** TM-The Conservation Commission is not happy with information that revenue from a selective, healthy cut of the Town Forest is being considered. At the request of the Board Chair the TM researched and found in 2011 where the Conservation Commission was created at Town Meeting and provided 24 VSA § 4505 to the Select Board proving they have the power to run the Town Forest taking into consideration the Conservation Commission's recommendations. In addition, the George D. Aiken deed of the transfer to the Town of Westminster states the powers of attorney (the Select Board), for the Town of Westminster, have the right to make any and all decisions regarding the land.

**9. Other Business:** None

**10. Date of Next Meeting:** NOTE CHANGE IN DATE TO: MONDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 2015 AT 6:30 P.M.

The Board Chair brought the meeting into executive session to discuss a personnel matter at 8:22 p.m. Upon returning into the regular meeting, Peter Barrett made a motion to pay a \$1500, one time stipend to Karen Astley in recognition of her fine work keeping the Listers office active and efficient while the transition from old to new was taking place. Toby Young seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**11. Adjournment:** The Board moved to adjourn at 8:42 p.m.

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Signature of Clerk

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Date

Minutes prepared by Millie Barry 11/12/15