

**TOWN OF WESTMINSTER
SELECTBOARD MEETING
DECEMBER 28, 2016**

Members Present: K. Sheldon Beebe (Chair); Craig Allen (Vice Chair); Nancy Dalzell (Clerk); and Susan Harlow

Others Present: Russell Hodgkins (Town Manager / ZA), Stephen Dotson, Marion Major, and Jan Ameen.

1. CALL TO ORDER: The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

2. ADJUSTMENTS TO AGENDA: Russ Hodgkins suggested that the Chair recognize the speakers that were present under Communications and Public Comments and if any decisions needed to be done after their presentations they could be addressed under the regularly scheduled topic. This would free the speakers to go home at an earlier time. The Chair agreed.

3. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES: December 14, 2016 minutes: Susan Harlow brought the Boards attention to two revisions that needed to be addressed. The first one came under 8A, second paragraph. The word “policy” should be added and the sentence should read “*that an investment policy should apply*”. The second correction was needed under 5A. (Town Garage). The last sentence should read “*Susan feels a qualified engineer is not needed at this time*”. Craig Allen made a motion to accept the minutes as amended. Nancy Dalzell seconded the motion. Motion passed.

4. COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC COMMENT:

- The Chair (Sheldon Beebe) recognized Stephen Dotson (the Town’s representative to the Windham Regional Commission) and Marion Major (Resident and Windham Regional Commission employee) to speak about an opportunity that the Town of Westminster has in regards to a Pilot Program offered by the State of Vermont through the WRC to enhance the ability to have more say in the Public Service Boards (PSB) decisions. A letter needs to be written by the Town and the WRC will select three Towns within Windham County to be the first to have the correct wording added to their Town Plan so that towns will achieve “Substantial Deference” in the decision making process as it relates to ACT 174. This opportunity starts on January 11, 2017 with a letter due and is proposed to be completed by July 2017 and submitted to the PSB for approvals. The Board Chair stated that this issue will be addressed later in the meeting with a vote on whether to apply for this grant.
- The Chair then recognized Jan Ameen (the Towns representative to the WSWMD). She was asked to report to the Board about the closing fee that was attached to this years’ assessment of approximately \$8,100. Jan explained that the Windham Solid Waste Management District was surprised as anyone with the turn of events that had Brattleboro opting out of the recycling program. This move will force WSWMD to close their recycling facility in July of 2017 and the closing fee consists of:
 1. Approx. 2 weeks to cleanup and put to bed the facility for 8 people;
 2. An incentive for employees to stay to close out the facility
 3. A tipping fee if the employees leave before it can be cleaned up;
 4. Health Insurance for a month into the new fiscal year;
 5. Unemployment costs after the facility is closed;

She finished with the fact that this is a one-time charge and the assessment will go back down next fiscal year. Craig Allen brought up the fact that the Town is paying approx. \$28,500 to the District for the assessment and wanted to talk about what that money goes to. Jan handed out a 16 page document going over what the State mandates from Solid Waste Districts every year and some of the associated costs that go with these items. Jan went on to explain that as a District, the Town of Westminster shares the costs of these mandates and make them manageable. The Town of Winhall

stated earlier this year that they were going to leave the District and just recently requested to come back in because the costs on their own was unachievable. The Chair thanked Jan for coming in.

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS (Discussions/Action):

A. Existing Five Year Capital Improvement:

* **WWTH** – Nancy Dalzell stated that there was no new information to share at this time. The holidays have interfered with people getting back to her.

* **Post Office** – Toby Young was not at the meeting, but Russ Hodgkins stated that there was no new information to share.

* **Town Hall** – Sheldon Beebe stated that he had no new information. Russ Hodgkins advised the Board of two documents in their packets. The first was an email communication from Toby to the town Hall's neighbor Maureen McCarthy Young. Maureen stated that she was not opposed to the idea of granting an easement and Toby responded we would like to meet with you. No meeting is set as of this date. The second document was the timeline that Toby had asked for at the last meeting about the Town Hall Renovation and its funds. The Board had no questions at this time.

* **North Westminster Community House** – Craig Allen requested a meeting with the Town Manager about the new pricing he received in the packet. Russ Hodgkins stated that the budget number on the statement should not be read out loud because of fair bidding practices if needed, but followed with an estimate for the worst case scenario with sill replacement of approximately \$15,000. A meeting will be set soon to go over this estimate.

* **Town Garage** – Susan Harlow stated that the Town Garage at this time has no real urgent needs and would not need additional funding in this fiscal year. She continued, the article in the warning is from surplus from last year and will need to be addressed at Town Meeting.

B. FY18 Expenditure Budget – Final Version:

- **Clarification of the WSWMD Services by Jan Ameen:** This item was previously reviewed and the Board had no further comments.
- **Clarification of Hold Harmless Monies:** Russ Hodgkins explained that at the last meeting his explanation of this line in the Revenue Report was not as clear as it should have been and he handed out in the packet the true definition of the State of Vermont's "Hold Harmless" contribution to the Towns. It has to do with current use and a rate that is determined every year by the State.
- **Cleaning Services – Christine Durant:** The Town Manager explained that last year the Town paid a \$250 payment to VLCT – Pacif (Towns insurance carrier) to cover the present cleaning woman's lack of Workmen's Compensation. He continued to explain to the Board that a major concern is the Town Hall's security if we change cleaning companies. He also stated that a bid he received was for almost double of what the Town is paying now for the same service. Overall the service is great and the security of this resident is well worth the additional coverage that the Town needs to carry for her, for our protection. The Board agreed and the service will continue as is.

Russ Hodgkins reviewed the expenditure budget in the final version for the Town Report with the Selectboard. Susan Harlow made the motion to accept the Expenditure Budget as presented by the Town Manger in the amount of \$1,901,185.00. Nancy Dalzell seconded the motion and the budget passed and will be brought in front of the voters at Town Meeting.

C. FY18 Revenue Budget – Final Version: Russ Hodgkins reviewed the Revenue Budget with the Selectboard and mentioned that it matched the expenditures. Craig Allen made a motion to accept the Revenue Budget as presented in the amount of \$1,901,185.00. Susan Harlow seconded the motion and it passed. The Chair declared that this budget will be presented to the public at Town Meeting.

D. First Draft – Investment Policy: The manager explained that he used the model policy from VLCT and one other to create this draft presented in their packet. The Chair tabled the discussion until next meeting when they can fully comprehend the new policy and its meaning.

E. Articles for Town Meeting (update if any?): TM explained that there were no new completed petitions for warnings at this time. The chair tabled this discussion until next meeting.

6. NEW BUSINESS:

A. WRC – Pilot Program: Susan Harlow made a motion to have the Town Manger write the letter to WRC for the pilot program. Craig Allen seconded the motion. Discussion consisted of the Board thinking this was a good opportunity to be on the lead end of this process and that more say in large projects coming to our Town would be a good thing. The motion passed and the Manager will forward the draft letter to the Board as soon as it's available.

B. Letter to PSB – Whitney Blake Phase II Application: The TM explained he drafted a letter to be sent to the PSB from the Selectboard. He continued that he had had conversations with a few of the residents near this solar array and it prompted him to read the packet application for Phase II in its entirety. He found many false statements that prompted this letter and he was hoping for the Board's support to send this letter. The Chair explained that he adjusted the letter to be firmer with the accusations of false information in the application. Susan Harlow gave the TM a corrected version of the letter for him to finalize. Craig Allen made a motion to send the letter with the corrections and have the Chair sign it. The motion was seconded by Susan Harlow and the motion passed.

7. MANAGER'S REPORT:

- a) **Public Hearing Zoning Bylaws:** Russ Hodgkins stated he needs the corrections and/or comments to the Bylaws by January 16th.
- b) Russ Hodgkins handed out an explanation of the E&O's as requested from the last meeting.
- c.) Russ Hodgkins gave the Selectboard the letter for Nextsun regarding the taxation of their solar arrays (2) that was requested at the last meeting. The Manager told them that the letter went out two weeks ago +/- and he has had no response yet.
- d) **Public Hearings set: The Zoning Bylaws** will be heard on Jan. 25th at 6:00 here at the Town Hall just before the SB meeting. **The Town Hall Renovation** hearing will be on Feb. 8th at 6:00 at the Town Hall just before the SB meeting. The Board agreed that these dates and times worked for them.
- e) **High School and SeVEDS:** Russ Hodgkins stated that Chris Kibbe had not been back in touch with him yet, to get on the School Board's agenda.

8. BOARD'S AND COMMISSION: No business at this time.

9. OTHER BUSINESS:

- Sheldon Beebe brought back up the email from Maureen Young and stated his concerns about paying for a survey, deed work, and land compensation all for the reason of not losing a window. He stated we have a plan to go out the side of the building and it is his opinion that this is the way to proceed. He wants this matter brought back up at the next meeting when Toby Young will be present.

- Craig Allen mentioned the correction of plowing on Orchard Hill Road that Fran Renaud brought up last meeting. Russ Hodgkins stated he sent the correction to Fran and the SB as soon as he talked with Mark Lund the next day. Orchard Hill Road goes to the Kawaky house and is a Town Road and the section to the top of the hill (Airport Road) is called Higgins Hill Road and is also a Town Road. To be clear, Airport Road is not a Town Road.

10. Date of Next Meeting – January 11, 2017

11. ADJOURNMENT: Nancy Dalzell made a motion to adjourn at 8:48 p.m. Susan Harlow seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Signature of Clerk

Date

Prepared by: Russell R. Hodgkins - TM