

Meeting of the Westminster Selectboard

Tuesday, February 10, 2015

Present: Chair, Nate Stoddard, Peter Barrett (by telephone) Craig Allen and Toby Young

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 p.m. in the Westminster Town Hall. Mr. Stoddard requested that all who wished to speak sign in and identify themselves before speaking.
2. **Adjustments to Agenda:** None
3. **Acceptance of Minutes:** As written for the December 13, 2015 meeting – motion made by Craig, seconded by Toby, passed unanimously. Acceptance of the minutes as written for the January 20, 2015 meeting – motion made by Craig, seconded by Peter, passed unanimously.
4. **Communications and Public Comments:**
 - A. **Trash Discussion:** Josh Kelly from the Vermont Waste Management Division spoke about the Act 148 Universal Law. Specifically that haulers would be required to offer collection of food scraps, organics, yard debris, solid waste and recyclables by July 1, 2017. Westminster has in place organized recycling for recyclables, but yard waste, food waste would have to be added. Haulers can subcontract for these services and the State of Vermont is focusing on different options. Questions from the public were asked about the detail of the law and time frame implementing the law? Bill O'Connor estimates to keep the present curbside it would cost tax payers \$12.20 per 100k of property tax evaluation and would like the town to consider leaving trash pick-up as it is. Jim Toher (Casella Representative) stated trash and recyclables could be picked up on alternative weeks. Casella could supply different size bins for storing recyclable items and believed picking up trash every other week could work well in the Town of Westminster. Peter Barrett suggested having no trash pick-up for a year in the Town.
Other information presented: The transfer Station will have variable rate pricing based on volume or weight – Hauler(s) have to be registered with Windham Solid Waste – Hauler(s) will be required to comply with law due to State of Vermont mandates. Craig questioned \$40k the Town pays to Windham Solid Waste District Assessment due to new State requirements? Jan Ameen explained the fee is not used just for town recycling purposes but also for other items such as school education programs, hazardous waste disposal and includes processing at centers. It is possible the dollar amount could be adjusted in the future. Noted in discussion was the alleged violation by the Westminster Recycling Center. This item has been resolved.
 - B. Mary Lou Smith wanted to thank the road crew for the fabulous job that they have been doing for the past few weeks without hardly a break in the weather.
 - C. Alisa Allbee Daigneault explained her concerns about three warned articles for Town Meeting. Article 14 was worded to softly and should have had the word Quarry in it because that shows the harshness of this proposal. She also questioned articles 9 & 10 and what was there purpose. The

Town Manager explained that the wording from article 14 was approved by legal counsel as being appropriate and he went on to explain that the other two articles are voted on every year and they are reserve funds for up & coming projects. Her last concern was the posting of unapproved minutes and why aren't they aren't replaced when the new and approved are available. She is concerned that the changes to the minutes could affect the outcome of a discussion. The Manager will look into how the changes (if any) to the approved minutes are being incorporated into the next meeting minutes so that the public will see the new and improved minutes.

5. Unfinished Business (Discussion/Action)

A. Status Report on possible land purchase (Cote Property)

The Potters have removed their offer of a ROW because of negative social media. They fear it will affect their business.

The Manager spoke to the other offer to help the Town with a ROW and they are still willing. The Beams off of James Road will meet with the Selectboard to confirm their needs and conditions.

The Manager received the signed contract from the Cotes with the corrections and the Chair is to sign it and the offer will be held until Town Meeting.

If the Town purchases the property and decides to remove trees, the logging done would be using a "select cut" process.

Suggestion made that TM contact Tim Morton, local state forester for opinion on logging or tree removal on parcel.

The Selectboard and TM realize they must prove to the people in Westminster the purchase of this property is worthwhile. Toby stated she understands there are people that do not want to see the project go forward. The Selectboard has given much consideration to the purchase and believes it is a good opportunity for the Town. They are acting in good faith for the benefit of the Town.

B. Town Meeting Prep (if any)

The Selectboard asked the Manager to set up a meeting with Fletcher Proctor (the Moderator) before Town Meeting at 9:30 am.

At 8:46 Nate Stoddard departed the meeting due to an emergency situation

6. New Business (Discussion/Action)

A. Mapping Request for Ancient Road – Island Corp.

The Island Corporation represented by Stewart Reed and Randy Major requested the Town retain a road named Island Corp Road highway (not discontinue it). This is an ancient road leading from Granger Street under the new bridge over the Saxtons River to Basin Farm and would connect The Bellows Falls Historic Riverfront Park with the Basin Farm and Bald Hill properties. Toby made motion and Peter seconded the motion to "map it", meaning, put it on the Vtrans map. The motion passed unanimously. Next steps would be to meet with all abutters, have clear public access, and obtain any additional information, deeds and forward information to VTrans.

B. Comparison of Personnel Policy Plans in relation to sick/personal days: There are no changes or differences in the two plans presented. The question of accrued days is very clear if and when someone is retiring or let go.

C. Adopt and Sign – Road and Bridge Standards – Toby made the motion, Peter seconded to sign certification of compliance. The board will sign.

7. Manager's Report:

121 Pavement Project was denied Federal funding because the last Manager signed a contract stating that a NEPA report was going to be done before work began. This was never done. The State of Vermont funded the project at 90% because they felt responsible also for the lack of this document. The loss for the Town is \$12,337.00 +/-.

The Selectboard has received a written letter from a 6th grader and from the State of VT stating the importance of saving the Monarch butterfly by planting roadside flowers also beneficial to bees etc. The Manager is expecting a notification of the next step and will advise the Board when its available.

8. Boards and Commissions: The DRB is meeting 2/11/2015. The new Town Plan copy is not ready for the public, yet

9. Other Business: An inquiry about lawsuits/violations the Town was involved in 2014? It was noted by the Manager that there were no new lawsuits/violations that he is aware of. There are legal/attorney fees for interpretation of the law and notices that are published.

10. Date of Next Meeting: February 24, 2015

11. Adjournment