

Town of Westminster

Select Board Meeting

Tuesday, February 24, 2015

Present: Chair, Nate Stoddard, Peter Barrett (by telephone) Craig Allen and Paul Banik

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 and identify themselves before speaking.
2. **Adjustments to Agenda:** The TM requested 6. B. To sign a certificate of 'No Appeal or Suit Pending' from Listers.
3. **Acceptance of Minutes:** (February 10, 2015) Craig Allen moved to accept the minutes as printed, Paul Banik seconded. Passed unanimously
4. **Communication and Public Comments:**
 - A. Official Information on Acquiring Quarry

The TM presented a self-explanatory Time Line and reviewed a printed Town of Westminster Quarry Purchase Opportunity that will be presented as a slide show on Town Meeting Day. Discussion began from Alisa Daigneault commenting that savings presented were a moot point as no testing had been completed to confirm the amount of material present. The TM commented there was ledge present throughout the parcel. Katie Dearborn questioned the numbers for the project? She also commented that a quarry could affect the value of adjoining property adversely and refinancing, at a lower interest rate. Refinancing probably would not happen because of the location of homes on the same road and could or would be at the option of an appraiser. Beth Shrader questioned hydrogeology and the impact of aquifers and effect on wells. Homes would be difficult to sell if wells were impacted. Brian Bousquet spoke about Morse Brook Road, wash boarding and how big trucks and other equipment would affect the road? David Judd asked about a ROW and where the ROW would be located? TM - Norm and Elaine Beam were considering a ROW. Mr. Judd questioned the impact on James road handling loads of gravel and the cost of ROW or a road to the quarry. TM – there had been no monetary discussions with Norm Beam concerning a ROW and questions and requests would be discussed, possibly before Town Meeting. Tonia White's question about wells and the impact on the water table, effects of blasting? TM - A blasting person was invited to attend the meeting to answer questions but was not present. Jason Allbee felt there was not enough information present to make a decision before Town Meeting. The TM responded to a question that Forrest Road and Bemis Hill Road were two locations that would soon require work. Material from the quarry would help keep the costs as minimal as possible. Information from the DRB (Phil Savoy, member of the DRB) indicated the DRB interest would be cursory only because of ridgeline overlay and cutting trees. John Medeiros supports the project and access to material to repair roads. His comments, in 2-3 years this project could be a commercial project, trucking costs will change, increase and if a big company wanted this property they would get the permits and buy the property. Phil Savoy commented he had done a lot of gravel permitting

and his estimate was 2 million yards of material for the price was very good. The DRB members feel the project will meet all town permits. Jan Ameen questioned cost of road from the Beam property? TM – estimated at less than 100k if town puts the road in, regular 14' wide with a couple of bump out areas. Presently there is nothing official about road cost. Questions continued:

The actual running of the quarry, hiring people to dig and crush? TM - \$11.00 a cubic yard, slide II had this in it. Why has it taken so long to have questions answered? Alisa Daigneault stated in 1984 Pike attempted to buy property, hired lawyers and they were unable to secure permits etc. Why would anyone want without a ROW? David Judd questioned clear cutting the property? TM - confirmed Paul Cote has a ROW through the Potters to log property, Chris Potter has confirmed information. Beth Shrader questioned State reimbursement of cost for material from quarry? TM confirmed the State reimburses for material meeting specifications. How many cubic yards of gravel does the Town use? TM - 3000 cubic yards. TM – State will help with log sale and select cutting at no cost. TM – The ROW specifics will be for town purposes only. Phil Savoy – Permitting process is very involved; how many yards, number of trucks, etc. Wells, storm water, permitting will address every environmental issue before 250 permit issued. The permit will include no sale of material to other towns. Warner & Pat Clark (Pike Industry employees) spoke about rigorous permitting process addressing traffic plans, commercial use, expense etc. Question about 250 process? TM – If acreage involved is under 10 acres the town can bypass 250 permit. Insurance Liability? TM - As the town is not crushing or blasting there is not insurance liability for Town. TM confirmed the parcel has been surveyed and by law Paul Cote must produce survey. Question: Water to run quarry? TM -There is not water required to run quarry, dust will be processed as now. Members of Select Board: Research, money, road costs, specifics, Morse Brook Rd., legal, ROW, other questions have to be answered for the town to move forward pursuing purchase. The benefits of the property were worth the risk of pursuing and 5k to hold property. The Select Board will make final decision with all information in hand. David Clark believes municipality owning property is great idea, he supports purchase with due diligence. In addition, the possibility of longer term option, developing costs to first load of gravel coming out, firmer idea of reserves and empathy for abutters. Question: How long does 5k hold the property? TM – As long as it takes to figure out if purchase is practical or impractical? Question: Blasting? TM – Home inspections using size graph machine will indicate vibration at your home. Comment: From contact to his homeowners insurance, John Medeiros indicated taking pictures, having photos on file for concerns or addressing damage from blasting. TM addressed a questions pertaining to notification of Towns people regarding purchase? Referring to time line, the Christmas holiday season and attorney/legal process was significant in securing legal document. Question: Are there other town operating their own quarry? Select Board – Dummerston. Have we reached out to them?

Select Board – There was an opportunity to join where there was an existing pit but not enough time to put before Westminster voters. Attendees recommended voters attend Saturday's Town Meeting as big things were happening in the Town. Attendees felt the Select Board has time for more research if article was voted down. Question: Were letters sent to abutters re: 250 process requirement? TM- supplied names of 30-35 abutters to

April Hensel from Act 250, but Letters were not sent. TM was not sure why. Question: Is amending article from the floor possible? TM – Yes. Pricilla Allbee read an email from a neighbor stating his opinion of negative effect on abutting property owners, disturbing the quiet of the area and questioning the value of the property? The public hearing was closed.

Katie Dearborn spoke regarding the School Board members leaving to the taxpayers a school budget. She felt it was their responsibility to present a fiscally conservative budget and was disheartened they had not done this. Further, it was important to look at budgets and realize we had a great building that could house all our school children.

5. Unfinished Business: None

6. New Business:

A. Discuss Bids for Trash

Figures presented were from two out of five contractors solicited for collection and disposal. Important differences were one contractor including totes in cost proposal. Including totes was significant as the Town would not have to handle totes.

Nate requested something in writing from the State or District that the Town was in compliance with a violation discussed at the last meeting: Failure to submit a written report. Further he believed until the town voted yes to curbside pick-up the Town was not in the trash business. Comment would be limited until the Town voted to be in the trash business.

B. Craig moved and Peter seconded to sign a certificate required by law: There Was No Appeal or Suit Pending” from the Listers. Motion passed unanimously.

7. Manager’s Report:

Noted that Karen Astley had done the Town Report. Further, it was very professional, an outstanding document taking a great deal of her time.

There is a Select Board seminar on Saturday, 3/21/15

Butterflies and bees will be on the agenda until more information is received.

As of February 24, 2015 the listers have resigned. Mike Fawcett will complete his term ending in March. Two listers will be appointed. The Select Board is considering the option of hiring a professional appraiser.

8. Boards and Commissions: None

9. Other Business:

Town Meeting Prep – Meeting with Fletcher Proctor and Select Board at 9:30 a.m. on Town Meeting Day has to be warned.

Paul thanked Nate for his service as this was his last official Select Board meeting.

10. The date of the next meeting is March 10, 2015

11. Craig moved and Paul seconded to adjourn the meeting at 9:25 p.m.

Clerk Signature

Minutes were prepared by : Mildred Barry