

## Town of Westminster

### Selectboard Meeting

May 11, 2016

**Selectboard Members Present:** K. Sheldon Beebe (Chair), Craig Allen (Vice Chair), Nancy Dazell (Clerk) and Susan Harlow

**Others Present:** Russell Hodgkins (Town Manager), Alison Bigwood (Town Clerk), Mark Lund (Road Foreman), Millie Barry (Recording Clerk), Peggy O'Toole, John Ewald, Kevin Hughes, Janice Wojcik, Steve Ovenden, Sunny Leporati, Vickie Sterling, Bill Staats (FACTV)

- 1. Call to Order:** Craig Allen called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m. because the Chair was running late.
- 2. Adjustments to Agenda:** The Town Manager (TM) under *Other Business* made a request to add:  
– A. Town Hall Renovation Discussion and B. VT-Alert and Pagers. The additions to the agenda were approved.
- 3. Acceptance of Minutes:** April 27, 2016 – Susan Harlow moved, Nancy Dazell seconded the motion to accept the minutes of the April 27, 2016 minutes as written. The motion passed.
- 4. Communications and Public Comments:**

Allocation Reports:

- Women's Freedom Center (\$775.00) Vickie Sterling thanked the Board for supporting the Center. She shared information the funds allocated were used, in part, to support a 24 hour hot line, financial assistance, youth advocacy (k-12), housing assistance, to navigate community resources and provide support/assistance to survivors of violence as well as prevention and educational activities. The Center also sponsors educational workshops/facilitates trainings with law enforcement, court personal, health care professionals and employers building knowledge and sensitivity about domestic/sexual violence. The Center has been in existence for forty years, their main offices are in Brattleboro and Springfield. Everything they do is free and confidential.
- Green Mountain Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) (\$775.00): Sunny Leporati and Steve Ovenden said the emphases of the RSVP program is healthy ageing for retired, senior group of people age 55 and over. RSVP provides assistance/information on meals (Meals on Wheels) mentoring, AARP tax aid and the bone builders exercise program as well as other programs. Currently their Dial A Ride service, with two drivers, covers southeaster VT providing transportation for people on Medicare or those over 60. Their volunteer need far exceeds the number of volunteers currently involved with the program.

In other Communication/Public Comment discussion - John Ewald questioned the reasoning of the video surveillance at the Westminster Town Pool asking if there was a policy for video surveillance and Town involvement. Craig Allen explained the Westminster Pool Committee requested assistance from the Town due to concerns of criminal activity at the pool site. The TM added the cameras would not be used during the summer season at the pool.

5. **Unfinished Business (Discussion/Action):**

- A. **Debris Management Plan (revisions)?** The TM included in the Selectboard packet information for the Board to review and read before the Public Hearing scheduled for May 25, 2016. The Public Hearing will be held at 6:00 p.m., (before the next scheduled Selectboard meeting) at the Westminster Institute.
- B. **Westminster West (WW) Town Hall** – discussion and update if any: The TM included in the Selectboard packet information for the Board to review and read before the Public Hearing scheduled for May 25, 2016. The Hearing will be held at 6:00 (before the scheduled Selectboard meeting) at the Westminster Institute. Mr. Ewald thanked the Town and road crew for work done at the WW Town Hall. He asked if there was money in the budget, once the structural engineer reviewed the building, for repairs or minor things to be done so the building could be used. The Selectboard and TM responded ‘yes’. The dollars must be requested for a specific purpose.
- C. **State Facility Storm Water Problem – update:** Nancy Dazell motioned to move to Executive Session for a real estate matter where premature public knowledge would be a disadvantage to the Town. Sheldon Beebe seconded the motion, the motion passed.
- D. **Existing Five Year Plan** – revisit/revisions: TM – information included in packet is an outdated 2014 Five Year Capital Improvement Plan for the Board to review and to begin thinking about an updated Five Year Capital Improvement Plan. The TM and Road Foreman have drafted a capital equipment funding plan (included in packet). Nancy Dazell shared a format the State uses as a planning tool. This is to think about strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in planning for the future needs of the Town. The Manager requested that each Board member place his or her ideas under each category for a future meeting.
- E. **Parking Area – Post Office Plantings:** The TM handed out an updated Post Office Planting Plan. The cost for 5 foot plants, delivered would be \$2040.00. The TM believes the road crew (with assistance) would be able to plant the shrubs. These arborvitae will create a hedge row in a relatively short amount of time. Susan Harlow made a motion, Nancy Dazell seconded to purchase, from Allen Brothers, 5 foot Dark American Arborvitae shrubs for the north side of the Post Office. The motion passed. Plantings on the opposite side of the Post Office will be decided at a later date.
- F. **FEMA Buyout Property Update:** TM – Asbestos was found at the site and will be removed. In addition, the well casing/cover will be removed and well filled, septic tank and dry well pumped out, if needed, and/or filled in and covered. The cost for all work is completely covered by FEMA.

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

- A. **Land Record Software Change – Alison Bigwood (TC):** The present software to access land records is Imass put in place by the prior TC. For support, information or to problem solve this system the TC sends many emails and makes numerous telephone calls with limited result. As the NEMRC module is in place it will take six hours to transfer the data from Imass to NEMRC with no interruption in service. Research shows the NEMRC system is a better system and Doreen Woodward will volunteer on June 7<sup>th</sup> to assist with the transfer of

records. \$1400.00 per year is the present cost for Imass and \$600.00 will be the yearly cost for NEMRC.

**B. Reimbursement from School Tax – Alison Bigwood:** The Town will receive \$107,232.85 from the State due to overpayment by the Town as determined by the State of Vermont for the School taxes. The change in amounts paid/due was the Grand List between preliminary and final education spending sheets resulting in the amounts raised in Homestead and Non-residential education tax. The amounts were less on the final cash flow resulting in the State kicking in more cash and the Town less. The money received will be put back into the general fund.

**C. Town Service Officer and Activities Commission Member Appointments: TM** – The Town Service Officer acts as a liaison between the public and various funding opportunities for taxpayers. Currently the Information provided by the Town Service Officer is provided by Town Office personnel. The TM recommended he be appointed the Service Officer. Craig Allen made the motion, Susan Harlow seconded to appoint Russ Hodgkins as the Town Service Officer. The motion passed.

In the second appointment, Doreen Kelton recommends Pauline Wilson as the Activities Commission Member. Craig Allen stated there were terms for Activity Commission Members. The TM will research the length of term to be filled before moving forward with an appointment.

**7. Manager's Report:**

*School Consolidation Meeting:* TM – Attended a recent school consolidation meeting and believes the entire Town should be involved. State mandates will have a large impact on Town tax rates. The TM recommends the Board attend consolidation meetings and be knowledgeable about the process.

*Structural Engineer (Tim Schaal):* Will be inspecting the WW Town Hall on May 17, 2016 beginning at 8:30 a.m.

*Zoning Permits:* To address a question/request from Fran Renaud: The Master list is on the website showing parcel number and object of permit.

**8. Boards and Commissions: None**

**9. Other Business:** Susan Harlow spoke about the Energy Siting bill passed by the State. She believes the town will have to have a plan in order to have a voice. The TM will research the bill and specifics.

*Town Hall Renovation:* TM - In the packet are Town Hall renovation plans (3). The Town is waiting for pricing/costs on all three options.

*Vermont Yankee Emergency Pagers:* TM – Packet contains information on two pagers currently carried by the TM and Chair of the Board. The last test of these pagers will be Wednesday, May 18, 2016. The fees for the pagers will be paid by the State through May 2016. VT-Alert will use the pagers and carriers for emergency alerts showing the specific emergency, town, county and state location. The new information will be paged within a minute of the alert. The TM will research cost and contract term for the Town to use the current pagers, pay the costs associated with the new VT-Alert system.

**10. Date of Next Meeting** – May 25, 2016 with a Public Hearing at 6:00 p.m. at the Westminster Institute.

**The Vice Chair declared that the Board would now go in to Executive Session at 7:50 pm.**

The Board came out of Executive session at 8:30 PM. No further action was taken.

**11. Adjournment:** Susan Harlow made a motion to adjourn. Nancy Dalzell seconded and the motion passed at 8:35 PM

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Signature of Clerk

Minutes prepared by Millie Barry, Recording Clerk

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Date