

Town of Westminster Select Board Meeting

Wednesday, May 13, 2015

Present: K. Sheldon Beebe – Chair, Craig Allen - Clerk, Toby Young and Peter Barrett.

Others Present: Russell Hodgkins (Town Manager) and Millie Barry (Recording Clerk)

1. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. in the Westminster Town Hall.
2. **Adjustments to Agenda:** None
3. **Acceptance of Minutes:** (April 22, 2015) Craig Allen moved to accept the minutes as printed, Peter Barrett seconded, the minutes were accepted unanimously.
4. **Communications and Public Comments:** None
5. **Unfinished Business:**

A. Trash Update:

The TM referred to the packet and showed the “Stickers”, silver in color and are peel off and sticky on one side. One sticker will be placed around the neck of the bag adhering one end of the sticker to the other.

The Contract has been signed and the TM will meet with Joe Ruggiero to make sure the routes work for his new service. The route information will be included in the packets mailed to taxpayers.

Ruggiero’s have said that three various sized totes will be available to look at in the Town Hall and can be purchased at his cost. The TM has researched the cost of these totes at Home Depot and they are not cheap. They range in price from \$45 to \$68.

The TM has researched disposal/recycling of kitty litter. The options to recycle are by using sawdust, shavings, or sawdust powder. Further information can be found at the Town Hall upon request.

Town wide informational sessions will be scheduled after the packets are sent out. The packets will contain a letter, a brochure, stickers, etc.. A lengthy discussion ensued about the trifold brochure and the size of its print. The brochure was designed by the Manager and his Administrative Assistant. It contains all of the pertinent information about Act 148, general rules of recycling, Do’s and Do Not’s of recycling, and contact information about the new program. The layout of the brochure was done with the thought that the information was concise and very helpful for the new program and could be placed on a refrigerator for easy access.

The TM recommended Village Printers to print the brochure for the Town after receiving three bids for this task. Toby Young brought back up the fact that she thought the print was too small and many people would have a hard time seeing it. Craig Allen made a motion to authorize the TM to print 2,000 brochures from the Village Printers, Peter Barrett seconded. Additional discussion pursued and Craig amended his motion to have the TM research cleaning up the print or enlarging the print, if possible. Peter Barrett seconded. The original motion with the amendment passed with one opposing vote by Toby Young. Later in the meeting, Toby Young asked if the trifold brochure could be redone using bigger print and perforations. Further research will be done by the TM for other brochure options.

B. Listers Office Update:

TM – Information and suggestions from NEMRC states that an assessment firm will need to be hired before the Board appoints new Listers because the scope of their work could change with each new assessor hired. Approximately 60 grievance letters went out this past week. Current Use properties are back in line with the State. The “Abstract Grand List” is out to the Town Clerk. TM stated that we have spent approximately \$8200.00 on NEMRC thus far. Due in part to NEMRC work, the Town is in good shape, on time, and filed appropriately as far as the State is concerned.

C. Front Door Update:

The doors will be done around the week of July 24th.

D. Review Town Trash Ordinance :

TM – Peter Barrett was the only Board member to respond with suggestions/changes to the presented new trash ordinance draft, to date. The changes were presented in the new ordinance draft in the packet. One noted change was the trash bag capacity needs to match the new program which makes the 30 gallon to 33 gallon bag capacity match the new brochure.

E. Solar Tax Exemption:

TM – There are three ordinances currently being looked at for change in the Town. They are Trash, Ancient Road Usage (Class 4), and Solar Taxation. It would be good for the board to consider reviewing all three of these at the same time for adoption.

F. Town Plan Review (if any):

TM – Please make suggestions, give feedback for final version. Flood Resiliency did not meet the State requirements and will need to be revised with help from Windham Regional Commission. Craig Allen noted an error in the name of a Town Road from “Birchwood Heights” to “Birch View Heights” on page 21.

6. New Business (Discussion/Action)

A. Review Existing trash Ordinance:

The Manager explained that in the packet was an expense report and revenue report which shows our up to date look at the financial year to date. It looks very good and in fact shows a substantial surplus because of many factors. Revenue is up due to the State of Vermont’s response to the roads/culverts/bridges updates presented by this office. Expenditures are down a little for many reasons. All toll, the bottom line is showing a possible surplus of approximately \$450k. The Board will need to look at this and figure out where to put some of this money such as:

- Replenishing our “rainy day” fund which every Town should have at least 10% of the present budget and we don’t at the present time because of “Tropical Storm Irene”.
- Town Hall renovation fund imbursement.

B. Camera Purchase:

The Selectboard viewed a recording sample of the camera that is being looked at for purchase. The total cost of the camera is \$569.95. The increase of \$79.99 previously reported, is the cost of a memory card that would allow the sound and picture to be placed on the Town’s website. This purchase will allow immediate placement onto the website, the meetings, which will relieve the five day “Open Meeting Law” minutes requirement. Craig Allen made the motion to purchase the camera for approximately \$570.00, Peter Barrett seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

7. Manager’s Report:

1. There is going to be a “Town Planning” seminar for Selectboards, Administrators, etc. in Townshend on May 28th. If anybody is interested, please let the TM know.
2. State of Vermont’s bridge inspection report was handed out and the TM made note that we have a bridge over the Saxtons River in North Westminster that is only in “fair shape” and has made the list for replacement somewhere around 2018.
3. The new Westminster West School bulletin board is up and running for Town use.
4. Dog Registrations – TM explained the Town is up to 360+ dogs registered which is approx. two thirds of the total amount of dogs in Westminster. June 1st is the deadline to get this done without penalty.
5. TM – Grievance Day is June 2nd from noon to 7:00PM. If needed the 3rd will be available.

6. TM – explained that the Town Clerk asked that all Selectboard members look at the Voters checklist (handed out) and make note of any changes and get them back to her.

8. Boards and Commissions:

TM – The DRB has heard 37 Zoning permits this year. The Planning Commission has received kudos from the WRC about their first draft of the Town Plan.

9. Other Business:

Craig Allen questioned the traffic survey lines that are located in various areas of the Town. TM- explained that the State is doing surveys about traffic patterns and this could have a bearing on monies received for future paving projects.

Sheldon Beebe questioned the speed bump at the end of the pavement on Rt.121. TM to research.

Peter Barrett was asked about the BCA meeting in regards to Gail Murrays request for abatement. The result was that Gail did not file in a proper, timely manner to receive a rebate.

10. Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday, May 27, 2015 at 6:30 p.m.

11. Adjournment: Toby Young moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 PM. Peter Barrett seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Clerk Signature

Minutes prepared by Millie Barry (5/18/15)