

## **Town of Westminster**

### **Selectboard Meeting**

**May 25, 2016**

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

**Others Present:** Russell Hodgkins (Town Manager), Alison Bigwood (Town Clerk) Millie Barry (Recording Clerk). Twenty four people signed in to the meeting with approximately 30 people present.

Call to order: Shell Beebe called the public hearing to order at 6:00. The hearing/Selectboard meeting was held at the Westminster Institute due to attendance.

**Debris Management Plan:** The Town Manager (TM) referred to the Debris Management Plan information in the Selectboard (SB) packet. The document was available for the public attending. FEMA guarantees 2% more in federal aid if the plan is approved and in place in the event of another disaster. The document will be added to the emergency management implementation plan and ensure efficient steps are taken in the event of a disaster. FEMA will be able to add or subtract information to the document after the SB approval. The TM, as the emergency management director, will be responsible for the plan as well as the fire department as they are very rehearsed in emergency management. Once the plan is in place, the Town would access private property in case of an emergency. The Town would not go into the private sector to clear debris if there was no emergency purpose.

**Westminster West Town Hall:** David Mulholland presented additional information on a possible partnership with the Preservation Trust of VT as well as start-up costs (\$6,500.00 +/-) to purchase the Westminster West Town Hall. New information and documents presented by Mr. Mulholland at a prior SB meeting were available for the public. He stated that his purpose in purchasing the building was to see the building be used and have the building accessible and in the hands of a local community group. With a Preservation Trust partnership the Trust would pay part of the cost to repair the building and Mr. Mulholland would pay part of the cost. TM stated the structural engineer visit to the building was positive. The engineer's analysis will be available in the next week or two. Mr. Mulholland and the TM believe the estimate of \$30,000.00 presented to the Town for initial repairs in comparison to the \$6500.00 start-up cost presented by Mr. Mulholland are a government versus private citizen insurance demands. Insurance costs for Mr. Mulholland and tax liability for the Town are unknowns. TM stated the building was presently locked as an insurance audit request by VLCT (Vermont League of Cities and Towns). Of the five Town buildings, two were deemed unsuitable for municipal events. They were the North Westminster Community Hall and Westminster West (WW) Town Hall. Another inspection, one year later, involved fire and safety and a \$30,000.00 estimate from them and the insurance inspector was given to get the Westminster West Town Hall up to code and to be able to be used by the public.

Mr. Mulholland stated long term leadership/beneficiary would be turned to the Preservation Trust with details determined before ownership changed hands. In the event the Town does not

approve the sale to Mr. Mulholland, he is willing to help preserve the building. Mr. Mulholland was thanked for his very generous offer to the West and also the Town as a whole.

## SELECTBOARD MEETING

1. **Call to Order:** The scheduled Selectboard meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m.
2. **Adjustments to Agenda:** TM – Under Unfinished Business, item F. should read E.
3. **Acceptance of Minutes: Corrections to minutes of May 11, 2016**  
To add, under **Unfinished Business (Discussion/Action) – D. Existing Five Year Plan – The Town is renting an excavator for two months to see if this equipment will save the Town dollars as opposed to hiring a contractor.**  
**Under Communications and Public Comments:** *It was noted the Pool Committee did not request installation of cameras for surveillance.*  
**Under New Business (Discussion/Action) - 6A. Land Record Software Change - \$600.00 will be the cost for transfer fee for NEMRC. It is a one-time fee.**  
In addition, *Nancy Dalzell mentioned her name was spelled incorrectly.*  
**It was moved by Craig Allen, seconded by Susan Harlow to accept the corrected minutes.** The motion passed.
4. **Communications and Public Comments:** Katie Dearborn asked about the Selectboard's interest in taking a look at ACT 46 to educate the community? TM – Town has agreed to joint meetings with the Prudential Committee and the School Board.
5. **Unfinished Business (Discussion/Action)**
  - A. **Debris Management Plan (adoption):** TM – Selectboard approval is required to move to the final step which is FEMA approval. Toby Young moved to adopt the Management Plan as printed, Susan Harlow seconded, the motion passed. The Document was signed by the complete Selectboard.
  - B. **Westminster West Town Hall – discussion** – Toby Young believes the Town should continue ownership of the WW Town Hall. In addition, Toby said the building is an important one to the people of WW. It was noted the Friends of WW Town Hall are in the process of putting up railings, emergency lighting and following through with other work so the building can be certified by the fire marshal and used by the public.
  - C. **State Facility Storm water Problem – update:** TM – update. The State and Town lawyers are working out easement and installation requirements along with a maintenance agreement that will remove Westminster from monitoring the States storm water run-off plan. The State has given themselves a new storm water permit and the Town is fighting that permit. TM has learned the ACT 250 permit is being possibly revised and the building is 95% complete.
  - D. **Existing Five Year Plan** – To create a list of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats: TM-In the packet, (as Nancy requested) is list the board can add to at each meeting. Susan Harlow - **Strength/opportunity** - the Town has other buildings available that can be used for social/business functions. The CT River bordering the town is a tremendous recreational opportunity. TM added the river can also be considered a liability due to flooding and zoning. **Threats** – Likely there will be more extreme weather events affecting

our roads. That upgrading technology/computer equipment/software will be important. TM – stated upgrading technology and purpose from State mandates are effecting budgets.

Nancy Dalzell added other **weaknesses** were the lack of job opportunities, no senior housing, no room for commercial growth and the lack commercial sewer system to attract businesses. **Strengths:** small town feel, history and the location of the Town made it easily accessible.

Craig Allen – **Weakness** is lack of parking in the town and a **strength**, there are no red lights in the Town. **Opportunity** is living and working in the Town (there are jobs currently available in the Town).

TM – In the packet is updated Capital Equipment Funding – Equipment /Reserve Fund with additions of the leaf blower, culvert thawer and York Rake including dates purchased and estimated life of equipment.

- E. **Activities Commission: New member Pauline Wilson – 3 year term:** TM confirmed the three year term. Craig Allen motioned, Nancy Dalzell seconded to appoint Pauline Wilson for three year term on Activities Commission. Motion passed. TM – FYI another volunteer, Tony Coven has requested to be appointed as a Fence Viewer and this appointment will be presented at the next SB meeting.

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

- A. **Discussion on “Policy for Town Cameras (surveillance)?** TM – When there is a problem or request a camera is put up. 98% of the time the camera is on Town land. Examples where cameras have been used successfully were dumping trash at recycling center, other illegal dumping and the Westminster pool. The Selectboard Chair and or Sheriff agree before a camera is put up. The Chair requested TM explore neighboring Towns policies about surveillance.
- B. **VT Alert Pagers – Cost per month:** The correct fee, per month, for one pager is \$8.75. CVC pagers will be transferred to the VT Alert network. With the pager the Town is immediately able to respond once a page is received to any emergency, road closing, amber alert, disaster, etc.. TM recommended just one pager. If the TM is on vacation/unavailable, Karen Astley is a monitor and would have pager, in Karen and Russ’s absence Cole Streeter would monitor and carry the pager. Craig Allen motioned for a one year contract for one CVC pager, Susan Harlow seconded, motion carried.
- C. **Energy Siting Bill – Update:** TM – The new energy bill is 57 pages. The pertinent information is included in the board packet. The TM believes the bill has not been completely passed. There is one additional step for this bill to become final/a law. The bill will give planning commissions, regional planning commissions, Selectboard’s/Towns a voice for renewable energy.

## 7. **Town Manager’s Report**

1. Asbestos abatement on FEMA buyout property went well, the building is down and removed. Mark Lund is filling in the cellar hole, has found the well and septic system to abandon both. The last phases of work will be done in the next two weeks.
2. Structural Engineer report will be available in the next two weeks.
3. Post Office Plantings – Went very well, Tim Allen of Allen Brothers was very helpful with plantings on the north side of the post office.
4. Thank You -

To all volunteers planting trees in North Westminster. David Deen, State Representative and Trout Unlimited sponsored Westminster plantings. Two SB members, Sheldon and Susan helped plant along with Lister, Bruce Sterling.

To Nancy Dalzell for helping with phones while Karen was on vacation

5. Visit with Prudential Committee: TM talked about meeting space, joint meetings with the SB and the Prudential Committee and Debris Management Plan.
6. New Grader is here and the old Grader has been sold. Payment to Nortrax is due in July and Mascoma Bank has placed the money for payment in the Town's account.  
Ben Gates (Sheriff) is done as he has found another job. Another graduate from the Police Academy has been hired, Noah Rheume.
8. **Boards and Commissions:** Nothing
9. **Other Business:** Bazin Brothers has the contract to remove ledge on I-91. Bazin's have not decided if they want to sell ledge material, the quantity or quality of the material has not been analyzed yet.
10. **Date of Next Meeting:** June 8, 2016 at the Town Hall
11. **Adjournment:** Susan Harlow moved, Nancy Dalzell seconded to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 p.m.

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Signature of Clerk

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Date

Minutes prepared by Millie Barry, Recording Clerk