

## Town of Westminster

### Selectboard Meeting

June 22, 2016

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

**Others Present:** Russell Hodgkins (Town Manager), Mark Lund (Road Foreman), Alison Bigwood (Town Clerk), Millie Barry (Recording Clerk), David Smith, Margaret O'Toole, Sheila Aubin, Debra Gass, John Ewald, Kevin J. Hughes, Beverly Major, Nicholas Keil, Collin Leech, Lise Cavanaugh and FACT TV

1. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by the Chair, K. Sheldon Beebe
2. **Adjustments to Agenda:** TM – To add, under 9. Other Business – Signing of Public Accountant Contract with Sullivan and Powers. The Chair so noted.
3. **Acceptance of Minutes:** June 8, 2016 – Craig Allen made the motion, Nancy Dalzell seconded to approve the minutes of June 8, 2016 as written. The motion passed.
4. **Communications and Public Comments:**
  - *Allocation (\$11,500.00) Visiting Nurse & Hospice of VT and NH* - Sheila Aubin representing Visiting Nurse and Hospice of VT and NH (VNAH) told the board how much their organization appreciated the Town's funding for their non-profit. This amount has been granted to VNAH since 2009 to fund programs from prenatal/pregnancy till the end of life plus bereavement services after death. In Westminster, last year, VNAH made 1,024 home visits to 46 different individuals. In part, their services include a program using an iPad in people's homes, communicating with DHMC to possibly save trips to DHMC and a telehealth program (wrist band) that communicates with DHMC twenty four hours a day, seven days a week. Also, a Hospice Dinner/Date (program) providing families a meal brought in from a local restaurant. The majority of referrals for their services come from local hospitals, DHMC and the BF Health Center facility.
  - *Allocations (\$3000.00) Westminster West Public Library* – Nicholas Keil – Beverly Major, (no longer the librarian), served in the position 15 years. She relayed a tiny board and fundraising was a major constraint to operate the library. Their budget of \$16,000.00 - \$18,000.00 is obtained from fundraising, a small endowment and the Town. The library has experienced a number of deficit spending years. She requested the Selectboard release an additional \$1200.00 voted/approved at Town Meeting originally approved to be used for connectivity to the internet. People are able to access eBooks, audio books, Heritage Quest as well as universal classes through the library, in their homes, with a library membership. TM -\$4200.00 has been carried forward in the budget for the library for several years due to a miss-communication in the Town Office. Nancy Dalzell made a motion to release the additional \$528.00 of the \$1200.00 that is remaining in this present year's budget. Craig Allen seconded, the motion passed. Additional information is the library is open 14 hours per week including an after school and pre-school program. The library also offers film nights and other special events. Craig Allen made a motion, Nancy Dalzell seconded to release the additional \$1200.00 for the next fiscal year for the Westminster West Public

Library as this amount is already in the proposed budget. This amount will be released after July 1<sup>st</sup>. The motion passed.

- *Allocation (1275.00) Early Educations Services* – Debra Gass – Ms. Gass, Executive Director of Early Education Services thanked the board for their long standing support saying the amount allocated really made a difference. Funding comes from the State, Federal Government, local sources and contributions matched from the local community. There are 32 Headstart children at the center on Buck Drive. They are proposing to add/renovate space for 8 more children due to an increased demand for infant/toddler care. She noted Westminster parents, especially, are very involved/invested in their children’s care and the center. Their programs include The Welcome Babies Program, oral health, immunization, well baby visits, and nutritional meals/snacks under USDA guidelines. Also, parenting workshops, monthly community playgroups offered throughout Windham County open to anyone, in-home screenings and pre-reading skills through play, promoting reading comprehension. There are approximately 5-6 Westminster Children enrolled in the program. The number of Westminster children enrolled, varies.

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

- A. Westminster West Town Hall Update (if any):** TM – spoke to Steve Dumont (VT Fire & Safety). He has agreed to come to the meeting on July 13th with a report/recommendations before the building is re-opened to the public. Wade Masure, (VLCT, Vermont League of Cities and Towns) representing the Town’s insurance carrier will also attend this meeting.
- B. State Facility Storm water Problem Update (if any):** TM – Packet contains a new plan currently being formalized by getting approval from Agency of Natural Resources, Stream Alteration, Dept. of Environmental Conservation Storm Water, ACT 250 and Vermont Army Corps of Engineers – Wetlands Division. Included in packet is the agreement between the State and Town which has already been breached as the State discharged water from the existing pond without notifications, permission or contaminate protection for the neighboring properties. The Town has taken legal action in that if there are other violations. The Memorandum of Understanding (included in packet) between the Town and Dept. of Building & General Services will be null and void if this continues. In addition, there are other permits required, the list is included in the packet.
- C. Existing Five Year Plan Continuation:** TM – Where does the Selectboard want to go from this point? He stated his top three priority needs from capital asset point of view were: 1. Town Hall – physical upgrade and/or IT wiring/upgrade. 2. Telephone system is very antiquated at the Town Hall and 3. Town Shop/Garage upgrade. At the present time the Town is special ordering trucks to fit in two bays at the garage. This is costing more at the purchase time and the trade-in-value of these trucks is less. Our new Grader is in a dirt floor shelter because it does not fit in the garage, either. Susan Harlow questioned the TM about his view for the next five years? TM – IT upgrade, a new town garage made possible by budget surplus amounts to be used for town improvements. In addition, the TM requested a ‘road trip’ by the Board to view the work of the excavator currently being rented. The Town is required to comply with State road regulations and this machine will help comply quicker, more efficiently to save taxpayer dollars. The field trip to view the work of excavator was scheduled for July 6<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m.

**At this time Ali Bigwood mentioned the tax rate had to be set before August 1<sup>st</sup>.** At the present time she does not have the downloads from the State. Suggested is a lunch time meeting. The date to be announced. The regular scheduled Selectboard meeting dates in July may be changed due to member conflicts. TM – The lunch time meeting would be warned. Susan Harlow will be away for the meeting scheduled July 13, 2016.

- D. Bike Path/Sidewalk Grant Update:** TM – Per Windham Regional, the Town could probably get the money by staff writing a comprehensive grant. VTrans won't let the Town spend the money. Matt Mann suggested the Town put its efforts elsewhere. Susan Harlow expressed how irritating it was the Town cannot place cross walks across the busiest street in Westminster Village. Writing a letter to the present Governor was suggested and also Toby Young pursuing connections she may have at the State House.
- E. Policy for Town Cameras – Model Plan –** TM – A draft policy is included in the packet. Nancy Dalzell and Craig Allen believe there should be a policy in place for the protection of the Town. Legal council has reviewed the draft as written. After discussion, questions and changes the updated policy will be reviewed in more detail by legal council. The Surveillance Camera Policy will be discussed at a later meeting.
- F. Town Hall Renovation Update (if any):** TM – Option A and B are included in packet with the estimated costs of construction. The third item included is room measurements requested by Craig Allen. The dollar numbers are a starting point to keep moving forward. The town hall renovations will be discussed at another meeting.
- G. Ending Year Budget:** TM – Packet includes revenue and expenditures report. Revenue, over what was expected is approximately \$202,000.00. On the Expenditure side, there is about \$40,000.00 left to spend on miscellaneous items before years end. These include, in part; Selectboard stipends, sheriff, Westminster Recreation, Waste Collection, off road diesel etc. Surplus expected in the expenditures is about \$150,000.00. TM explained, there is approximately \$13,000.00 left in the Town road budget. A possibility would be to add more to this \$13,000.00 in anticipation of a new Town Garage. Tonight the Selectboard decides what to do with surplus realizing the Westminster West (WW) Town Hall is still a question.

**Craig Allen motioned to put \$50,000.00 of surplus in a new capital reserve fund for the town garage, adding it to the remaining 13,000 +/-.** Susan Harlow seconded the motion.

Discussion followed regarding estimated cost of a new town garage, location of a new building and other options to be included in the garage. Craig Allen thought a steel structure would be +/- \$400,000.00. Mark said pull-in and turn-around space as well as buried tanks need to be considered before determining location. The motion passed.

**Craig Allen motioned to move \$100,000.00 of the surplus to the current building capital improvement fund for the Town Hall.** Susan Harlow seconded. The motion passed. There was also discussion regarding the Post Office (PO), repairs/improvements to the building and adding a storage component to this building for Town records. Monthly rent from the PO is \$768.33.

**Craig Allen moved to take \$100,000.00 from surplus to offset next year's taxes.** Susan Harlow seconded, the motion passed.

**Craig Allen moved to take the balance of the surplus (exact amount unknown at this time) from fiscal year 2015/2016 and put it in the 'rainy day' fund. Nancy Dalzell seconded the motion.** Motion passed. Craig Allen commended the Town Manager on the good job of having surplus monies available.

- H. Wage Decision for FY 16-17 (Executive Session):** Nancy Dalzell motioned to move to executive session after Other Business, 9A was completed. Craig Allen seconded, the motion passed.

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

- A. Signs (6) for Town by Will Parmelee – TM –** Mr. Parmelee is offering to create, at cost, Town signs to welcome visitors at six major points. Route 5 north and south, Westminster West Road north and south, Route 121 east and west. The Board authorized the TM to follow up with Mr. Parmelee. Susan Harlow mentioned the possibility of Mr. Parmelee creating something that indicates the Town's historical significance.
- B. Contract for Humane Society (signing):** TM – The contract has increased from \$425.00 to \$800.00. TM added the Town received a lot of free services from the Humane Society. Some of these are taking care of strays, collecting fees for stray pick-up room and board, etc. Craig Allen made a motion to authorize the Town Manager to sign the contract with the Windham County Humane Society. Susan Harlow seconded, the motion passed.
- C. Fuel Bids FY 16-17 – approval:** TM recommends from the four bids submitted, staying with HB Energy. Heating oil cost being \$1.68, propane \$2.399 and off road diesel cost \$1.77. Craig Allen made the motion to authorize the TM to sign contract with HB Energy for one year contract 2016/2017. Nancy Dalzell seconded, the motion passed. Town Employees can take advantage of prices from HB Energy.
- D. Trash/Recycling Contract FY 2016/2017:** TM – The Town has a three year contract with Ruggiero. In the contract is a clause if recycling prices go up by more than \$25.00 per ton, the town is to pick up the difference. The present cost is \$50.00 per ton. Mr. Ruggiero has presented information documenting the price increase due to the market being flooded with recyclables and surplus everywhere waiting to be shipped. He is asking if the Town will take care of the entire \$50.00 increase. The TM recommends the Town pay half of the increase per 18 tons or \$5,400.00 because this cost is in the proposed budget and it is what the contracts states. Craig Allen authorized the Town Manager to add \$5400.00 as a surcharge to the Town of Westminster Trash/Recycling Contract with Joe Ruggiero. Nancy Dalzell seconded the motion, the motion passed.

**7. Manager's Report:**

- 1) Buchner's Report on River Plantings: TM –** Final Report about plantings included in the Board packet. TM thanked Shell Beebe for use of a water pump and his labor in helping him water the 435 trees during the past weekend. The trees planted earlier in the spring are very dry due to lack of rain. Mr. Beebe added he would share the pump with the Town of Rockingham (if needed) to water trees planted in Rockingham off Route 121.
- 2) Ham Radio Days:** Ken Morse invited the public to the annual Field Day Event Saturday and Sunday, June 25 & 26<sup>th</sup>. The TM noted there were three major Ham radio carriers in Westminster and approximately 20 in the Westminster, Putney, Grafton, Windham area. As emergency manager director, Russ hopes to attend.

- 3) **The Shopper Newspaper:** Per Bob Miller 170 copies of the newspaper are left at Westminster Station Market, 425 at the Putney Post Office and 570 are left in Westminster West Post Office. Mr. Miller is very certain Toby Young is receiving a copy of the Shopper. He will personally follow-up on this delivery.
- 8. **Boards and Commissions:** Alison Bigwood reminded the Selectboard of the Board of Civil Authority Meeting on Monday June 27<sup>th</sup>. Packets are in the mail.
- 9. **Other Business:**
  - A. **Sullivan and Powers Contract (signing):** Susan Harlow made a motion to accept the contract (dollar amounts are determined by their amount of work) dated 6/16/2016 with Sullivan and Powers. Craig Allen seconded, the motion passed  
Craig Allen asked if there was a welcome packet for new residents in Town. The TM and Town Clerk do not know of any welcome packet.
- 10. **Date of next meeting:** July 6<sup>th</sup> a road trip to view excavator work.

**The meeting moved to executive session at 8:55 p.m.** The Board came out of Executive Session at 9:47 PM. Craig Allen made a motion to make the "Cost of Living" adjustment 3% for this upcoming fiscal year for the Town's employees. Nancy Dalzell seconded the motion and the motion passed. Craig Allen made a motion to raise the Town Clerk/Treasurer's salary to \$46,000.00 for the fiscal year starting July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016 and will request a review shortly with her. Susan Harlow seconded and the motion passed.

- 11. **Adjournment:** Nancy Dalzell made a motion to adjourn @ 9:53 PM. Susan Harlow seconded and the meeting was adjourned.

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Signature of Clerk

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Date

Minutes prepared by Millie Barry, Recording Clerk  
 Minutes after Exec. Sess. were created by Russell Hodgkins