

Town of Westminster

Selectboard Meeting

June 8, 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), Annie Guion (Executive Director, Windham County Humane Society), David Smith, Don Slie, Fletcher Proctor, Noah Rheume, Alissa Allbee Daigneault, Margaret O'Toole, John Ewald and Nicholas Keil

1. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by the Selectboard Chair, K. Sheldon Beebe.
2. **Adjustments to Agenda:** The Town Manager, (TM) noted 5B (State Facility Storm Water Problem – update) *under Unfinished Business* that a land negotiation with Roger Frarnsworth might be considered in executive session as where premature public knowledge would place the Town at a disadvantage. This was noted by the Selectboard Chair.
3. **Acceptance of Minutes May 25, 2016:** Susan Harlow motioned, Toby Young seconded to accept the minutes as written of the May 25, 2016 minutes. The motion passed.
4. **Communications and Public Comments:**
 - Windham County Humane Society (\$400.00) As the Society's representative was not present, the item was passed over until later in the meeting
 - The TM introduced Noah Rheume of the Windham County Sheriff's Department. Rheume is the newly appointed Deputy in the Town.
5. **Unfinished Business (Discussion/Action):**
 - A. **Westminster West Town Hall** – document update:
 - *Friends of the Westminster West Town Hall* – TM - Included in the Board packet, the Schaal Engineering report on the Westminster West (WW) Town Hall. Also, information from David Mulholland stating the Preservation Trust of Vermont willingness to grant Roundwood Resources LLC funds to share the costs of a historic analysis of the property. The cost for the analysis was not known. Craig Allen motioned, Susan Harlow seconded to grant permission for a contract between David Mulholland and the Preservation Trust to complete a historic analysis. The motion carried. The "Friends of the WW Town Hall" (Friends) would like access at the same time of the historic analysis and would like to add Mike Wells and Dan Savel to their committee expanding the number of members to seven. The Friends asked permission to paint two sides of the building, the west and north sides using volunteer labor and requesting the Town purchase the paint. The Selectboard Chair noted there were clapboards needing replacement before painting began. The Friends asked if they could continue to work toward repairs for the Fire Marshall Inspection and a certification of occupancy so the building could be used. Discussion continued regarding the Fire Marshall list of safety concerns, supports under the center of the building listed in the engineer report, insurance for the building, bringing the issue of sale to the voters, as well as researching grant money for repairs and maintenance. The TM verified the engineering report has been sent to the Fire Marshall with the Board confirming its intention to pursue next steps as needed. Peggy O'Toole read from the prior Town Plan, in part:

the policy of the Town to preserve its cultural heritage and to maintain and restore historic sites and to maintain/restore appropriately and to protect its historic sites. Nicholas Keil of the WW Community Fair noted the fair was held during the second week of September. This committee assumes the building will not be available for this event. The Board also agreed to have the Preservation Trust look at the North Westminster Community Hall when they are present at the Westminster West Town Hall to look at records. Toby Young stated her belief that the Board should explore keeping the North Westminster Community Hall and the WW Town Hall. Craig Allen mentioned to the Friends of the WW Town Hall the fact that minutes of their meetings were required as any other Town committee. Craig Allen moved and Nancy Dalzell seconded to approve the appointment of two additional people (Michael Wells & Dan Savel) to the Friends of the WW Town Hall. The motion passed.

B. State Facility Storm Water Problem – update: Nancy Dalzell moved, Craig Allen seconded to move to executive session at a later time in the meeting to discuss a land negotiation with Roger Farnsworth where premature public knowledge would place the Town at a disadvantage. The motion passed.

At this time in the meeting the TM mentioned Don Slie was present and a representative of the Humane Society was also present.

Mr. Slie stated he had approached the Selectboard on two occasions and asked that an outside wood boiler be moved. He believes this boiler is affecting the air quality at his home. He stated there were no other outside boilers that would bother his property. Mr. Slie left the meeting abruptly after a confrontation with the Chair of the Board.

Annie Guion representing the Windham County Humane Society said the Society really appreciated the support from the Town. 75 to 80% of their income is from Town allocations. Westminster residents use their facility for no or low cost spay/neuter, basic wellness visits and stray pick-up. They also hold monthly vaccine clinics and education on licensing. She presented a new contract to the Town for perusal.

C. Existing Five Year Plan (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats): TM - Board packet contains information discussed at the last meeting. No further action was taken.

D. Appointment of Fence Viewer – New member Tony Coven: Craig Allen motioned, Toby Young seconded to appoint Tony Coven as Fence Viewer for the remainder of the fiscal year to March 2017. The motion passed. TM noted the Fence Viewer was a negotiator where property lines are in dispute and an important appointment.

E. Policy for Town Cameras – Model Plan: TM – The Towns of Putney and Rockingham do not have a surveillance camera policy. Included in the packet is a draft of a *Surveillance Camera Policy* to read, think about, change etc. Discussion followed about the status of pictures obtained from surveillance, insurance and precedent that might be set if a camera surveillance policy was adopted by the Board. Regarding cameras installed at the Town Pool, TM noted the James Family conveyed, in 2011 to the Town of Westminster, the Westminster Pool. In turn, the Town appointed a Recreation Committee to manage the site. Insurance for the pool and surrounding land is paid by the Town.

F. Town Hall Renovations – discussion/update: TM – Estimates for renovation of the Town Hall will not be available until the end of next week. The TM stated he was directed by members of the past Board to bring all of the resources back to the Town Hall building with capacity for future storage and that is what is in the design presented.

Documents/records/materials are currently stored at the Town Garage, Westminster Institute and a local mini storage unit. Toby Young stated she was opposed to giving up their meeting space. Shell Beebe suggested installing a bulk head in the Post Office (PO), cementing the basement of PO for storage. Other discussion was: private meeting space for the Town Clerk (TC) (without leaving the Clerk in a precarious position), the history of the building, architectural costs, the front doors (in storage), and requirement for second egress. Also, insurance regarding safety of the building as it is now and the handicapped lift.

6. New Business (Discussion/Action):

- A. Bike Path/Sidewalk Grant** – TM - included in the packet is the Vermont official Bike/Ped grant program. The Board is interested in aggressively pursuing striping/cross walks on route 5 in the Center of Westminster Village.
- B. Ending Year Budget Discussion:** TM – It is time to look at revenue and expenditures for this fiscal year ending. Present reports included in Board packet. A new report with new figures will be presented at the next meeting. Craig Allen commended the TM re: distribution/management of trash and distribution of stickers. The new stickers (paper and green) are in the mail to Town residents.
- C. Wage Discussion for Fiscal Year 16-17:** TM – As requested by the Board, packet includes information found on the internet on national/state average cost of living index, CPI (Consumer Price Index), as well as forecast for the remainder of calendar year. This was tabled with a decision required at the next meeting.
At this time Toby Young stated she would not be available for the next meeting and the TM indicated he would not be available for the July 27th meeting. Decision regarding the 7/27/16 meeting will be made at a later date.
- D. Financial Management Questionnaire – Alison:** The questionnaire included in the packet is required by State Statute to be completed and signed by the Selectboard signing off that all questions are answered and the Town's cash and interests are accounted for. Alison noted the VLCT (Vermont League of Cities and Towns) provides financial trainings.
- E. Set Homestead Declaration Late Filing Fee – Alison:** After discussion, Craig Allen motioned, Susan Harlow seconded to set Homestead Declaration Late Filing Fee at 1.5%. Motion passed.

7. Manager's Report:

- 1. FEMA Buyout Property is completely done.** Paperwork to be completed and sent to FEMA
- 2. Trash Tags have been mailed for 2016-2017 fiscal year.** Residents should receive mailing during June 8-10th.
- 3. Memorandum – Trans Canada is selling off their hydro assets:** Information included in Board packet - FYI the State of Vermont is interested in a joint purchase of hydro-electric power on the Connecticut River. Also, Governor Shumlin vetoed the Bill for renewable energy. Noted by Toby Young there was an effort to override the veto.
- 4. Roger Fransworth land offer versus the Town offer** – Moved and seconded to go into Executive Session (notes in Unfinished Business B).
- 5. Fuel Bids are out for next year.** Due date is June 17th.
Dog Owners: 52 letters were sent to owners that possibly have unregistered dogs. 274 dogs have been registered thus far in the Town.

The TM noted the Road Foreman had replaced the stones at the WW Town Hall with Town owned stones noting these stones were necessary for the protection of the WW Town Hall. Craig Allen asked for an update on grant money from the Westminster Meats slaughter house? TM - letters sent have been returned and visits to the site have found no one there. The Town Clerk stated the last payment of \$500.00 was received in September 2015. The actual payment owed is about \$4000.00. The TM stated this was a State loan, the Town is the collector of the loan. The TM has updated the State on the situation. The property taxes on the site are current.

8. **Boards and Commissions:** Nothing
9. **Other Business:** Alison formally thanked Russ and Patty for assistance placing the Veterans flags at the Westminster Cemetery for Memorial Day as well as Karen for support. Due to a lack of communication this was not done by the person usually completing the task. Alison would like to place the flags for Memorial Day from now on. She will remove the flags and dispose/burn at the Veterans Day ceremony. Chris Potter is restoring cemetery stones at a very reasonable cost to the Town. The restoration process will take 8-9 years to complete.
The Board noted the flags hung on Route 5 and along the road in the Westminster West Village looked great! Flags for the Village of North Westminster may be hung next year.
10. **Date of Next Meeting:** June 22, 2016.

The Board moved to executive session at 8:30 p.m. Upon coming out of executive session at 8:47 p.m., no further business was discussed.

11. **Adjournment:** Susan Harlow made a motion to adjourn at 8:50, Nancy Dalzell seconded. The motion passed and the meeting was declared over.

Signature of Clerk

Date

Minutes prepared by Millie Barry, Recording Clerk