

Town of Westminster

Select Board Meeting August 12, 2015

**Present:** K. Sheldon Beebe-Chair, Craig Allen-Clerk, Peter Barrett and Paul Banik-Vice Chair

**Others Present:** Russell Hodgkins (Town Manager) Millie Barry (Recording Clerk), Jan Ameen, Dave Mulholland, Ali Bigwood (Town Clerk), Don Slie, Fran Renaud and Nancy Dazell

1. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 6:30p.m. by the Select Board Chair.
2. **Adjustments to the Agenda:** None
3. **Acceptance of Minutes:** Craig Allen motioned to accept the minutes, Peter Barrett seconded, the minutes were accepted as written.
4. **Communication and Public Comments:** Don Slie appeared before the board requesting the Select Board set up a meeting with his neighbor, Cole Streeter to resolve a problem with a wood boiler at the Streeter residence. Mr. Slie believes the smoke, coming down the valley from the Streeter boiler is affecting the air quality at his residence. Mr. Slie spoke about the smoke from the boiler (especially when the boiler is smoldering) penetrating the insulated walls at his home. One side of the Slie property home is also covered with plastic. The Select Board will look into Mr. Slie's concerns. Mr. Slie requested communication about the matter be in writing.

Jan Ameen requested the board revisit the possibility of local businesses selling trash stickers. The consensus of the board, as stated from the previous meeting, was to wait three-six months before making any changes regarding stickers, recycling and trash pickup. The board will invite Joe Ruggiero to a September board meeting to review pick-up and recycling from Mr. Ruggiero's perspective. Fran Renaud suggested the Town discuss (with two retailers) interested in selling trash stickers for the convenience of the Town of Westminster residents.

**5. Unfinished Business:**

- A. **Interview Lister Candidates – David Mulholland:** An additional candidate presented qualifications and interest for one of three listers positions.  
positions in the Town.
- B. **Amendment to Tax Rate:** Craig Allen moved, Peter Barrett seconded to amend the tax rate as presented on July 31, 2015 from \$2.2734 to \$2.2360. Motion passed unanimously.
- C. **Homestead Declaration Late Filing Fee:** Ali Bigwood presented to the board the late/non filing fee for Homestead Declaration as 8%. This fee is set by the State of VT. The Select Board can request the fee be waived. On a case by case basis, the Town Clerk will refer residents affected by the fee, to the Board.
- D. **North Westminster Payment on Bond-Discussion:** TM- In meetings with Chip Stearns (Rockingham Town Manger) and John Jones (Chair) of Westminster Fire District #5 Prudential Committee, information was presented that Fire District #5 would like to disband and give their responsibility/fee collection etc. to Village of Bellows Falls. The meetings/discussions are preliminary. The fee, requested by District #5 at the prior Board meeting has been waived due to \$1600.00 paid by the Town for sewer clean-up at the North Westminster Community House. Additional Information from these meetings is: Matt Brennan (Saxtons River Trustee) has been contacted with a request that Village of Saxtons River slow the process/phase of their sewer engineering project. This project could impact or include the Village of North Westminster sewer. The USDA has interest in

development /planning project to include three towns. If roads/streets are ripped up there is a possibility to include water with sewer project. This project could (possibly) include the Back Westminister Road as well as a water source for Vermont Academy currently having water problems at the school.

- E. **Change Zoning in Westminister:** TM-Maps (posted in Town Hall) and Town Plan draft are available. The Town Plan has been sent to the State of VT, five neighboring towns, Windham Regional and legal counsel. If the Board plans on making zoning changes, this conversation should happen before the first public hearing scheduled for 9/10/15. The Board will schedule a meeting, to discuss zoning changes, with the Planning Commission before the Commissions next scheduled meeting September 14, 2015.
- F. **Solar Agreement in Industrial Park (update):** TM- There are no changes or new information. Larry Slaton (legal counsel) is working on pilot agreement. This item will be tabled until new information is received from Peter Thurrell or legal counsel.
- G. **Solar Tax Exemption:** Ordinance Change Update (if any): TM -No new information. Larry Slason is fairly positive there will be no grandfathered projects. Something will be created before Town Meeting.

6. **New Business:**

- A. **Selection of Listers:** Craig Allen motioned, Peter Barrett seconded to go into Executive Session (at a later time in the meeting) to discuss the appointment of Listers and to invite the TM to attend. The motion passed unanimously. At this time, Fran Renaud withdrew her application for a lister position. Additionally, Ali Bigwood withdrew a request to discuss a personnel matter in executive session.
- B. **RFP (Request for Proposals) Town Hall Architect Search:** TM - For renovation of Town Hall an Architect would work with the Town, Clerks, secure historic value, design office space and storage. Seven architects have shown interest in the project and the project will be advertised. The TM requested approval from the Board to move forward with RFP and with installation of new front doors. Packet information (Request for Proposals) dates for preliminary project schedule were corrected.
- C. **Errors and Omissions from Listers Office (3+/-):** Craig Allen made a motion and Peter Barrett seconded to approve the reduction of \$7,500. in real property value on parcel #011032.000 from \$7,500 to 0.00 for property owned by Westminister Aqueduct society as per Town vote in March 2015. Motion passed unanimously. Another motion, made by Craig Allen and seconded by Peter Barrett was to approve the reduction of \$37,100. In real property value on parcel #007038. 000 from \$126,600. To \$89,500. for the property owned by Richard Burgmeier as per the Board of Civil Authority vote in 2014. The motion passed unanimously.  
  
An additional motion by Paul Banik seconded by Craig Allen moved to approve the reduction of \$5,000. in real property value on parcel #003126.000 from \$64,900 to \$59,900. for property owned by Ernesto and Lillian Velez as per a certified survey confirmed less acreage owned. The motion passed unanimously.

7. **Town Manager's Report:**

- 1. **Westminister Center School- Crosswalk update-** The stripe request will be dropped. The cross walk request has been submitted to the State and is being reviewed.
- 2. **Town has received Route 121 monies from State-** Mark Lund (Road Foreman) requesting overspending guardrail budget line item by a total of \$6,570.00. The State of VT supplies used

Guardrails when available, that will be placed at intersection of Orchard Hill and Kurn Hattin Rd. and intersection of Goldie's Rd and Town Garage Rd. Written proposal for Board (in packet). TM is requesting lenience in Road Foreman's budget for work. Guardrail project approved by Board.

**3. Grant Update- High Meadows-** (Written Information in packet) \$32,000 received to restore SR corridor where washouts were worst. In Westminster, plantings will be received for the Basin Farm (both sides of road). Plants will be put in ground by volunteers.

**4. Cemetery Stipend update-** To address question from Toby Young regarding cemeteries; Chris Potter is using \$2,500. each year, rotating work between three major Town cemeteries to upright, square and clean stones. This project will take 8-9 years to complete work in all cemeteries.

**5. Town Hall Doors** -The doors are completed, will be accepted in panels as they are and stored on the 2<sup>nd</sup> level of the Town Office until phase work with architect is completed.

**6. Wood Heat Grant-** Windham Regional has provided information on large grants available for historical buildings to heat with wood. One very evident problem in the Town Hall is space and building location in a historic district. Russ will have more information at a later date.

**7. Speed Limit on Kurn Hattin Rd.** -There have been two formal requests to reduce the speed limit on Kurn Hattin Rd.. It may be the Westminster Fire Dept. will also make a request to reduce the speed limit from Kurn Hattin School to Morse Brook Road. The State will ultimately make the decision to reduce the speed limit. In addition, the new sheriff, Ben Gates will attend next Board meeting.

8. **Boards and Commissions:** TM- Town Plan ready to go!

9. **Other Business:** None

10. **Date of Next Meeting:** August 26, 2015

11. At 8:05 p.m. the Board moved to Executive Session.

The Board came out of Executive Session at 8:40 p.m. Craig Allen made a motion of appoint Jackie Atwood, Bruce Sterling, and David Mulholland to the Board of Listers. Peter Barrett seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

12. Peter Barrett made the motion to adjourn at 8:55 p.m./ Paul Banik seconded. The motion passed.

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Select Board Clerk, Craig Allen

Minutes prepared by Millie Barry 8/14/2015