

## Town of Westminster

Select Board Meeting

September 14, 2016

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

**Others Present:** Russell Hodgkins (Town Manager), Alison Bigwood (Town Clerk), Janice Wojcik, Fran Renaud, Bob Lober, Peggy O'Toole, John Ewald, Michael Wells, Millie Barry (Recording Clerk), Mark Lund, (Road Foreman), FACTV.

1. **Call to Order:** At the request of the Chair of the Board, Craig Allen called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and presided over the meeting.
2. **Adjustments to the Agenda:** Under New Business –
  - 6B – There are two errors and omissions
  - 6G - Add Health Officer Re-appointment
  - 6H – Matter of arbitration for Executive Session
  - 6I – Liquor License for Harlow Last Stand –As there were no objections to these additions to the agenda, the items were added.
3. **Acceptance of Minutes – August 24, 2016** – Toby Young motioned to accept the minutes as written, Susan Harlow seconded the motion. The motion passed with two abstentions. Toby Young asked to clarify one sentence in the August 24<sup>th</sup> minutes. She meant to express, “it was her opinion that the present staircases should remain as they are.”
4. **Communications and Public Comments:**

Bob Lober began that it was his opinion, as a former selectman leaving the Board 16 years ago, the present Town Hall, it's safe/vault were not big enough for the town then and are not big enough now. Further, he feels the Town should look for and purchase a piece of land to build a proper office to serve the Town into the future. Craig Allen noted there would be a Town Hall Renovation discussion coming up as noted in the meeting agenda. Mr. Lober confirmed he would stay and participate in this discussion.
5. **Unfinished Business (Discussion/Action)**
  - A. **Westminster West (WW) Town Hall Discussion (bids):** The Town Manager, (TM) noted J. Jesup proposal for structural repairs was included in their packet. He cautioned the board to be careful about stating specific prices and costs in a public forum so not to jeopardize Mr. Jesup's bid. Mike Wells handed to the board a summary package of cost proposals/other estimates of well-known contractors for work to address fire codes and structural issues. These figures are attempting to be conclusive as well as frugal. After extensive discussion between the board and members of the public attending the meeting, the Board confirmed they supported work to open the building and to make repairs so it can be used and safe. The Board authorized the TM to obtain three bids on items Mr. Wells submitted that were over \$500.00. Also to consult with Steve Dumont (Fire Marshall), the engineer and the State electrical inspector on specific electrical items i.e. upstairs lights, light switches, wires hanging down and hanging lights being up to code. Peggy O'Toole expressed her frustration with the length of time in the process to obtain bids and bring

information before the Board. The TM and Board confirmed there will be a total package, previewed by the Select Board, at their next meeting in two weeks.

- B. **Town Hall Renovation:** The TM would like the Board to come together to decide a direction regarding the Town Hall renovation, specifically the man-lift. The packet includes plan drawings. Bob Lober believes the lift on the outside of the building will cost more to maintain and heat, this is a bad direction for the Town to go in and that renovations are a waste of Town money. Craig Allen said in the past the voters decided not to build a new building and also not to purchase neighboring property. The Board is attempting to come up with concrete costs to renovate. Toby stated she believes keeping the Town Hall in the center of Town was a good option. Again, after considerable discussion between the Board and members of the public attending, it was suggested the Board appoint a committee to make decisions about the Town Hall renovations. The TM stated in the past (before he was employed as TM) there was a committee to decide renovations and nothing was accomplished by this committee. Susan Harlow questioned what the actual options were? They are: the elevator inside or outside, a door at the side or back of the building as a second egress and possibilities for a meeting room? Toby Young stated in conversations she has had with Lyssa there may be other options. Susan Harlow believes the Historical Society is an important part of the town and suggested they make a bigger effort to become more involved and a part of the solution. It was noted the renovations of the Town Hall has been discussed, were on The Select Board meeting agenda for six months and Historical Society members had attended one meeting. The TM stated everyone had spent a ton of time with the current plans; moving and changing things such as bathrooms and storage around. The Board suggested going back to Arnold & Scangas architects about other elevator plans and for sharing and or reconfiguring the meeting room on the second floor. It was noted the Fire Marshal has approved meeting space on the second floor. The TM asked if the Board could make a decision about where the man-lift will be placed. Janice Wojcik questioned the costs thus far for the building? Craig Allen stated work previously done, (dependent on far back they went) to update the building was, in part, wall insulation, a heating system, air conditioning, windows, wainscoting and a vault. Thus far, architectural expense is approximately \$11,000.00. Janice Wojcik believes people should work together to make decisions. The TM stated option A, the lift inside was \$453,715.00. Option B, lift outside is \$605,157.00. As individual members of the Board, Sheldon Beebe asked the members, elevator inside or outside? Toby Young objects to removing the staircase. Susan Harlow has no problem with the elevator outside but questioned additional costs to maintain the elevator outside? Nancy Dalzell had no problem with the elevator inside, she does have considerations about placing it outside. Her concerns were moving a wheelchair and/or access in snowy conditions. Russ confirmed the elevator will be at ground level and will be under cover. Craig Allen does not have a strong opinion on elevator placement and noted a meeting space on the second floor would give more room. The Board requested an actual drawing of how the building will look with the elevator outside. The TM will request a drawing from the architect. Fran Renaud asked about changing the outside of the building and possibly disqualifying the Town from receiving as much as \$150,000.00 from VT Historic Preservation. It was noted the files and boxes on the stage upstairs belonged to the

Historical Society. Some of these contain different eras of time. There are six to seven different sections of time displays.

- C. **Existing Five Year Plan – Chart:** Russ asked the Board about their thoughts of where the Town will go? Susan Harlow stated she felt it was a good idea for each select person to take a building to research, ideally a building they are not familiar with. They will talk to employees using the building, be open minded in their research, fact find, look at capital and structural needs, exploring options for each building. It was determined Craig Allen would take the North Westminster Community House. Sheldon Beebe – Westminster Town Hall, Susan Harlow – Town Garage, Nancy Dalzell – WW Town Hall and Toby Young – Westminster Post Office.
  - D. **Excavator Purchase vs Lease:** There was considerable discussion regarding the pros and cons of owning, leasing or turning the Excavator back in. In addition, questions were asked about how the machine is used, how it will be stored, and the price to rent for six months and of hiring independent contractors, instead of purchasing this machine. Nancy Dalzell made the motion to purchase the Excavator for \$95,200.00 with cash on hand, not financed. Toby Young seconded the motion. The Board voted 3 to 2 to purchase. The TM thanked the Board.
  - E. **Post Office – Storage Upgrade:** TM – included in the packet is a bid for work needed at this building. He cautioned the Board not to discuss this specific bid in public. The TM will put out to bid for floor and door. If storage were added in the cellar, the one price he received to install a cage, would be about \$8000.00. Toby will compile thoughts, ideas and cost benefits regarding this renovation.
6. **New Business (Discussion/Action):**
- A. **Draft of Auditor’s Report:** TM – Draft of report is included in packet. The manager’s portion (with amounts) is not included. The next step is to accept the process of draft. TM stated if others would like a copy of the draft, to contact him.
  - B. **Errors and Omissions:** TM – Two Errors and Omissions are included in the packet. Shell Beebe made the motion to approve the name change of Roger Moul to Parcel 006014.000. Nancy Dalzell seconded the motion, the motion passed. Shell Beebe made the motion to accept the correction and to re-activate parcel 006126.000 erroneously inactivated in Grand List with taxable value of \$109,000.00 and to generate a tax bill. Susan Harlow seconded the motion and the motion passed. The TM mentioned this inactive parcel was brought to the Town’s attention by the Martins. The TM said the Town office was currently going through the process of researching all parcels for possible errors.
  - C. **Creation of Highway Garage Fund:** TM – The statute states the Select Board does not have the right or ability to create a fund, the taxpayers do. The Highway Garage Fund is not the Highway Garage fund yet. There will be an article at Town Meeting to approve the \$63,000.00 put aside for the Town Garage. These funds are currently in the ‘rainy day fund’. There is a specific fund for the highway garage as the need is serious and evident for improvements to this building.
  - D. **Appointment of new DRB member (Kevin Hughes):** TM – The position was advertised in the paper with Mr. Hughes the only interested candidate. Sheldon Beebe moved to appoint Kevin Hughes, Nancy Dalzell seconded, the motion passed. It was noted that there is no

conflict to be a Planning Commission member and a DRB member at the same time. The term expires in 2016.

- E. **Appointment of a new Historic Review Board Member (Tony Diorio):** Susan Harlow made the motion to accept the nomination of Tony Diorio to the Historic Review Board. Toby Young seconded, the motion passed. There is no term of this office.
- F. **Hold a Candidate Forum?** Information included in the packet. TM – A Candidate Forum tool kit is included as VLCT has important subjects that could affect municipalities. If there are three or four smaller towns interested in creating a meeting, the Board would consider holding a candidate forum. The TM will check with other area towns.
- G. **Health Officer Re-appointment:** Toby Young motioned to accept Russ Hodgkins for a three year term as health officer. Nancy Dalzell seconded the motion and the motion passed.
- H. **Matter of arbitration for Executive Session:** Sheldon Beebe made a motion to go into executive session to discuss Town property on Westminster Heights Road as premature public knowledge would not benefit the Town's financial outlook. Nancy Dalzell seconded and the motion passed.
- I. **Liquor License for Harlow's Last Stand:** Ali Bigwood (TC) stated Dan Harlow has requested a 2<sup>nd</sup> class license to sell malt beverages, hard cider and wine at the farm stand. The License would be renewable May 1, 2017. Sheldon Beebe made the motion to approve a 2<sup>nd</sup> class license for "The Last Stand". Nancy Dalzell seconded, the motion passed. There was one abstention.

**7. Manager's Report:**

- 1. Tim Morton has marked out approximately  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the forest for cleaning and/or to regenerate new growth, making the forest manageable. Select Board members can consult with Russ about the bid range. Steve Major is the current Conservation Committee member talking to Mr. Morton directly about the process.
- 2. Town Signs are completed – Seven signs are very well done by Will Parmelee, (actual signs were on display at meeting).
- 3. State Facility update. Buck Adams is about three quarters done. Russ will inspect the work on 9/15 to verify the work done as specified. The pipes are down to the bottom and the splash pool is done. He will work his way to the top to the upper pool with completion in about one week.
- 4. Town Report Dedication: The Board's decision about a candidate is due in November.

In addition, Mr. Lober questioned the Board about the cost for the Town recycling center. The recycling dumpsters do not cost anything more than just our solid waste assessment. Russ continued, the Town was trying to keep the area as clean and orderly as possible and to pinpoint illegal dumping and theft of material such as sand/gravel etc. Often the center is being used by residents outside of Westminster.

**8. Boards and Commissions: None**

- 9. **Other Business:** Nancy Dalzell read from the VLCT handbook: "It is one of the duties of Select Boards to establish rules for pedestrian traffic on public highways and establish crosswalks". This item will be carried forward to the next Select Board meeting.

10. **Date of Next Meeting** – September 28, 2016

**At 8:53 p.m. the Board moved to Executive Session:** The Board came out of Executive Session at 9:05 PM with Sheldon Beebe making a motion for Bucky Adams to finish the work needed to complete the NOAV given to the Town by ANR. Susan Harlow seconded the motion and the motion passed.

11. **Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 9:09 PM with a motion from Sheldon Beebe and seconded by Susan Harlow. The motion passed.

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**Signature of Clerk**

**Date**

Prepared by: Millie Barry, Recording Clerk