

MEETING OF THE WESTMINSTER SELECTBOARD

Wednesday, March 14, 2018

Westminster, VT Town Hall

Members Present: K. Sheldon Beebe, Craig Allen, Susan Harlow, Toby Young and Kevin Hughes (newly elected Selectboard person).

Others Present: Russell Hodgkins (Town Manager/Zoning Administrator), Alison Bigwood (Town Clerk), Patty Mark (Assistant Town Clerk), Nancy Dalzell, Jackie Atwood, Stephen Dotson, Katie Dearborn and two people from FACTV

- 1. Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by the Town Manager, Russell Hodgkins.
- 2. Re-Organization of the Board:** Mr. Hodgkins called for nominations for chair-person of the Board. Toby Young nominated K. Sheldon Beebe as chair-person, Susan Harlow seconded the nomination and the nomination carried for the year beginning March 15, 2018. At this time K. Sheldon Beebe directed the Selectboard meeting. Mr. Beebe called for nominations for vice chair. Toby Young nominated Craig Allen, Susan Harlow seconded the nomination and this nomination carried. Toby Young nominated Susan Harlow for the clerk's position. Craig Allen seconded the motion and Susan Harlow's nomination carried. Mr. Beebe welcomed Kevin Hughes newly elected Selectboard member.
- 3. Adjustments to Agenda:** None
- 4. Acceptance of Minutes:** February 28, 2018 – Craig Allen motioned to accept the minutes of February 28, 2018 as printed. Susan Harlow seconded the motion, the motion carried
- 5. Communications and Public Comments:** Katie Dearborn addressed the Board with her concerns of compensation for Jackie Atwood as the newly elected Treasurer. Ms. Dearborn expressed her belief the budgeted amount of \$5,000.00 was not adequate compensation to fulfill the position. The Board discussed Ms. Dearborn's concerns that included a conversation with a Board member about possibly eliminating the Town Clerk assistant position. Ms. Dearborn stated she was interacting quite a bit with the Town office staff in her professional capacity. Toby Young stated it was late in the budgeting process when the Board learned Ms. Bigwood would not be running for Treasurer. She addressed Ms. Atwood saying, she wasn't sure of Ms. Atwood's expectations, also stating the Treasurer position was not full time. The Board members made comments including it had been many years since the Treasurer position was a separate position and the number of hours and exact duties of the Treasurer were not known. Alison Bigwood stated Doreen Woodward was paid \$12,000.00 a year as Finance Officer and \$5,000.00 a year as Treasurer. Craig Allen stated the Town had a certain amount of money for services in each department and the Board has the right to move numbers around as they felt appropriate. Ms. Bigwood asked the Board if they were contemplating eliminating the Assistant Clerk's position, why she was not informed. Patty Mark commented, she was no longer interested in serving as Assistant Treasurer and the total budgeted amount for the Treasurer position was a little more than \$7,000.00. Toby Young assured visitors, the Board would be working on a solution.

In another matter - Stephen Dotson, current representative of the WRC, expressed his interest in continuing to serve on the Windham Regional Commission. His current duties are on the

energy committee and community development committee. The Commission is experimenting with growing agriculture under solar arrays with Tatiana Schreiber and also working with Dan Crocker of Sidelands Sugarbush.

6. Unfinished Business (Discussion/Action) –

- A. Town Meeting Discussion (if any) –Toby Young commended Mr. Hodgkins for putting all of the information together for the Selectboard. The Board discussed how to better publicize the Town Meeting and Susan Harlow made a note to bring this matter up in December to inform town residents.

In another matter: Included in the packet was information on the reserve fund balance policy. This matter will be tabled until the next meeting so all Board members have an opportunity to be well informed.

- B. Sale of Land on Heights Road (update): Mr. Hodgkins told the Board, Mr. Farnsworth had contacted his Legal Counsel about the purchase but had received no responses. The Board members as a result, locked the gate on the Heights Road. Mr. Hodgkins said there was a purchase contract with Mr. Farnsworth and the gate presently was unlocked. The Chair mentioned the lock will be placed again April 1st if no further movement is completed.

In another matter: The Board Chair inquired about the search for a Road Foreman. The Town Manager said the deadline for applications was March 26th and currently, there are four applications for the position. Susan Harlow asked for a copy of the Road Foreman employment contract.

7. New Business (Discussion/Action) –

- A. Sign Certificate of Compliance for Town Road and Bridge Standards – Mr. Hodgkins let the Board know this item should be tabled to a future meeting due to delay verifications with VTrans (Vermont Agency of Transportation). The Chair so noted.
- B. Liquor License – Allen Brothers – Craig Allen moved to approve a liquor license for the year 2018 for a commercial property doing business as The Last Stand. Toby Young seconded the motion, the motion passed. Susan Harlow abstained from voting. Toby Young moved to approve the liquor license for Allen Brothers, Kevin Hughes seconded the motion, the motion carried. Craig Allen abstained from the vote.
- C. Annual LEOP (Local Emergency Operations Plan) Adoption and Signing: Included in the Board packet of information is the LEOP & mitigation plan. Russell Hodgkins told the Board the plan had not changed since the last meeting. Action on this matter was tabled for discussion at a future meeting so all Board members could be informed of information on the LEOP.
- D. Yearly Appointments of Record: Information included in the packet of information. The Manager discussed the openings and contacting those in current positions about their interest in maintaining the position. There were several recommendations from the Board with names for other open positions. Toby Young volunteered to be an alternate member for the DRB (Development Review Board). Susan Harlow nominated Nancy Dalzell for the Commissioner of the Campbell Fund. Kevin Hughes seconded the motion, the motion carried. Mr. Hodgkins noted the Shopper was the Town's official newspaper of notice. Toby Young suggested a note in the Westminster Gazette to inform the town residents the official paper was the Shopper. The Appointment List will be published in the Westminster Gazette

when finalized. Kevin Hughes volunteered to be the alternate member for the Planning Commission.

- E. Personnel Matter (Executive Session??) Toby Young questioned the need for an executive session. The Board discussed moving to executive session to discuss personnel matters and reviewed the VT Open Meeting Law posted information. It was determined the Board could move to executive session to discuss a contract. Susan Harlow motioned to move to executive session to discuss a personnel matter. Craig Allen seconded the motion. Jackie Atwood requested she be included and to invite the Town Clerk and Assistant Clerk. The motion carried. The Chair noted this would be after 'other business'.

8. Manager's Report:

- 1.) Westminster Meats – Public Sale was postponed to March 22, 2018 at 11:00 a.m. The Town Manager will attend to represent the Town interests in this property and sale.
- 2.) Spring Selectboard Workshop: Kevin Hughes expressed interest in this workshop.
- 3.) Back Door Construction is finished: On March 15th the Town Manager met with All Seasons Construction about remaining items to be addressed in the construction. The window removed to install the door will be stored in the Town Hall.
- 4.) EM (Emergency Management) Active Shooter class – Fire Dept. Needs money for equipment. The Manager explained to the Board how the town would respond to an active shooter in a Westminster neighborhood. The first responders in an incident would be the police to take out the harm. The second response would be special trained medics. They would care for any casualties in a 'warm area', an area where they believe the shooter is not located. There are two very well trained medics on the Westminster Fire Department interested in completing certification training. The cost to outfit each trained person is \$550.00 with the Fire Department paying the cost of one outfit. The Town Manager expressed the importance of these positions and covering the cost of the second suit taking money from the Emergency Management Fund. Mr. Hodgkins noted Springfield, VT is the nearest team having four certified, trained medic officers. Brattleboro has no coverage at this time. Kevin Hughes inquired about school coverage and State funding. The Manager responded the State provides training and he will be attending a meeting with WNESU to address transportation for students to be taken out of the area and harms way.
- 5.) Windham Solid Waste Management District – Presentation by Bob Spencer and Kristen Benoit. Included in the packet is information (email) from Bob Spencer about an offer to meet with the Selectboard and a newsletter from Windham Solid Waste Management District. The Manager recommended a presentation by Mr. Spencer and Ms. Benoit regarding service, fees and defending their \$37,000.00 assessment. Mr. Beebe questioned the time frame of the present contract, when it ended. The Manager said the new contract begins July 1. The Manager stated the State has asked the Town to go one more year to figure out the assessment value as it relates to the solar panels. If the solar panels are paying \$102,000.00 back to the District, he believes the assessments have to go down. The Manager added Jan Ameen is the Town's representative, she would be asked to attend a meeting with the Board to share her knowledge. The meeting with Spencer and Benoit would be very important if the Town makes a change by July 1. It was also noted that Ruggiero Waste Management offers a service to Westminster landowners to take compost.

Cost of this service would be paid to Ruggiero by the landowner. Ruggiero supplies pails for compost.

- 6.) The Town Manager is on the Village of Bellows Falls meeting agenda to speak about Fire District 5 to discuss assessment of sewer rates as well as their billing process. He believes the current assessment is antiquated and out of date. This meeting is scheduled for March 27th.

9. Boards and Commissions: None

10. Other Business: Patty Mark noted other open vacancies in the Town.

Craig Allen let the Board know that Cole Streeter would like to meet with the Board and Town Manager about using the Town Highway Crew that are on the volunteer fire department in the instance of a fire or other emergency. Specifically, volunteer members on the Town crew and when and who can respond to an emergency. The Manager said there were no new policy changes. If the Fire Department requires personnel, plowing, salt, or sand the Town responds to the request as soon as possible.

Date of Next Meeting: March 28, 2018

The Selectboard moved to executive session at 7:43 p.m.

Upon coming out of Executive Session at 8:29 PM, no further business was conducted.

- 11. Adjournment:** Susan Harlow made a motion to adjourn at 8:31 and Craig Allen seconded. The motion passed.

Clerk

Date

Minutes prepared by Millie Barry 3/15/2018