

## MEETING OF THE WESTMINSTER SELECTBOARD

Tuesday, April 9, 2019

Westminster Institute, Westminster, VT

**Members Present:** K. Sheldon Beebe (Chair), Susan Harlow (Vice Chair), Toby Young and Kevin Hughes (Clerk)  
Absent: Craig Allen

**Others Present:** Russell Hodgkins (Town Manager/Zoning Administrator), Charles Lawrence (Road Foreman), Jason Benson (Assist. Road Foreman) and FACTV

1. **Call to Order:** The Chair of the Selectboard, K. Sheldon Beebe, called the meeting to order at 6:31 PM and stated that the meeting was on Tuesday night because of the town wide school meeting tomorrow night at the Bellows Falls Union High School and all the Selectboard will be attending.
2. **Adjustments to Agenda:** Mr. Hodgkins (TM) requested to table 6A, Unsafe/Abandoned Building Ordinance. The Chair agreed to table this item until the next regular meeting.
3. **Acceptance of Minutes:** March 27, 2019 – Susan Harlow motioned to approve the minutes of March 27, 2019 with a minor correction. She stated that the liquor license request was printed without a name attached to it after the executive session and wanted to add this to the approved minutes. The name of the new Circle K store will be “WSM, LLC – Westminster Station Market”. Toby Young seconded, the motion carried.
4. **Communications and Public Comments:** None
5. **Unfinished Business (Discussion/Action):**
  - A. **TM Evaluation Form** – The TM asked the Board if they approved of the form in their packet. Russell Hodgkins told the Board that this was the same form that was used previously and was produced by him. The Board agreed that this form would suffice and the Chair explained that there wasn't a huge rush, but should be done as soon as possible.
  - B. **Quarterly Budget Report** – Toby Young started the conversation requesting clarification of a couple of items. The Manager was able to verify the concerns with explanations of the specific lines in the quarterly report. Susan Harlow asked about the over expenditure of the “Culvert/Drainage” line item and the Manager told the Board that this was a grant and was covered by a revenue on page 1 of the report. Hearing no further questions, the Chair moved the meeting along.
  - C. **Act 46 Clarification and Update**– The Town Manager told the Board that in their packet was the agenda for the meeting tomorrow night and he also had copied an article from the Brattleboro Reformer that explained what Grafton had done with their ownership of the school building. He explained that this type of conversation might come up at this meeting and what was the Town of Westminster planning to do.
  - D. **Mandich Case Update** – The Town Manager told the Board that the new court date has been set for May 2<sup>nd</sup> at 9:00 AM in Keene, NH. The Manager will be representing the Towns interests.
  - E. **North Westminster Community House** – The Manger told the Board that Mr. Allen wanted this on the agenda to talk about the buildings future but without him at the meeting it probably should be tabled. The Chair agreed and tabled the item until the next regular meeting.

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

**A. Unsafe/Abandoned Building Ordinance** – The Chair stated that this item was tabled in the adjustments to the agenda.

**B. Highway Department Discussion** – The Town Manager presented, by request, a detailed summary of why a 7<sup>th</sup> man is needed for the Highway Department to function efficiently. He stated that safety issues are why the position was created in the first place and stated it was created on June 6, 1999. He continued with the grants received to date (\$289,040) with a Town match of \$53,110. He explained that typically the Town does not pay out of the budget for the match they work it off with labor, machine time and materials. A 7<sup>th</sup> man is critical in providing labor, flagging etc. The Town Manger asked the Board to turn to page two of the handout where he had itemized man hours to cover what has been promised for work, vacations, sick time, regular maintenance, mowing, grading and came up with a total of unused hours for the 6 man crew that is apparent today and came up with 10 – 13 days to do the State mandated erosion control work on the towns 100+ segments that need to be addressed before 2035. To put this into perspective, the Manager told the Board that the crew had completed 12 segments in two years. The Manager told the Board that safety is a very large concern always for the Highway Department and that public, Selectboard, and Town Manager expectations are very high. We expect to travel our roads safely and that the maintenance will be done without fail. The 7<sup>th</sup> man, he continued, will only keep the service where we expect it to be. The 7<sup>th</sup> man gives the Road Crew the ability to respond to emergency calls that change the daily schedule in a flash. Snow Plowing our roads takes a 7 man crew approximately 8 to 12 hours. Without a full crew, this time turns into multiple hours of overtime for the already tired Crew which again becomes a safety issue. Multi-tasking is another factor in the Road Crews daily life. The Manger explained today's schedule had men (2) cleaning ditches without a flagger, maintenance with two people, 1 man hauling sand from a source that is being purchased, and the Road Foreman checking on road conditions from concerned taxpayers. The 7<sup>th</sup> man in this case would have been flagging. The Manager finished with the fact that the FY19 and FY20 supports the 7<sup>th</sup> man and he hopes the Board would also. The Chair commented that even if the 7<sup>th</sup> man is hired that scheduling for all of this work needs to be changed. It was clear to him that all this work was not going to be completed no matter what the outcome of this discussion. Kevin Hughes ask the Town Manger if the 7<sup>th</sup> man was needed. He answered yes. Kevin asked the Road Foreman if the 7<sup>th</sup> man was needed and he replied absolutely. Hearing no further questions or comments the Chair continued the meeting. The Town Manager asked the Board for permission to engineer "Grout Ave." for proper drainage approved by the State of Vermont. Phil Savoy supplied the Manager with a proposal for the work. No decision was made to hire an engineer. The issue will be brought back up at a later time.

**7. Manager's Report:**

- 1. Dry Hydrant on Beebe Road** – The Town Manager, per request, gave the Board a list of 6 alternate water sources in Westminster West that could be used when the construction begins on the dam removal on Beebe Road. This information came from the Fire Chief, Cole Streeter.
- 2. Heat Upstairs** – The Manager reported that the heat/cooling units were mounted upstairs already and the ground units will be installed in the last week of April. He commented that the first May SB meeting could be upstairs in the Town Hall.
- 3. FY 19 Delinquent Tax report to date** - The Board packet included a revised list of taxpayers two years in arrears at the present time.

4. **Windham County Sheriff** – Keith Clark announced his retirement and the Manager wanted to make sure that the Board knew this. The Manager also told the Board that Mark Anderson would possibly be the next Sheriff but will need to be appointed by the Governor.
5. **WCS Report** – The Manager gave April’s Sheriff report to the Board. This showed 50.5 hours of work with 1 ticket written and 4 warnings. This had a total of \$105 total fines.
6. **Results from Conservation Commission Grant** – In the Board’s packet was the complete report received from the \$3500 grant.
7. **Meeting w/ Village President and Municipal Manager** – Russell Hodgkins told the Board that a meeting has been scheduled for April 23<sup>rd</sup> to discuss Transfer Station fees for next year.  
K. Sheldon Beebe and Russell Hodgkins will be at the meeting for Westminster.
8. **Boards and Commissions:** The Town Manager reported to the Board that a possible candidate for the Planning Commission has stepped up and shown interest. He will keep them posted.
9. **Other Business:** Susan Harlow explained that the Westminster West Librarian requested that a Selectboard meeting be held in the Westminster West area. She told Susan that a group of kids are studying politics and would like to observe a meeting first hand. The TM told Susan to have the Librarian call him and we will set it up at the Westminster West Town Hall for the summer. The Board agreed.
10. **Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday, APRIL 10, 2019 – Meeting at Bellows Falls Union High School: Windham Northeast Union Elementary School District.** The Chair requested that the Board meet 10 minutes early to open their meeting and the Chair will close their meeting at the end. No minutes will be taken.

**The next Regular Selectboard meeting will be April 24, 2019 at the State Police Barracks at 6:30 p.m.**

11. **Adjournment:** Susan Harlow made a motion to adjourn and Kevin Hughes seconded. The motion passed at 7:37 PM.

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**Clerk**

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**Date**

Minutes prepared by Russell Hodgkins 4/10/2019