

# Meeting of the Westminster Selectboard

Wednesday, August 8, 2018 – Westminster, VT Town Hall

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

**Others Present:** Russell Hodgkins (Town Manager/Zoning Administrator), Nancy Dalzell, Millie Barry (Recording Clerk) and FACTV

1. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 6:37 p.m. by K. Sheldon Beebe, chairperson of the Board.
2. **Adjustments to Agenda:** The Town Manager (TM) requested to add a contractual matter under unfinished business, item F. – Executive Session. The chair so noted the addition.
3. **Acceptance of Minute** – July 25, 2018 – Craig Allen motioned to accept the minutes as printed, Susan Harlow seconded the motion. The motion carried.
4. **Communication and Public Comments:** None
5. **Unfinished Business (Discussion/Action):**
  - A. Reserve Fund Balance Policy – update with discussion: The TM advised the Board that the information in the packet included revisions discussed and was the final version. Craig Allen moved to approve the Reserve Fund Balance Policy for adoption. Susan Harlow seconded the motion the motion carried. The TM said the policy will be an Article on docket for Town Meeting in March.
  - B. New Dog Ordinance – discussion of public hearing / adoption? A public hearing was held at 6:00 p.m. prior to the Selectboard meeting August 8, 2018 for town citizens to weigh in on the ordinance changes. The TM noted more changes would be made per the hearing adding a section about dogs in heat. There will be one additional public hearing September 12, 2018 at 6:00 p.m. for additional public discussion, thoughts and input.
  - C. Property Sale – Zdunek property update: Mr. Hodgkins told the Board it was recommended by the realtors involved in this listing to choose one realtor to list property. Susan Harlow motioned to put six realtor names in a hat and draw one to list/market this property. Toby Young seconded the motion, the motion carried. The TM mentioned to the Board there was a large gap in opinion of value for the property by some realtors involved. The Manager noted the Town’s goal was to sell the property as quickly as possible to pay the taxpayers back for their investment.
  - D. Website Renewal Search Update: Included in the Board packet of information, was the “Indelible” proposal for scope, process and estimate of work for the Westminster website. Mr. Hodgkins told the Board he expected a written estimate and proposal from the first company contacted about the website work.

- E. Mandich – NH Law Suit Update: The TM let the Board know the court has accepted judgment as fair and accurate. Mr. Mandich was served and his assets and properties were frozen until a hearing can be scheduled. He added, the suit was moving along.
- F. Executive Session – Personnel matters (2), contractual matter: Susan Harlow motioned to move to executive session to discuss two personnel matters and one contractual matter. Craig Allen seconded the motion, the motion carried. The Board Chair-person noted this would be after ‘other business’ on the agenda.
- G. Community Leadership Summit Nominations – October 1, 2018: Mr. Hodgkins told the Board the workshop is designed to find local leadership from small communities to enhance development of small towns keeping the younger population from leaving local areas. Mr. Beebe questioned if SEVDS was involved in the program “Making it Happen”? Mr. Hodgkins said the program is State sponsored.

**6. New Business (discussion/action):**

- A. Signage on Westminster West Road: Mr. Hodgkins noted the High Risk Road Grant had fallen short of the signage work the Town assumed would be completed and the replacement of signs the grant indicated it would replace. New signs were placed to Kimball Hill North. There were four Town Road signs not replaced. Toby Young mentioned the displeasure of Westminster West residents that the “Thickly Settled” sign had been removed. The TM told the Board there were four 35 mph signs and four 40 mph speed signs that have been stolen. In most cases, the sign and pole were removed by a machine or vehicle. The poles had a spike at the bottom and anti-theft bolts attaching the sign to the post. In addition, the value of the signs is over \$900.00 making the theft a misdemeanor, a civil matter and criminal act if the signs are not returned. Kevin Hughes questioned the Manager if the new signs (when replaced) could be set in a cement block. The Manager hopes to replace the four signs not covered in the High Risk Roads Grant in time, working within the highway budget.
- B. Treasurer’s letter/request: The Board packet included a letter from Jackie Atwood, elected Town Treasurer, regarding her request/opinion of a sufficient budget figure to fund the Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer’s position. The Board will read the letter and discuss Ms. Atwood’s request at the next meeting. Mr. Allen requested the balance, after considering the budgeted amount, and suggestions of where the additional monies would come from to meet the funding request.

**7. Manager’s Report:**

- 1). Town Hall Renovation – update: There is no word when the work will start. The Manager assured the Board that by November 1 that climate control from outside weather conditions would be taken care of. This was included in the contract.
- 2). The packet includes the final version of the Kurn Hattin letter regarding the biomass heating system which unanimously supported the renewable energy proposal.

- 3). Storm Damage – Saturday July 28, 2018 – Update: This was called a ‘straight line storm’ with a duration of 15 +/- minutes covering approximately one half mile wide with 80 MPH winds. The damage included South Valley Road, East Putney Brook Road, Pine Banks Road, Quarry Road, Town Line, Patch Road and Beebe Road. There was a loss of three vehicles due to the storm and six to eight homes were damaged. There were no physical injuries. The Manager estimated there was about three weeks of clean-up work costing about \$80,000.00 in repairs.
- 4). Municipal Budgeting Seminar: This seminar will be held September 11, 2018. It is a full day conference costing \$60.00 per person. The seminar will cover preparing, formulating and communicating with the Town about budgeting and legal requirements.
- 5). Cemetery Lot Purchases: There are 4 lots in the Westminster West cemetery not being used by a family. They would like to sell the lots back to the Town. By State law the Town would pay what the lot originally cost.
- 6). There is the possibility of one person interested in the piano in the Historical Society space. Mr. Beebe recommended moving the hearse to the North Westminster Community House temporarily.
- 7). Road Crew Accident Report on Thursday, 8-2-18. It has been determined this accident was the fault of the Town and has been given to VLCT for their approval.
- 8). Opening for Animal Control Officer. This position has been advertised in The Gazette. There is a stipend attached to the position. It is helpful to have animal knowledge for the position.
- 8. Board and Commissions:** There are three planning commission members with one other person expressing some interest.
- 9. Other Business:** Susan Harlow mentioned information on the VT Secretary of State website noted voting for Tuesday’s primary would be at the Westminster Center School. The Board confirmed voting would take place at the Westminster Institute and a call would be made to the Secretary of State office to correct the misinformation posted. The Manager said the informational town ‘sandwich boards’ would be posted with voting information.
- 10. Date of Next Meeting – August 22, 2018**

**The meeting moved to executive session at 7:19 p.m.** Upon coming out of executive session, Susan Harlow made a motion to accept the fuel bid for this next season by Allen Brothers Fuel Service. Kevin Hughes seconded the motion and the motion passed 4-0 with Craig Allen abstaining from the vote for obvious reasons.

**11. Adjournment:** Toby Young made a motion to adjourn at 8:38 PM. Susan Harlow seconded the motion and the motion passed.

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**Clerk**

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**Date**

Minutes prepared by Millie Barry 8/9/2018