

Meeting of the Westminster Selectboard

Wednesday, August 22, 2018 – Westminster VT Town Hall

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

Others Present: Russell Hodgkins (Town Manager/Zoning/Administrator), Mark Lund (Interim Road Foreman), Millie Barry (Recording Clerk), Robert Wickberg, David Dupuis and FACTV

1. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by K. Sheldon Beebe, Chairperson of the Board
2. **Adjustments to the Agenda:** None
3. **Acceptance of the Minutes** – August 8, 2018 – Susan Harlow moved to accept the minutes of August 8, 2018 as printed. Toby Young seconded the motion, the motion carried.
4. **Communications and Public Comments:** The Town Manager (TM) noted there would be various speakers present to address the Board at upcoming meetings. Speakers include Gary Derosia, manager of the Rockingham transfer station and a representative from SeVEDS.
5. **Unfinished Business (Discussion/Action):**
 - A. Signage on Westminster West Road – The TM told the Board there were between eight and fourteen speed limit signs missing. Two other road signs were recovered after discovering a break-in in Westminster West. Those signs will be saved and used at a future date.
 - B. New Dog Ordinance – Discussion of public hearing number 3: Susan Harlow and Mr. Hodgkins met to review the Ordinance and add a section about dogs in heat. The third public hearing will be held September 12, 2018 (before the regular Selectboard meeting) at 6:00 p.m. in the Town Hall.
 - C. Property Sale – Zdunek Property Update: Mr. Hodgkins said the names of all local realtors were put in a hat and Buffum Realty (Earl and Julie) were chosen in the draw. Buffum Realty will list the property for sale.
 - D. Website Renewal Search Update: Mr. Hodgkins let the Board know the second proposal to design the website has not been received as of yet. This company has provided preliminary costs of between \$5,000.00 and \$10,000.00. The company has experience, knowledge and is recommended by another town with a very good website design. The first proposal received was \$32,000.00.
 - E. Mandich – NH Law Suit: The TM let the Board know there was nothing new to report. The suit is ongoing and liens have been attached to property owned by Mr. Mandich.
 - F. Executive Session – Personnel Matters (2): Toby Young motioned to move to executive session to discuss two personnel matters. Susan Harlow seconded the motion, the motion carried. The Board chair noted the executive session would be after other business on the agenda.

G. Piano and Hearse Update: The TM said there was interest by two people in the piano but nothing definite as of yet. In regard to the hearse, the dimensions of a building to house the hearse would be at least 8'x14'. The North Westminster Community House would serve as a temporary storage space. Mr. Beebe asked about the building beside the WW Church on the cemetery side. Could the building be restored or should it be torn down? The TM noted the hearse can be taken apart to move.

In other Unfinished Business: Susan Harlow asked about the land sale to Roger Farnsworth. The TM said there had been no word from Mr. Farnsworth but he believed the legal paperwork had been started. Further, the gate to the property is closed and locked.

Kevin Hughes questioned progress at the site of the old Westminster Motel. The TM said someone was interested in turning the house into a restaurant and another person in stripping the motel section to the bare studs and rebuilding as a motel.

Negotiations are ongoing.

Mr. Beebe asked about the Town Hall renovations. The Manager said the rain has caused a delay in the start of the work. He has been assured by the Contractor that the work being done will be closed in and weather tight by November 15, 2018 as requested in the bid.

6. New Business (Discussion/Action):

A. Financials to date – The Board asked numerous questions and discussed the print out included in the Board's packet. The TM said many entries needed to be changed or corrected and figures would be a more complete/accurate when the quarterly report was finished and printed. Of note, were the numbers for the box culvert replacement on the More Brook Road. The grant monies for this project have not been received yet and this is the reason for the large (316.9%) of actual budget.

7. Manager's Report –

1). Town Hall Renovation (discussed earlier) has been delayed by rain. There will be another update at the next meeting in September.

2). SeVEDS will be attending the seminar in Castleton. The SeVEDs director, Sarah Lang will be speaking at the seminar. Note: This information was requested at the last meeting.

3). The Municipal Budgeting Seminar early deadline for registration is September 3.

4). Pavement is completed on the Patch Road and Westminster West Road. The State of Vermont will be lining the road shortly. The TM commented he was pleased with the work.

5). Kelly (TM administrative assistant) and TM will be out of the office for an emergency management training on Friday, September 7, 2018

8. Boards and Commissions: There was nothing new information to report. The TM let the Board know that the Planning Commission and DRB have quorums and are able to hold meetings.

One additional member may be needed for the DRB in the future.

9. Other Business:

Animal Control Officer: The TM let the board know Cass Wright was interested in the animal control officer position. Mr. Wright currently volunteers as the control officer in Bellows Falls. The TM and Mr. Wright will meet to discuss specifics of the position.

Sheriff's Department: The TM let the Board know the current Sherriff's department officer working within Westminster is leaving the position. The TM said the hours for contracted services are just short due to the officer leaving.

In another matter Robert Wickberg spoke to the Board at length about the speed limit posting in Westminster West. Mr. Wickberg shared information from the Federal Highway Administration manual and suggested the Town conduct a survey regarding setting speed limits. He shared he did not believe 35 miles per hour (mph) was the maximum safe speed limit on the Westminster West Road. Toby Young stated the 35 mph speed limit signs formerly posted were in error. The speed limit signs should have reflected 40 mph. Mr. Hodgkins said the Sheriff's Department had done speed surveys and the Town was following their recommendation for safe speed posting. He will request the past survey results from the Sheriff's Department. In addition, the High Risk Roads Grant, just completed, is granted by State of Vermont by the number of accidents on a specific road. The information gathered by the Sheriff's Department will be posted in the Gazette.

10. Date of Next Meting: September 12, 2018 – There will be a public hearing to discuss the animal control ordinance beginning at 6:00 p.m.

The meeting moved to Executive Session at 7:16 p.m. Upon coming out of Executive Session at 8:16 PM, the Selectboard received a motion from Toby Young stating that she would like to authorize the Chair and TM to talk again with Jackie Atwood about two options in lieu of her resignation. Susan Harlow seconded the motion and the motion passed.

K. Sheldon Beebe made a motion to deny the request for an additionally insured partner of an employee as this would set an unprecedented action not supported by the personnel policy. Kevin Hughes seconded and the motion passed.

11. Adjournment: Kevin Hughes made a motion to adjourn at 8:25 PM and Susan Harlow seconded. The motion passed and the Chair declared the meeting over.

Clerk

Date