

## **Meeting of the Westminster Selectboard**

Wednesday April 8, 2020

### ***Remote Tele-Conferencing – 6:30 PM***

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

**Others That Joined the Call:** Russell Hodgkins, Town Manager/ZA, Nate Stoddard and Fletcher Proctor

1. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by the Chair at 6:30 PM. Susan Harlow explained that this was the first of many remote meetings that this Board would be hosting because of the COVID19 virus. Susan began explaining the rules of engagement for the public for participation and thanked FACTV for this opportunity.
2. **Adjustments to Agenda:** None
3. **Acceptance of Minutes: March 25, 2020** - Toby Young motioned to accept the minutes of March 25, 2020 as presented. K. Sheldon Beebe seconded the motion and it carried with a 5-0 vote.
4. **Communications and Public Comments:** None
5. **Unfinished Business (Discussion/Action):**
  - A. **Henwood Hill Discussion – tabled from the March 11 meeting** – Susan Harlow explained why this item was on the agenda because no firm decision was made on March 11 and that the construction season is coming up. Kevin Hughes explained that he was not for taking out a loan for this project from a lending company or bank. He brought the attention of the Board to a document that was in the packet and explained that a 5 year note with this bank would cost approximately \$17,000 more than borrowed. This in his mind was not a smart move to get this project done. Craig Allen agreed with this thought and told the Board that he thought that the project could be done in sections with the Road Crew. He continued with the fact that the voters authorized spending of the first payment of \$37,500 which would give the project a great start. K. Sheldon Beebe agreed for this first year because the trees can be cut by the Town's Road Crew and they could cut the sharp corner's embankment for better visibility for the first year and then the project could be revisited to see if the completion might go out to bid. Toby Young told the Board that she thought that this project needed to be done in one phase because it was just too dangerous to do in pieces. The Town Manager asked the Board if another site visit would be the best way to come to a final decision. It was decided that a site visit was the best way to finalize the projects progression. The site visit will be on May 13, 2020 at the intersection of CCC Road at 5:30 PM. Craig Allen asked that the Town Manager and the Road Foreman, Chuck Lawrence, be present.
  - B. **Special Town Meeting – discussion** - Susan Harlow asked the Board if they had a chance to review the Warning that the Town Manager had compiled with Article dedications for each of the Board members. The Board members agreed to the

dedications of the Articles and the Town Manager asked the Board to review the facts document for further details that they might need. Russell Hodgkins brought attention to the lack of information for Toby Young's article and Craig Allen's article. He requested that each of these Board members contact him for the information that they think is important and valid.

Susan Harlow asked the Board about the business of the Assisted Living/Senior Housing Committee, Broad Band topic, and the North Westminster Community House improvements. She explained that these topics would come up under "Other Proper Business" at the Special Town Meeting. Craig Allen told the Board that he thought that this meeting is going to be complicated enough that this information can wait until another time. The Board agreed and this information will be tabled until another time for the public's input.

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

- A. **Daigel Road – drainage issue** - The Town Manager explained that he is requesting a site visit by the Selectboard to figure out a solution to a drainage problem on Daigel Road. The correction will create a precedence that he was not comfortable setting without Board approval. He continued with the thought of having this site visit on the same night as the Henwood Hill visit and they could consider these two visits as the whole meeting. He told the Board that he could warn the meeting for public involvement with social spacing which is still acceptable. Susan Harlow asked about any important items that needed to be addressed. The Manager told the Board that it would be just an outside meeting. All agreed to meet on Daigel Road after Henwood on May 13, 2020.
- B. **3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Financials - discussion** – Susan Harlow told the Board that she would table this item until the next meeting which would give the Board a chance to look at it closely and ask questions at the next meeting. Without any questions received, the Chair tabled the item until the next meeting.
- C. **Delinquent Taxes – Forgiven amount & mistake system rebate** - The TM asked the Board to look at a document in their packet as he explained what was going on and the process that he was following. Russell Hodgkins explained that he would like guidance from the Board in the process that he had begun. He continued that he would appreciate that the details of the two year delinquents not be displayed tonight because of the vote by the public not to display these facts such as the Town Report no longer prints this page. Susan Harlow said that if the public wants to see this information that it is a public document and can be received upon request. The TM agreed. The process that the TM created is a two letter format with the second letter being the last chance for these people to call the Town Hall and either pay in full or create a contract. Mr. Hodgkins explained that his second letter this year did not give a drop dead date as in the past but explained with the pandemic, that an additional month would be granted. He continued, that he told these folks that this did not relieve their obligation to be working on a plan for payments. K. Sheldon Beebe told the Board that he did not want the relief to go too far. He agreed that the delinquent taxpayers should get a slight extension but that this did not happen overnight and that they can still be obligated to

call Mr. Hodgkins for a schedule to pay. He understands that those who have been laid off will have a harder time, but still can make arrangements with Russ. Toby Young agreed with Mr. Beebe and said that everyone should be able to at least call even if they are unemployed. Craig Allen asked about Escrow payments and how this effects people to make arrangements for payments. The TM explained that the escrow payments through lending sources have already been processed and that next year it could possibly be an issue if this virus continues to hinder people going back to work. K. Sheldon Beebe asked if the TM received the guidance that he was looking for and all agreed the process was fine.

**D. Presidential Order – July 15<sup>th</sup> income tax extension** – The TM explained to the Board that an extension to file will have complications to next year’s tax bills for the Town of Westminster. With the extension, the homestead declarations will not be settled out before the first tax bills go out in August and thus will create the same scenario that we had last year where a second tax bill will need to be sent and that there will need to be adjustments made on several tax bills. He continued, that this will also be a work in progress and he will keep the Board apprised of the progress.

**E. Liquor Licenses (3) - Allen Bros., Harlow Farm, and Westminster Station Market** – The TM explained that these three licenses are the usual and that a motion to accept all three in one motion would be acceptable unless someone has a concern. K. Sheldon Beebe made a motion to accept all three of the license requests with Toby Young seconding the motion. The motion passed with Sheldon, Toby, and Kevin voting positively and Susan and Craig abstaining for obvious reasons. The vote passed as follows: 3-0-2.

7. **Manager’s Report:** Mr. Hodgkins told the Board that a report was not needed for this evening.
8. **Boards and Commissions** – The TM told the Board that all of the other Boards and Commissions’ meetings were canceled until this process of tele-conferencing could be finalized and better defined.
9. **Other Business:** None
10. **Date of Next Meeting - April 22, 2020** – (Tele-Conferencing) at 6:30 PM
11. **Adjournment:** Toby Young made a motion to adjourn at 7:12 PM with Craig Allen seconding the motion. The motion passed 5-0.

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Signature

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Date