

MEETING OF WESTMINSTER SELECTBOARD

Wednesday, January 27, 2021

Meeting by Zoom Conferencing

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

Others Present: Russell Hodgkins (Town Manager/Zoning Administrator), Millie Barry (Recording Clerk), Nate and Cynthia Stoddard, FACTV and others

1. **Call to Order:** Susan Harlow, chair of the board called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. This meeting was held via Zoom conferencing due SOV (State of VT) recommendations surrounding Covid 19 virus. Access to meetings is available through FACTV. To join a future meeting, information is available at the Westminster town office or from FACTV Facebook page.
2. **Adjustments to Agenda:** None
3. **Acceptance of Minutes:** January 13, 2021 - Craig Allen motioned to accept the minutes as printed, Toby Young seconded motion, motion carried.
4. **Communications and Public Comments:** None
5. **Unfinished Business (Discussion/Action)**
 - A. Town Meeting - options for procedure - information included in packet - Craig Allen motioned to: Open town meeting on February 27, 2021 and declare that the meeting will be resumed at a later date. Voting will be by Australian ballot for town officials, BFUHS budget and River Valley Technical Center budget on March 2, 2021. K. Sheldon Beebe seconded the motion, motion carried. Voting will be March 2, 2021 at Westminster town hall. **To request an absentee ballot call the Westminster town clerk at 802-722-4091** Craig Allen motioned to hold town meeting outside at the Westminster Institute May 15, 2021 at 10 a.m. Kevin Hughes seconded motion, motion carried. . An informational post card with details will be sent to all residents.
 - B. Town Meeting Articles - Item tabled to a later date
 - C. Half year financials (quarterlies) - questions - Susan Harlow questioned the computer contract spending. Mr. Beebe questioned if the money spent thus far on Henwood Hill, \$6,659.63, would be taken out of the amount budgeted to repair Henwood Hill of \$37,500.00. The TM (Town Manager) will check to be sure all Henwood Hill expenses are accounted for. Craig Allen thought trucking, gravel etc. should be reimbursed to the road budget for work and or material used for repair. Susan Harlow said the Selectboard opted to make the corner and one way section closest to North Westminster safer by placing guard rails and traffic mirrors. Further discussion on the road will take place at a later date.
6. **New Business (Discussion/Action)**
 - A. Animal Control - The TM noted Westminster, Putney, Dummerston, Windham and Newfane are interested in animal control by Windham Sheriff Department. All towns would need to have the same general animal control ordinance. Putney has adopted an ordinance like Westminster, Dummerston and Newfane are interested in changing their ordinance to comply as is Windham (with no current animal control ordinance. The officers' primary responsibility will be animal control.

- B. Town land off Pine Banks Road - update - The deposit for purchase of the land has been returned to the interested buyer due to a second right of way through Beechnut Lane. The TM has consulted legal counsel about relinquishing the second right of way and to confirm the right of being currently being used is the deeded right of way. There are two other interested buyers.
- C. School Warning - acceptance - Information included in packet - The board discussed including school articles for Windham Northeast Union Elementary School District within the town ballot to be voted on March 2, 2021. The board accepted including the articles within the town ballot procedure. The school ballot will be on different color paper. A separate informational card will be sent to Westminster voters.

7. Manager's Report:

- 1. Due to construction, the Town Clerk's office will be upstairs in the Town hall for the next few weeks with minimal service. Areas in front of the handicap lift and common area are next to be completed.
- 2. Collaborative financial processing policy first draft will be available 2/10/2021.
- 3. Town report will be sent to publisher 2/10/2021. The TM and members of board complimented Kelly Thayer for her hard work on the town report.
- 4. Eight properties are two or more years past due on property tax due amounting to approximately \$44,000.00 in delinquent tax.
- 5. Grants and Aid received to date is \$115,429.62. A total of approximately \$215,690.00 in grants is expected for FY 2022 in State aid. The money to be used for roads, bridges and Covid-19. The board discussed where money received in State aid was put or where it showed as revenue. Cynthia Stoddard stated typical process was if there was a project planned and application for grant completed, budget planning was done for the revenue expected. If the grant was not received the project was not done. Preplanning for the cost of the project, expense to taxpayer, grant money should all be stated in budgeting the project.

8. Boards and Commissions - nothing to report

9. Other Business - None

10. Date of Next Meeting- February 10, 2021

11. Adjournment: Craig Allen motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:34 p.m. K. Sheldon Beebe seconded.

Clerk (Millie Barry)

Date