

## WESTMINSTER SELECTBOARD MEETING

*Wednesday October 25, 2023 - 6:30 p.m.*

*In person at Westminster, VT Town Hall and remote by FACT TV*

**Selectboard Present:** Katrina Hamilton-Chair, Dan Crocker-Clerk, Stephen Major-Vice Chair, and Kevin Hughes, Jason Perry was absent

**Staff Present:** Charles (Chuck) Lawrence-Road Foreman, Millie Barry-Clerk – Remote-Pauline O'Brien-Town Clerk

**Others Present:** Bonnie Anderson, Rick Cowan, Gary Fox, Alison Latham and 1 person representing FACT TV

1. **Call to Order:** The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.  
Information to access a future meeting using a remote connection is available on the Town of Westminster website or by contacting the Westminster Town Hall.
2. **Adjustments to Agenda:** Kevin Hughes noted to add acceptance of a burial plot under new business. Katrina Hamilton noted to add to new business burial plot G., move road foreman's report to H. and executive session to I.
3. **Acceptance of Minutes:** October 11, 2023 – Dan Crocker motioned to accept the minutes, Stephen Major seconded motion with the following corrections – Mr. Crocker noted under communications and public comments, Lisa Merton, (not Martin) represented Windmill Hill Pinnacle Association. Also, under new business, C. town hall roof he made a motion to approve WE Brown roofing proposal not to exceed \$2,000.00 (not \$1,325.00). Katrina Hamilton said under other business, 8. the speed limit approved by the State of VT (SOV) was reduced to 45-mph (not 40-mph). In a letter dated 9/25/2023 the speed limit was reduced to 40-mph as written in minutes. Motion carried by 3-0 voice vote (one abstention) to approve minutes with corrections.
4. **Communications and Public Comments:** None
5. **Unfinished Business:** (Discussion/Action)
  - A. Town Hall Safe Update – Nothing to report
  - B. Aqueduct Update – Tabled
6. **New Business:** (Discussion/Action)-
  - A. Pine Banks Road Damage – motion to approve work – Ms. Hamilton noted after three contacts by Chuck Lawrence, Bazin Brothers was the only company available with the right equipment to perform the work at a cost of \$20,000.00-\$25,000.00

- and the work could be scheduled in November. Dan Crocker motioned to take up to \$25,000.00 out of the Contingency Fund to pay Bazin Brothers to do the work on Pine Banks Road overriding the bid process. Stephen Major seconded, motion carried 3-0 with one abstention.
- B. School Street Discussion: Hamilton noted there had been a lot of emails and complaints regarding traffic speeding and 'burning out' on the street. These are primarily willful violators; the sheriff was patrolling the area and had spoken to some individuals. Options that may be extreme could be speed bumps, speed humps and raised crosswalks. Mr. Lawrence will contact Windham Regional and/or VTrans (Vermont Agency of Transportation) regarding traffic counters to collect data of times and frequency of traffic.
  - C. Salt Purchase: Ms. Hamilton said the estimated amount of salt used on roads per year was 500 tons. American Rock Salt Company per ton price, \$95.50, Cargill, \$86.00 and Alpalachee, \$90.00, prices include delivery. Kevin Hughes motioned to approve the purchase of up to 500 tons of salt from Cargill at \$86.00 per ton. Stephen Major seconded; motion carried by 4-0 voice vote.
  - D. ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) Proposals – Information included in packet - Alison Latham appeared on behalf of the Westminster West Congregational Church noting the lift and boiler at church required significant unbudgeted repairs. She noted many groups and individuals use the building other than for church services. Kevin Hughes confirmed the entire community was able to use the building and the repairs were essential. Hughes motioned to approve ARPA funding proposal of \$2,839.76 (as submitted) with attached invoices for the Westminster West Congregational Church. Stephen Major seconded, motion carried by 4-0 voice vote.
  - E. Bike Path – Route 121 – Information included in packet – Rick Cowan, member of the Town of Rockingham Selectboard addressed the board seeking support for a walk/bike master plan and application for a mutual planning grant to provide the planning for infrastructure for pedestrians and bicycles for connectivity and safety for both towns. He said the two towns were interwoven by Route 121, Route 5 and Westminster West Road, all used by bicycles and pedestrians. He said Rockingham's Planning Commission/Selectboard had approved the application due November 1st and the Westminster Planning Commission approved the application unanimously. The grant would be up to \$50,000.00 with a \$5,000.00 local match. Rockingham decided it was fairest for Rockingham to pay \$3,750.00 and Westminster to pay \$1,250.00 of the local match, the SOV funding \$45,000.00. Rockingham would manage the grant application and paperwork. Also, at some time there would be a public meeting in Westminster for resident input. Dan Crocker confirmed the money will be used for a plan/feasibility study. Kevin Hughes confirmed the plan would be comprehensive, answer questions or contain contact information for questions regarding path location etc. Pauline O'Brien stated she was confused as she believed the Town had decided this matter was off the table. She noted concerns

- and dangers regarding present pedestrian/bike safety on Route 121 believing the road was narrow and the Route 121 bridge would not allow for safe passage across it when the new bridge was constructed. Hughes said this was for a feasibility study, Dan Crocker noted in previous minutes the board's support of the study. Hamilton questioned where \$1,250.00 would come from? Mr. Hughes motioned to authorize the Westminster Selectboard to distribute \$1,250.00 for a municipal planning grant bike plan/feasibility study for Westminster and Rockingham pending the availability of funds. Dan Crocker seconded; motion carried by 4-0 voice vote.
- F. Windmill Hill letter of support – Stephen Major motioned to approve a letter of support to the VT Housing Conservation Board requested by the Windmill Hill Pinnacle Association to apply for a grant to purchase and conserve 96 acres on Old Athens Road. Dan Crocker seconded; motion carried 3-0 with one abstention.
- G. Burial Plot – Kevin Hughes motioned October 25, 2023 the Town of Westminster, County of Windham, SOV for \$460.00 remise, release and forever Quit Claim unto Rosalyn Shaoul and her heirs and assigns two burial plots in the Westminster West Cemetery located in section B, row 19, bounded on the east by empty, on the north by empty and the west by stone wall as property line and on south by stone wall as property line and perpetual care thereon subject to whatever restrictions are imposed by law. Stephen Major seconded; motion carried by 4-0 voice vote.
- H. Road Foreman's Report – Chuck Lawrence said the road crew had been ditching on Milenkovich Road, cleaning shoulders to establish a turnaround before the house. Retired/part time employees will be on call for the winter. Road grading continues. The road crew will patch the Route 121 bridge on the east end. Truck #3 is waiting for a radiator. In another matter there will be a meeting on November 8, 2023 at 10:00 a.m. on Daigle Road to include a SOV engineer, the landowner, Mr. Lawrence and any selectboard member interested in attending for informational purposes. Larry Slason, legal counsel for the town, has been invited due to a previously issued legal opinion.
- I. Executive Session – Mr. Hughes motioned to move to executive session after other business on the agenda to discuss a contractual matter, there was no second to the motion. Mr. Major motioned to move to executive session to discuss a contractual matter, Mr. Hughes seconded, motion carried 4-0 voice vote. In another matter, Mr. Crocker motioned to approve spending up to \$2,000.00 for WE Brown to fix and repair the slate on the Town Hall roof. Mr. Hughes seconded; motion carried by 4-0 voice vote. **Note: The meeting minutes October 11, 2023 stated the board moved and approved to spend up to \$1,325.00 for WE Brown to make repairs to the Town Hall roof due to a clerical error. The motion was Dan Crocker moved to spend up to \$2,000.00 for repairs to the Town Hall roof. This motion was seconded by Jason Perry and was approved by voice vote.**

7. **Boards and Commissions:** Mr. Major said he believed one member was resigning from the planning commission and more members were needed. There is confusion within the planning commission (to keep a quorum and the planning commission moving forward) could he be appointed by the selectboard as a planning commission member? Mr. Major will contact the VLCT (Vermont League of Cities and Towns) or the Secretary of State office for an opinion on the question. Mr. Major said the commission was moving forward on approval of the old town plan.
8. **Other Business:** None
9. **Date of Next Meeting:** Wednesday, November 8, 2023 at 6:30 p.m.

The board moved to executive session at 7:42 p.m.

The board reconvened regular session at 7:55 p.m., no action taken.

10. **Adjournment:** Mr. Hughes motioned to adjourn at 7:55 p.m., Mr. Crocker seconded, meeting adjourned by 4-0 voice vote.

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Clerk

Date