

TOWN OF WEATHERSFIELD, VERMONT

SELECT BOARD

Select Board

**Weathersfield Center Meetinghouse
Weathersfield Center Road, Weathersfield VT**

Monday, August 20, 2018

7:00 PM

REGULAR MEETING

MINUTES

APPROVED 9/4/2018

Select Board Members Present: N. John Arrison
Daniel Boyer
C. Peter Cole
Tom Leach
Kelly Murphy

Select Board Members Absent:

Ed Morris, Town Manager

Others Present:

Sven Fedorow Darlene Kelly Nick Stapleton
Ray Stapleton Patty Kelly

1. Call to Order

Ms. Murphy called the meeting to order at 7:00PM.

2. Comments from Select Board and Town Manager

Mr. Morris said the first movie night on Saturday at Hoisington field was a success. 23 people showed up despite the weather. He said he will be able to advertise sooner for the next event which should help boost attendance.

Ms. Murphy suggested moving the discussion of the warrant up in the agenda so that Ms. Kelly doesn't have to stay so long at the meeting. Or the board could submit finance-related questions to Ms. Kelly prior to the meeting if that were preferable. Ms. Kelly said she didn't mind staying at the meeting as she finds it helpful to hear the board's discussions.

Ms. Murphy said there is a new bass fishing team in Windsor that consists primarily of Weathersfield athletes. Mike Tillman, owner of Tillman's bait shop in Weathersfield, is the coach. This is Vermont's first year being involved with the sport.

3. Comments from Citizens on topics not on the agenda

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Patty Kelly, local resident residing across from the Cady Hill/Weathersfield Center Road intersection commented on the high number of accidents she has witnessed in her four years at that location. She said often there is no police presence at the scene. There seem to be an equal number of accidents from all directions – either coming up on to the Center Road or turning down on to Cady Hill. Vehicles get stuck trying to make the turn or slide off the road into the ravine.

The board discussed various options to reduce the number of accidents. Mr. Stapleton said this will be an extremely expensive stretch of road to bring to state drainage standards and/or to make it a level intersection. Ms. Murphy asked that Mr. Morris and Mr. Stapleton look into the cost of altering the intersection or making Cady Hill a dead end road after the turnout above the Perkins Hill/Cady Hill intersection. She asked that Chief Daniels be consulted on accident data as well.

4. Review minutes from previous meetings – 8/6/2018

Additions/corrections/deletions:

a. None

Motion: To approve minutes of August 6, 2018 as presented.

Made by: Mr. Boyer **Second:** Mr. Leach

Vote: Unanimous in favor

5. Review Fire Commission/Selectboard Meeting from 8/13/2018

Ms. Murphy extended a tremendous “thank you” to all who participated in the joint fire commission/select board meeting on August 13th. The conversations were candid, open and very beneficial.

Mr. Leach agreed saying the involvement was “fantastic”. He said comments from senior members were positive and encouraging.

Mr. Arrison agreed and said the atmosphere was refreshingly different, noting that there were almost no comments opposing formation of a municipal department.

Mr. Boyer was surprised and said he looks forward to getting the equipment inventories.

Mr. Cole said he was impressed with the candid assessments from both departments; that all sides acknowledged the issues with the constant bickering and saying “enough is enough – it's time to do what's right for the town”. There are concerns about the costs that will be involved, but it is very encouraging.

Ms. Murphy agreed with everything that the board had said. She said figures show that the town and the two non-profits are spending \$225,000 a year on fire services, not

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including the payments on the fire truck, which is all being funded by community members by donations or tax dollars. She said she was impressed by the departments themselves saying that services could be provided more effectively and more safely.

Mr. Morris agreed with the board's comments and said he was surprised to see such consensus among the attendants. He acknowledged that there are still a lot of questions and concerns and that this transition will take time.

6. Ordinance Review

a. Mobile Homes

Land Use Administrator Sven Fedorow said the town's mobile home ordinance is redundant because HUD is directly involved in mobile home installations through the installers. HUD's standards are more stringent than the town's ordinance. He brought his findings to the Planning Commission who agree to repealing it entirely. He recommended the same to the board.

The board had no questions and agreed to move forward with the necessary public hearing.

Motion: To move to a public hearing to start the process of repealing the mobile home ordinance.

Made by: Mr. Cole **Second:** Mr. Boyer

Vote: Unanimous in favor

b. Highway Access

This ordinance was reviewed at the last meeting and changes were suggested. As directed, Mr. Morris took the board's questions regarding the 2nd paragraph of section IIA to the town's attorney who recommended removing the paragraph entirely or, if the board needed a disclaimer, just retaining the first sentence of the paragraph. Mr. Morris said he favored removing the paragraph entirely.

Motion: To omit/delete the 2nd paragraph of section IIA of the Highway Access Ordinance.

Made by: Mr. Cole **Second:** Mr. Leach

Vote: Unanimous in favor

7. Approve removing the town definition of *appurtenant* from the Zoning Bylaws

Mr. Fedorow said, in response to a variance hearing before the zoning board, he has found a court case in which the court stated that the definition of "appurtenant" as used in relation to accessory dwelling units, should not mean "attached". The town's definition of appurtenant means "attached" and is therefore in violation of the case law. Mr. Federow

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consulted with the VLCT legal department who advised him to ask the select board to support him in not applying the definition until such time as the bylaw can be changed.

Motion: To allow the Land Use Administrator to disregard the definition of “appurtenant” in the current bylaws to comply with state law.

Made by: Mr. Cole **Second:** Mr. Boyer

Vote: Mr. Arrison voted no; all others voted in favor – motion carries.

The planning commission is asked to make haste with the amendments.

8. Approve Town Festival October 6th, 2018

There is a growing list of activities for this event.

Motion: To approve the Weathersfield Parks and Recreation Commission holding the third annual Town-wide Festival on October 6th, 2018.

Made by: Mr. Boyer **Second:** Mr. Arrison

Vote: Unanimous in favor

9. Determine Town delegate to the VLCT Annual Meeting

Motion: To appoint the Town Manager to represent the Town of Weathersfield at the VLCT annual meeting.

Made by: Mr. Cole **Second:** Mr. Leach

Vote: Unanimous in favor

10. Discuss VLCT Draft Policy

Once again, Mr. Morris asked the board to review the VLCT Municipal Policy and to make any comments or edits they feel necessary. He asked that comments be focused on the broader scope of the policy and not individual words.

Ms. Murphy said she takes issue with the fact that nearly every item in the policy calls for taxpayer money.

Mr. Morris said VLCT tries to stop unfunded mandates or pushing costs onto towns.

Mr. Arrison said VLCT has done a good job representing the towns.

Mr. Morris gave the board more time to review the policy. He also said he felt the board should be routinely (more) up to speed on legislative actions during the legislative session.

11. Approve reallocating VDCP loan program money to the 1879 Schoolhouse VDCP grant

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Ms. Kelly explained that the town has \$9932.57 left over from a VDCP loan program that took place in the early 2000s. Ms. Kelly and Mr. Hier researched what could be done with the money which is just sitting in an account. They recommended that the money be divided equally with Cavendish, a partner in the program, and that it be applied to a community development project.

Motion: To approve moving \$4966.28 to the 1879 Schoolhouse fund to be used to build the handicap access ramp and to send \$4966.29 to the Town of Cavendish as approved by the voters.

Made by: Mr. Cole **Second:** Mr. Leach

Vote: Unanimous in favor

12. Approve moving forward with the purchase of the trail easement and property from the Abbotts for town forest access

Nick Stapleton provided some background on activities to procure access to the town forest through Emily Abbott's land and somewhat across Charles Johnson's land. An agreement has been reached to procure land for a parking area in exchange for some of the Abbott's delinquent taxes, but access issues remain. Based on recent developments regarding land ownership, Mr. Stapleton asked the board to move forward with completion of the land purchase from Mrs. Abbott as had been agreed to in earlier negotiations.

Motion: To authorize the Town Manager to complete the purchase of land and the easement as written in the Purchase and Sale Agreement previously agreed upon.

Made by: Mr. Arrison **Second:** Mr. Cole

Vote: Unanimous in favor

13. Credit Card authorization

Mr. Morris asked that the Town Manager, the Highway Superintendent, and the Library Director each be given a credit card, each with a \$2000 limit. Each party will sign the appropriate documentation. The Library Trustees have agreed to this as well.

Motion: To approve issuing a credit card to the Town Manager, the Highway Superintendent, and the Library Director, with each credit card having a \$2000 limit.

Made by: Mr. Cole **Second:** Mr. Arrison

Vote: Unanimous in favor

14. Budget Discussion

Mr. Morris presented the draft new format for the annual budget. It contains a section from each department, each containing a mission statement for the department, the department objectives, accomplishments for the current fiscal year, goals for the next fiscal year, outcomes of the department's investment, performance measures, and the line item budget. The intent is to move away from a strictly line item budget and toward a program-based

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budget. Mr. Morris said he also wanted to work toward a capital improvement budget as well.

Mr. Morris expressed appreciation for the staff who have worked on this project while upholding their regular work load.

Ms. Kelly and Mr. Stapleton expressed their support of this approach to budgeting and explained why they did so.

Mr. Morris said the Library is moving toward this as well, even though they don't have to. He said the elected officials don't have to adhere to this approach either, although he is trying to work with everyone on it.

Ms. Murphy asked Mr. Morris to ask the library trustees to have their minutes reflect their support of this program and any invitations they extend to Mr. Morris to participate in their discussions.

Everyone acknowledged that it will take time to make this change.

The question arose as to how to move to funding a municipal fire department. Mr. Morris suggested using the existing fire commission budget and adding the fire chief's salary to it.

The question was raised as to when an item goes into the budget or is put to the voter as a separate article. Mr. Morris said the select board uses its judgment to decide what goes in the budget, what goes on the ballot and what gets delayed based on their (the board's) best judgment.

Ms. Murphy urged clarity from all departments (in their budget requests) to help the board make better choices.

This discussion and the discussion on the CIP will continue at the next meeting.

15. Appointments

Motion: To appoint Matt Keniston to the 1879 Schoolhouse Committee as the local contractor representative.

Made by: Mr. Boyer **Second:** Mr. Cole

Vote: Unanimous in favor

16. Approve Warrants

Motion: To approve the warrants for August 20, 2018 as follow:

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General Funds	Operating Expenses	\$34,332.98
	Payroll	\$14,269.73
Highway Fund	Operating Expenses	\$23,815.48
	Payroll	\$10,030.76
Solid Waste Management Fund		
	Operating Expenses	\$6,209.60
	Payroll	\$1,458.42
Library	Operating Expenses	\$3,403.55
	Payroll	\$1,782.69
Grants	Operating Expenses	\$3,424.52
Agency Monies	Operating Expenses	\$
Reserves		\$
Grand Totals	Operating Expenses	\$71,186.13
	Payroll	\$27,541.60

Made by: Mr. Arrison **Second:** Mr. Boyer
Vote: Unanimous

17. Future Meeting Agenda Items

18. Adjourn

Motion: To adjourn the meeting

Made by: Mr. Arrison **Second:** Mr. Boyer

Vote: Unanimous in favor

The meeting adjourned at 8:58 PM

Respectfully submitted,
deForest Bearse

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N. John Arrison, Selector

Daniel E. Boyer, Selector

C. Peter Cole, Vice-Chairperson

Tom Leach, Clerk

Kelly Murphy, Chairperson