

TOWN OF WEATHERSFIELD, VERMONT

SELECT BOARD

Select Board
Martin Memorial Hall
5259 Route 5, Ascutney VT
Monday, August 6, 2018
7:00 PM
REGULAR MEETING

MINUTES
APPROVED 8/20/2018

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:

Alex Longtine David Fuller Darlene Kelly
Edith Stillson Ray Stapleton

1. Call to Order

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

(Ms. Murphy asked to move item #5 to the top of the agenda. There were no objections.)

Ms. Murphy read a letter recognizing Alex Longtine for his ten years of dedicated service to the town.

2. Comments from Select Board and Town Manager

Mr. Arrison announced that town caucuses are coming up for candidates for justice of the peace; democratic caucus is at the Town Office at 7PM on Thursday. Anyone that wants to be on the ballot in November for JP position needs to get hold of the Town Chair and attend the caucus.

a. Cell Tower Update

Work on the tower is to be done by the end of August.

b. Budget Committee Request

Mr. Morris made another request for new members.

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- c. Field of Dreams Follow Up
(See below.)

3. Comments from Citizens on topics not on the agenda

Mr. Stapleton said they completed about three miles of ditching, 2400 feet of which was stone-lined, in the last 5 weeks. He felt the program was a success and would like to do it again next summer.

Mr. Fuller expressed his opinion about the budget committee. He said the the board had been overdoing the charge of the committee and that they had gotten “way out of bounds”, particularly with meeting at 7 AM. He felt it used too much of the Manager's time. He suggested not meeting with them separately – instead let them decide what they feel about the budget on their own. He felt there was also much animosity with the committee.

Mr. Morris agreed and said now they will get their information at the same time as the Board and then work on their own.

Mr. Morris and Mr. Fuller said the music event went well. There were a few minor incidents, but they were easily resolved. The emergency access worked very well. Mr. Fuller estimated there were 300-350 cars. Mr. Morris remarked that there were several other events that weekend in addition to this one and that all went well.

4. Review minutes from previous meetings –

Additions/corrections/deletions:

pg 3 – towards the bottom – correct Ms Kelly/Ms Murphy

Motion: To approve as corrected

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

Vote: Unanimous in favor

5. Employee recognition (Alex Longtine?)

(See above)

6. Fire Services Update

a. Matrix

August 13th is the next fire commission meeting. The select board will join them. The new minute-taker will record the meeting for the fire commission. Ms. Murphy said she had invited all fire personnel to attend - all members would be welcome to come and participate. She said there would be a quick presentation of the matrix - how it was reviewed, discussed and prioritized by the Board followed by discussion with all present.

The meeting will be held at the school at 7PM in the gym.

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The Board then reviewed the matrix that had been re-organized in accordance with Board members' requests at the last meeting. The matrix will be distributed to the fire commission prior to the meeting. Discussion of it will be the focus of the evening.

Additional topics raised during the meeting that are not directly related to the matrix discussion will be “staged” on a white board and addressed by the commission at a later commission meeting.

The purpose of this meeting is to hear where they (the departments) stand on these matrix items.

Nancy Nutile-McMenemy will run the meeting as the Commission chair. Ms. Murphy will facilitate on this topic.

There will be two sets of minutes from this meeting – one for each board.

b. Municipal Study Update

Mr. Morris has begun gathering information for his presentation on what a municipal fire department would look like. He asked the Board if there were specific questions they would like answered.

Mr. Leach wanted to know more about call types – do area departments answer all types of calls? He mentioned the strain on volunteers that comes from answering a large number of calls, not all of which are fire-related or actual emergencies.

Ms. Murphy said, if Mr. Morris speaks to towns that have made the switch from volunteer private non-profit to municipal, was there anything they would have done differently or is there a way to make the transition go smoother (if there were bumps in the road)? Would they do it again?

Mr. Arrison asked for budget information.

Mr. Morris said he is aiming to have a basic proposal ready in September.

7. Approve Application for Village Designation

Mr. Morris has been working for over a year toward applying for village designation for Ascutney and Perkinsville. The designation would provide tax credits for restoration of existing buildings for commercial use and opens up grant possibilities.

There was much discussion about the boundaries of each village area and discussion about the criteria used to set the boundaries. The Ascutney “village” will extend from the Newell Green house at the intersection to the Claire Murray building on Route 5. The Perkinsville village extends from the mid-point of the green to the 1879 schoolhouse. The boundaries can be changed later as changes take place.

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Motion: To approve applying for Village Designation Status in the Villages of Perkinsville and Ascutney as drafted.

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

Vote: Unanimous in favor

8. Approve the use of reserves to purchase a shed for the transfer station.

Mr. Morris sought approval for using \$5000 from the Solid Waste Reserves to place a pre-constructed shed at the transfer station to be used as a warming shed.

Motion: To approve using up to (not to exceed) \$5000 from the solid waste reserve for the purpose of purchasing a shed to be placed at the transfer station.

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

Discussion on the motion: Lumber must be pressure treated to meet NFIP standards as the shed will be in the flood plain. It is more cost effective to purchase the shed than to construct it in-house.

Ms. Murphy asked if Mr. Morris would consider looking into the cost of putting a solar panel on the shed's roof that would generate the power need to run the shed's needs. Mr. Morris said he is already working on a larger solar project that could conceivably provide all of the town's power needs (for powering municipal buildings).

Vote on the motion: All in favor of motion

(Note: There is \$63,000 in the reserves)

9. Approve accepting expanded road right of way along Skyline Road (482 Skyline Rd).

Alan Swanson is offering an easement to the Town over his property on Skyline Drive for the purpose of improving sight distances on a bad curve in the road. He is not asking for any compensation for the easement. The Town can keep the brush and trees cut back and re-shape the bank as needed.

Motion: To approve the Town Manager accepting this easement for the property located at 432 Skyline Drive for the purpose of improving the sight distance.

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

Vote: Unanimous in favor

The Board thanked Mr. Swanson for being pro-active.

10. Policy Review

a. Personnel Policy Update (second reading)

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The Board reviewed the revised Personnel Policy. Previous changes were highlighted in yellow.

Mr. Leach disagreed with providing sick time and vacation to any employee working less than 20 hours a week.

Mr. Arrison felt it was unfair for everyone over a certain time limit to get full benefits and those below it get nothing. He said he favored a proportional approach.

Mr. Morris said part-time employees are the hardest to keep and offering something could be an incentive to stay.

A maximum of 200 hours of vacation time and 720 hours of sick time can be accrued.

Motion: To approve the changes to the Personnel Policy as written

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

Vote: Unanimous in favor

b. Ordinance Review

Highway Access ordinance:

Mr. Arrison questioned the last sentence of section IIA. Its meaning is difficult to understand. Ms. Murphy asked about the first sentence in the same paragraph. Who determines inaccessibility and how is it done?

It was agreed to have the Town Attorney review the ordinance and return to it later.

Large Gathering/ Assembly

Ms. Murphy asked to have “athletic fields” removed from the list of exempted sites under the definition of “Large Assembly” on the grounds that school athletic events are covered by the school, but Hoisington field, which is an athletic field, is overseen by the Trustees. There are many events at Hoisington Field that should be covered by a large gathering permit that would be exempted.

After discussion, it was agreed to remove “athletic field” it from the exemptions.

11. Strategic Planning

a. Mission Statement

Ms. Murphy said the Board has been talking about a strategic plan since Mr. Morris came to the Town and transitioning the line-item budget review into a program budget. What follows are the beginning steps to achieve that goal.

Mr. Morris introduced his (draft) Mission Statement and list of Focus Areas, all directed toward shifting the budget process to a more project-based budget than just a line-item

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budget.

The mission statement should be revisited as the Strategic Plan develops and every few years thereafter.

Mr. Morris asked the Board what projects they would like to see undertaken before the budget is developed. He said the department heads are working on what they would like to accomplish in the next budget year.

A project-based budget should make more sense to the voters, but it will require shortening up the number of line items.

Mr. Morris gave an example of a mission statement and objectives for his office. This same format would be completed by each department.

Mr. Cole said he would like to see “bottom-up stuff” in addition to the top-down approach.

Ms. Murphy would like department heads present at budget discussions so the Board can speak to them directly.

Mr. Arrison said that affordability is still key to it all.

Ms. Murphy asked to change the mission statement to read, “It is the mission of the Town of Weathersfield to *encourage* a healthy, safe and resilient community by delivering high-quality municipal services in an efficient and fiscally responsible manner, *promoting sustainable growth that protects our natural and historic resources and preserving our sense of rural community, integrity and quality of life.*”

Mr. Cole asked if this addressed responsible economic development. Ms. Murphy said that was something she had placed in the focus area – economic development, housing, etc. Mr. Morris felt that responsible economic development was covered in the mission statement and cautioned against getting too detailed in the statement.

Mr. Arrison said the Board should read the Town Plan to make sure they were not being redundant (with the strategic plan).

Ms. Murphy said the Town Plan should fall under the mission statement. Mr. Arrison said the Town Plan *is* the mission statement – it may be long, but it covers “just about everything”. He said the Board should not duplicate something that's already in the Town Plan – at the very least, not to contradict it.

Mr. Morris said there should be a strategic guiding principle from the select board, even though at times it may appear that the strategic plan and the Town Plan are overlapping.

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There followed an extensive discussion on the roles of each plan and how they will/should/might fit together.

The discussion then turned to the focus areas. Ms. Murphy asked to have town finances added to the community resiliency area. She cited the Town's recovery from Irene as an example of resiliency because the Town had the funds available at the time the recovery needed to start.

Mr. Cole asked to have paving needs included in road maintenance.

Ms. Murphy asked to add housing and to ensure that zoning supports responsible home ownership.

To be continued.

12. Appointments

a. Re-appointment to the Weathersfield Fire Commission-Citizen At large Term ending March 2019 to Nancy Nutile-McMenemy

The Board received a letter from Ms. McMenemy asking to be reappointed to the Fire Commission.

Motion: So moved

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

Vote: Unanimous in favor

Ms. Murphy read the list of board openings.

Ms. Murphy read a letter from Meals on Wheels thanking the voters for their support and requesting the \$400 approved at Town Meeting.

13. Approve Warrants

Motion: To approve the warrants for August 6, 2018 as follow:

General Funds	Operating Expenses	\$43,986.14
	Payroll	\$20,618.24

Highway Fund	Operating Expenses	\$39,768.10
	Payroll	\$14,874.48

Solid Waste Management Fund		
	Operating Expenses	\$7,530.86
	Payroll	\$2,180.43

Library	Operating Expenses	\$1,438.34
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	Payroll	\$2,674.03
Grants	Operating Expenses	\$13,769.60
Agency Monies	Operating Expenses	\$0.00
Reserves		\$0.00
Long Term Debt		\$0.00
Grand Totals	Operating Expenses	\$106,493.04
	Payroll	\$40,347.18

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

Mr. Leach asked about an item for reimbursement for child support. Ms. Kelly explained that it is employee garnishment of wages.

Mr. Arrison asked about the grant amount. Ms. Kelly explained that it is a payment on the library expansion project.

Vote: Unanimous in favor

14. Future Meeting Agenda Items

15. Adjourn

Motion: To adjourn the meeting

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

Vote: Unanimous in favor

The meeting adjourned at 8:52 PM

Respectfully submitted,
deForest Bearse

WEATHERSFIELD SELECTBOARD

N. John Arrison, Selector

Daniel E. Boyer, Selector

C. Peter Cole, Vice-Chairperson

Tom Leach, Clerk

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Kelly Murphy, Chairperson