

TOWN OF WEATHERSFIELD, VERMONT

SELECT BOARD

Select Board  
Martin Memorial Hall  
5259 Route 5, Ascutney, Vermont  
Monday, April 18, 2016  
7:00 PM  
REGULAR MEETING

MINUTES  
APPROVED 5/16/2016

**Select Board Members Present:** Daniel Boyer  
C. Peter Cole  
Lynn Esty  
David Fuller  
Kelly Murphy

Ed Morris, Town Manager

**Others Present:**

Edith Stillson	Bette Jo Esty	Ray Moore	Ryan Pelletier
Steve Hier	Alec Longton (?)	Brenda Richardson	Susan Prasch
John Esty	Wes Hazeltine	Colin Butler	Donnie Huntley

**1. Call to Order**

Mr. Boyer called the meeting to order at 7:00PM.

**2. Changes to the Agenda**

Mr. Boyer drew attention to the revised agenda format. He said the changes have been made to better comply with the Open Meeting Law.

Mr. Hazeltine asked if item #14 could be moved up higher on the agenda as many of the Highway Department employees were in attendance. Mr. Boyer agreed to move it to position 7.

Ms. Murphy asked to have a discussion about the interim zoning administrator added to the agenda. Mr. Boyer agreed to add the discussion at position 15.

**3. Comments from Select Board and Town Manager**

Select Board

Mr. Boyer said that Cookie Shand had thanked the Select Board for taking part in the annual Town Challenge.

Mr. Boyer said he had met with the Martin Hall Trustees. They had walked around the building and grounds noting items that needed work or repair. He said he is assisting in getting estimates for repair of the Palladian window. If there are sufficient funds in the budget, the project will be put out to bid.

Mr. Fuller said he had asked to have a discussion regarding social media and the Town seal and noted that the discussion was not on this agenda.

Ms. Murphy asked to have an executive session added to the agenda. Mr. Boyer said the discussion needed to take place in open session because it was a policy discussion. Mr. Fuller said that if a board member requests an executive session, the request should be respected. Ms. Murphy was concerned that if an executive session was not on the agenda, then the board couldn't go into executive session during that meeting. Mr. Morris assured her that that was not the case. It is helpful to know ahead of time, but not required.

Mr. Morris drew attention to an email he had received from the Regional Planning Commission, a copy of which was in the Board's packet. The Commission is soliciting feedback from member towns. Mr. Morris asked the board to consider the request and send him any items they wish to pass on.

**4. Comments from Citizens on topics not on the agenda**

Mrs. Bearse asked for clarification of Chip Cobb's appointment to the Veterans Memorial Committee. Mrs. Esty said she had appointed Mr. Cobb to the committee, but not as the Select Board representative.

Mrs. Bearse asked about the status of the cell tower in Ascutney – the board had been engaged in getting the tower changed to look more like the “tree” that was presented to the Town, but the discussion had been dropped and the tower still looks the same. Mr. Boyer said the board would resume the pursuit.

**5. Review minutes from previous meetings –**

**Additions/corrections/deletions:**

a. Remove the words “as select board representative” in the appointment of Chip Cobb to the Veterans Memorial Committee.

**Motion:** To accept the minutes of April 4, 2016 with corrections.

**Made by:** Mrs. Esty **Second:**

Mr. Fuller said he had sent an email to Mrs. Bearse stating that a motion had been made after the board came out of executive session, but he did not recall the words of the

motion. He remembered that it was a split vote. Mr. Morris said he would look at his notes and send them to Mrs. Bearse.

Mrs. Esty rescinded her motion on the grounds that the minutes were not complete.

**Vote:** None taken.

**6. Center Grove Wedding Reception Permission**

Susan Prasch requested use of the Center Grove for her daughter's wedding on August 6<sup>th</sup>. She asked that they be allowed to take pictures in the Grove, string lights on a couple of the trees, and perhaps play some lawn games. Mr. Boyer stated that picture-taking was acceptable. He and Mr. Cole asked her not to allow vehicle parking anywhere but in designated parking areas. Mr. Morris said he and Mr. Hazeltine had met with a forester that morning (the forester is sending a long list of recommendations for the board to discuss) and the forester said the trees are in relatively healthy condition for their age. He said wrapping lights around the trees would not be a problem, but recommended not piercing the bark.

Mr. Cole asked that she leave the Grove exactly as she finds it. Mr. Hazeltine said he could put out some "Event Ahead" signs and traffic cones at the cross walk from the parking area.

**Motion:** To approve the application for August 6<sup>th</sup> for the use of the Memorial Grove and Center Church and to waive the fees.

**Made by:** Mr. Fuller **Second:** Ms. Murphy

**Vote:** Unanimous in favor

**Item #9: Approve \$55,000 loan approved by voters per Article 10**

Mr. Hier stated that the voters had passed Article 10 at the last Town Meeting authorizing the Town to borrow \$55,000 immediately for three years to fund replacement of the heating system at the Highway Garage and the new well on the adjacent property. Mr. Hier recommended that the Town borrow the money from People's United Bank at a rate of 2.0%.

There was some discussion regarding who would/could act as the board's clerk for signing the loan documents. The consensus of the board was to have the Town Clerk sign.

**Motion:** To authorize borrowing \$55,000 from People's United Bank at a rate of 2.0% and to authorize the Town Clerk to sign as clerk of the board.

**Made by:** Mrs. Esty **Second:** Mr. Fuller

Ms. Murphy asked if the Town could wait until closer to the end of the fiscal year when there may be sufficient unused funds to cover the expense. Mr. Hier explained that the Town's cash flow is low at this time of year and that the Town would either borrow on its line of credit or borrow the funds outright – the interest would be the same.

**Amendment to the motion:** To appoint Mr. Boyer as clerk for tonight.

**Vote on the amended motion:** Unanimous in favor

**7. Item #10: Resolution to change signers at the bank**

Mr. Hier stated that Esther Allen has resigned as the Assistant Treasurer. Colleen Hammond has been appointed in her place. Mr. Hier asked the board to adopt a new Business Deposit Account Certified Resolution, which will add Ms. Hammond as an account signer and remove Ms. Allen.

**Motion:** To adopt the new Business Deposit Account Certified Resolution.

**Made by:** Mrs. Esty   **Second:** Mr. Cole

**Vote:** Unanimous in favor

Ms. Murphy asked how the Assistant Treasurer is appointed. Mr. Hier said that state statutes authorize the Treasurer to do so. Mr. Morris said he is working with VLCT to create a written procedure for the appointment.

**Item #14: Vacation Discussion**

Mr. Morris presented to the board a spreadsheet entitled, "Weathersfield Employee Vacation Analysis". The sheet shows accumulated hours/weeks of vacation time for Town employees (without names) and the number of hours over the maximum allowable under the Town's vacation policy. A second sheet showed the cost of the vacation time.

Mr. Fuller asked to have the current vacation policy read aloud. (There was some confusion about which policy is in effect. It appeared that the 1993 policy is the policy currently in effect.) Mr. Morris read the policy aloud.

Mr. Morris said he had discussed this issue with the Town Attorney. He reported that Mr. Callahan said that any vacation time that shows on an employee's pay stub is owed to that employee and that the Town is legally obligated to honor it. Mr. Morris said the plan is to ask the employees to take some extra vacation time and to pay out some to get the Town eventually back into compliance with the policy. If the Town were to make a single payout to resolve the issue, the cost would be \$23,856.33. He said most of this

has been expensed through the accrual accounting. The actual cost to this year's budget would be \$4205.32. He recommended taking 2-3 years to pull this back into alignment.

Mr. Hazeltine said that some of the accumulation was a result of Tropical Storms Irene and Sandy when everyone worked extra. He said he has a very dedicated crew who willingly do what needs to be done, often at the expense of their vacation time. He also said that both Mr. Melen and Mr. Mullen were aware of and authorized the rollover of accumulated vacation time. Mr. Hazeltine also said that the smaller number of employees in his department can make it difficult for them to take vacations.

Mr. Fuller stated that this issue has arisen because previous managers had waived the vacation policy without the board's knowledge or consent. It was agreed that perhaps the policy should be reviewed and amended to account for disasters.

The board thanked the highway crew for the excellent work they do and assured them that no one would lose any of their accumulated vacation time.

- 8. Select board representative request for the Senior Solutions Advisory Council**  
Senior Solutions (formerly Council on Aging) is seeking volunteers to serve on their Advisory Council. They are looking for representatives from each of the towns in Windham and Windsor Counties. The board agreed to add it to the list of Town appointments. Mr. Boyer asked the public for anyone interested to notify the board.
- 9. Review Procedure for fixing dry hydrants/Second Reading (Continued from 03/03/2016)**

Mr. Morris said that the four-day limit for repairs is unreasonable and that the board should wait until John Woods' report is complete before proceeding further.

There was discussion about the policy, how it should be amended, and that fact that it had been in limbo for a lengthy period of time.

**Motion:** To table the second reading to the May 16<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**Made by:** Mr. Cole      **Second:** Ms. Murphy

**Vote:** Unanimous in favor.

It is understood in this motion that the Town Manager will meet with Mr. Hazeltine and both fire chiefs regarding the policy before the May 16<sup>th</sup> meeting.

- 10. Approve \$55,000 loan approved by voters per Article 10**  
(Taken up earlier in the agenda)

**11. Resolution to change signers at the bank**

(Taken up earlier in the agenda)

**12. Review and sign Town Highway Annual Financial Plan**

**Motion:** To approve the annual financial plan –town highways for FY17 as presented.

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

**Vote:** Unanimous in favor

**13. Review Town Meeting and discuss future of Saturday meeting**

Mrs. Esty received a thank-you from Windsor County Partners for allowing them to host the luncheon at the Town Meeting. Mr. Fuller felt that the turnout was not greater than it would have been during the week. Apparently, some people forgot or did not know the meeting had been changed to Saturday. Ms. Murphy felt that having the televised coverage several days before the voting was helpful. Mr. Hazeltine said several people had told him that the audio on the TV coverage was not good.

**14. Discuss timeframes of budget review**

The board again discussed the format and depth of detail of the financial reporting they receive in their meeting packets. Some wish to see a lot of details; others are satisfied with Mr. Butler's summary. Mr. Butler said he can continue to provide the summary on paper and put the detailed information on the Town's website.

There was discussion regarding a \$10,000 write-off of uncollected hazmat income. Mr. Butler explained that the write-off comes from a time when the Town was doing the billing. It is not happening now, as the town no longer does the billing.

Mr. Butler explained the reason for the wide fluctuations in the workers comp figures.

The Town is 75% of the way through the fiscal year. Any lines significantly over or under that number should be scrutinized.

**15. Interim Zoning Administrator (by request of Ms. Murphy)**

(Former Town Manager Jim Mullen is serving as the Town's interim Zoning Administrator.) Ms. Murphy wanted to know how Mr. Mullen came to be hired as the interim ZA and why the board had not been consulted. Mr. Morris said he had made the decision to hire Mr. Mullen for 2-3 weeks while the Town works through the process of hiring a permanent ZA.

**16. Vacation Discussion**

(Taken up earlier in the agenda)

**17. Appointments**

**Motion:** To appoint Paul Tillman to the Planning Commission

**Made by:** Mrs. Esty    **Second:** Ms. Murphy

**Vote:** Unanimous in favor

**18. Approve Warrants**

**Motion:** To approve the warrants for April 18, 2016 as follow:

General Funds	Operating Expenses	\$36,979.99
	Payroll	\$13,039.21
Highway Fund	Operating Expenses	\$4,027.64
	Payroll	\$11,696.51
Solid Waste Management Fund		
	Operating Expenses	\$9,088.48
	Payroll	\$1,035.56
Library	Operating Expenses	\$194.75
Grants	Operating Expenses	\$668.96
Agency Monies	Operating Expenses	\$0.00
Reserves		\$0.00

**Made by:** Mr. Fuller    **Second:** Ms. Murphy

**Vote:** Unanimous in favor

**19. Future Meeting Agenda Items**

Mrs. Esty asked to have an executive session added to the next agenda to discuss a payroll issue.

Ms. Murphy asked to have the discussion of the Town Fireworks Policy moved out of “Future Agenda Items” up to the next meeting and to include the state statutes in the packet.

Ms. Murphy asked to have the discussion of social meeting added to the next meeting agenda.

**20. Adjourn**

**Motion:** To adjourn the meeting

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

**Vote:** Unanimous in favor

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

*deForest Bearse*

**WEATHERSFIELD SELECTBOARD**

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Daniel E. Boyer, Chairperson

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C. Peter Cole, Selector

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David T. Fuller, Selector

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Lynn Esty, Selector

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Kelly Murphy