

**Weathersfield Select Board
Meeting Minutes
January 30, 2017**

Present: Dan Boyer, Chair; Lynn Esty, Vice Chair; Kelly Murphy, Clerk; Peter Cole, Selector

Absent: Amy Beth Main, Selector

Community Members: Josh Dauphin, West Weathersfield Fire Chief; Nancy Heatley, representing CRJC-Mount Ascutney Sub Committee.

Chair called meeting to order at 7:04pm

i. Lynn Esty made a motion to approve the warning for Annual Town Meeting for Saturday, March 4th and Tuesday, March 7th, 2017. Peter seconded the motion.

- 1) Ed made an edit of Article 19, remove the before "The Current".
- 2) Lynn requested changing Article 15, remove "the creation of".
- 3) Article 4 was added:

"Shall the voters of the Town of Weathersfield exempt from Town property taxation the land and building owned by the West Weathersfield Fire Department, Inc., located at Map No. 03, Block No. 02, Parcel No. 26.0, for a period of five years in accordance with the provisions of Title 32, Section 3840, of the Vermont Statutes annotated?"

Historically, this is in Vermont Statute, Title 32, which Ed read to the Board. The Abatement Law has seven reasons for abating taxes; however, a non-profit exemption is not included in those reasons. The Statute refers to non-profits. Josh Dauphin stated the WWVFD has not formally applied but it has been approved by previous Select Boards.

4) Article 5 was added:

"Resolved, the Town of Weathersfield formally requests that TransCanada or subsequent owners of the Bellows Falls Dam and/or the Wilder Dam on the Connecticut River modify current dam operations and create a mitigation fund to reimburse towns and landowners for any and all damages, if it is shown that there is a causal relationship between the operation of those dams, resulting in the deterioration of the riverbank and attendant roads and farmland."

Discussion: A nonbinding resolution could be brought to the floor or this could be placed on the warning. Ms. Esty said there's a benefit to it going into the book, so people could read it ahead of time. Peter reaffirmed the benefit of putting it on the warning ahead of time. Board agreed to place the language in the warning as Article Five.

Kelly Murphy stated she has personally experienced and watched the rise of the river levels regularly during the summer time when the dam has been released, although she could not speak on any resulting erosion.

Motion was approved to approve the warning. No opposition or abstentions.

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*310 Ann O'Neil
Town Clerk*

- II. Review and approve budget documents.

Peter Cole made a motion to review and approve the final budget documents; Lynn Esty seconded the motion.

Prior to Town Meeting, the Select Board will discuss what to include in the PowerPoint presentation.

Motion was approved. No opposition or abstentions.

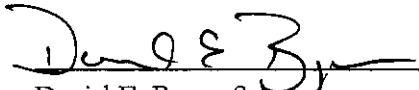
The Select Board will meet on March 9th as the reorganization meeting, following Town Meeting. March 6 and 20 are scheduled for the Planning Commission as hearings for the Town Plan.

Lynn made a motion to adjourn; Peter Seconded at 7:45pm.

Respectfully,

Kelly Murphy

WEATHERSFIELD SELECTBOARD


Daniel E. Boyer, Selectot

C. Peter Cole, Selector


Kelly Murphy, Chairperson


Lynn Esty, Vice-Chairperson

Amy Beth Main, Clerk

TOWN OF WEATHERSFIELD, VERMONT

SELECT BOARD

**Select Board Agenda
Martin Memorial Hall
5259 Route 5, Ascutney, VT
Monday, January 30th, 2017
7:00 P.M.
SPECIAL MEETING**

1. Call to Order
2. Review and Approve Warning for 2017 Annual Town Meeting
3. Review and Approve Final Budget Documents
4. Adjourn

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TOWN OF WEATHERSFIELD, VERMONT

SELECT BOARD

Select Board
Martin Memorial Hall
5259 Route 5, Ascutney VT
Monday, January 16, 2017
7:00 PM
REGULAR MEETING

MINUTES
APPROVED 2/6/2017

Select Board Members Present: Daniel Boyer
Lynn Esty
Amy Beth Main
Kelly Murphy

Select Board Members Absent: C. Peter Cole

Ed Morris, Town Manager

Note: There was no SAPA TV coverage of this meeting.

Others Present:

Wes Hazeltine Beverly Howe-Fluette
Julia Lloyd Wright Vic Hall

1. Call to Order

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

2. Comments from Select Board and Town Manager

Mrs. Esty announced that there will be public hearings on the Town Plan at the Select Board meetings on February 6th and February 20th. Ms. Wright said there had been some last-minute changes and those dates may have to be changed.

3. Comments from Citizens on topics not on the agenda

There were no comments.

4. Review minutes from previous meetings – January 5, 2017 (Note: the date on the agenda was incorrect)

Additions/corrections/deletions:

a. None

Motion: To accept the minutes of the January 5th, 2017 meeting as written.

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

Vote: Unanimous in favor

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SELECT BOARD

5. Aging in Place

Ms. Kehew was not present.

6. Weatherize Kick-Off Event/January 28th, 2017/Weathersfield School

Energy Coordinator, Julia Lloyd Wright and Vic Hall (from the Windsor energy committee) announced the kick-off of the "Weatherize the Upper Valley" program which is scheduled to take place on Saturday, January 28th at the Weathersfield School from 10 AM to 11:30 AM. According to materials distributed by Ms. Wright, this is a pilot program that will provide guidance and assistance to homeowners in the upper valley in weatherizing their homes. They asked for assistance from the Board in getting the word out about the program and kick-off.

7. Budget Review and Approval

The board once again turned to reviewing and discussing the FY18 budget. Mr. Morris proposed reducing the employees' raises from 4% to 3% with the exceptions of Officer Muldoon and Mr. Butler, both of whom were due raises during the wage freeze. (Mr. Morris said he estimated that the amount they were each due is about 2%.) He stated that this across-the-board raise would be followed by a full compensation study and compensation plan to be put in place in the FY19 budget.

(Note: The Zoning Administrator will also receive a raise that is slightly above the 3% given to the other employees due to the terms of his employment.)

Mr. Morris then proposed using \$30,000 from the unspecified reserve fund to lower the tax rate by one penny. This would leave \$65,000 to put into the unspecified reserves. The Board members were not in favor of this proposal because it won't make a significant difference in the tax bill and because it philosophically goes against what they have been working toward, i.e. restoring the reserves.

If all of the articles on the warrant pass, the tax rate will be \$0.6952 (with the 3% raises). This translates to a \$134 increase on the tax bill for a \$200,000 home. It does not include the school tax.

There was a lengthy discussion of the long-term debt schedule and how the reserves can be used to help maintain a level tax rate over a long period of time.

Ms. Murphy asked Mr. Morris why he decided to reduce the employee raises. He said he based his decision on the board's discussions, testimony he had listened to, and additional research he had done through VLCT.

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Ms. Main said that the board had “sliced and diced the budget to make it look pretty”, but that in the end, the taxpayers need to see the full reality of what it costs to run the town responsibly.

The board concluded that the budget was acceptable.

Motion: To approve the General Fund expenses for fiscal year 2018-2019 as amended this evening.

Made by: Mrs. Esty **Second:** None

The motion was withdrawn.

Motion: To accept the General Fund budget as amended tonight (i.e. reducing the employee raises from 4% to 3% only; does not include using \$30,000 from the reserves).

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

Vote: Unanimous in favor

Motion: To accept the FY18 Highway Fund budget with the amended changes to the staff salaries.

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

Vote: Unanimous in favor

Motion: To accept FY18 Solid Waste budget with the amended 3% raise for the solid waste employees.

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

Vote: Unanimous in favor

The board asked to have a discussion of the Swap Shop placed on the agenda for the next meeting.

8. Approve Warning for Town Meeting

Article 5: To vote on a public question by Australian ballot, the exact words of the question must be warned at one meeting and then voted on at the next meeting – they cannot be voted on at the same meeting as the original warning. This would mean either holding a special town meeting following the annual meeting or waiting until the next annual meeting to be able to have the question about the Fire District voted by Australian ballot.

The alternative is to call for ALL public questions to be voted on by Australian ballot, which would mean there would be no more floor votes. (This is the wording of Article 5.)

There followed a lengthy discussion about articles 4 and 5, which ended with the decision to remove both of them from the warning.

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Motion: To remove articles 4 and 5 from the warning for Town Meeting.

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

Vote: Unanimous in favor

Motion: To hold a public hearing before the start of the annual Town Meeting to discuss the John Woods report and the possibility of establishing a fire district.

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

The hearing will be held at 1:00 PM, with the Town Meeting to follow at 1:30 PM.

Vote: Unanimous in favor

Article 15: There was discussion on whether to borrow or appropriate the \$30,000. The consensus of the board was to leave it as a borrowing article.

Motion: To continue the meeting to 9:30 PM.

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

Vote: Unanimous in favor

Articles 16 - 27 were unchanged.

Article 28: Ms. Murphy said the board had already voted not to include the HCRS request and it should not be on the warning.

Motion: To accept the warning for the annual town meeting for March 4th as amended.

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

Vote: Unanimous in favor

9. Select Board Town Report Submission

Ms. Main asked to add a sentence about the idea of a fire district. She also asked that more details be added about the surplus and how it was applied; and change “on the Highway side” be changed to “in the Highway Department”.

10. Zoning Board of Adjustment Resignation – Kevin Christie

Motion: To accept the resignation with regrets.

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

Vote: Unanimous in favor

11. Appointments

There were no appointments.

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12. Approve Warrants

Motion: To approve the warrants for January 16, 2017 as follow:

General Funds	Operating Expenses	\$13,351.96
	Payroll	\$13,216.94
Highway Fund	Operating Expenses	\$29,883.71
	Payroll	\$12,289.75
Solid Waste Management Fund		
	Operating Expenses	\$6,504.60
	Payroll	\$1,220.66
Library	Operating Expenses	\$589.49
Grants	Operating Expenses	\$0.00
Agency Monies	Operating Expenses	\$54.96
Reserves		\$0.00
Grand Totals	Operating Expenses	\$50,384.72
	Payroll	\$26,727.35

Made by: Mrs. Esty **Second:** Ms. Murphy
Vote: Unanimous in favor

13. Future Meeting Agenda Items

14. Adjourn

Motion: To adjourn the meeting.

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

Vote: Unanimous in favor

The meeting adjourned at 9:22 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
deForest Bearse

WEATHERSFIELD SELECTBOARD

Daniel E. Boyer, Chairperson

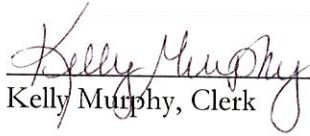


C. Peter Cole, Selector

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