

TOWN OF WEATHERSFIELD, VERMONT

SELECT BOARD

Select Board
Martin Memorial Hall
5259 Route 5, Ascutney VT
Monday, January 15, 2018
C. PETER COLE 7:00 PM
REGULAR MEETING

MINUTES APPROVED 2/5/2018

Select Board Members Present: Daniel Boyer
C. Peter Cole (participated via telephone)
Tom Leach
Amy Beth Main
Kelly Murphy

Select Board Members Absent:

Ed Morris, Town Manager

Others Present:

Darlene Kelly	Steve Geller	Tom Gilbert	John Esty
Alicia Jenks	Martha Zoerheide	Jackie McCuin	Wes Hazeltine
Jennifer Grant	Corey Mitchell	Bette Jo Esty	Edith Stillson
Shawn Brown	William Daniels	Darrin Spaulding	Ernest Shand
Lorraine Shand	Roderick Bates	Nancy Nutile-McMenemy	Nancy Heatley
Don Huntley	Ray Stapleton	Katie Cooper	

1. Call to Order

Ms. Murphy called the meeting to order at 7:01PM.

2. Comments from Select Board and Town Manager

Ms. Murphy announced this year's Citizen of the Year award would be given to Cookie Shand. Mrs. Shand was present at the meeting and received a round of applause. She will formally receive the award at Town Meeting. Ms. Murphy said this manner of announcing the award before publication of the Town Report was to preempt the secret being "leaked".

3. Comments from Citizens on topics not on the agenda

There were no comments from citizens.

4. Review minutes from previous meetings – 1/3/2018

Additions/corrections/deletions:

a. Ms. Murphy asked that the names of the Library Trustees who presented the Library's budget be added to the minutes on page 6.

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Motion: To accept the minutes of 1/3/2018

Made by: Mr. Boyer **Second:** Ms. Main

Vote: Unanimous in favor with the amendment

5. Representatives from Social Service Agencies (Question and Answer)

In accordance with the new Social Service Agency Appropriation Policy, which Ms. Murphy read aloud, 12 agencies seeking funding from the Town had been invited to present their requests and answer questions from the Board. Representatives from Green Mountain RSVP, Green Up Vermont, HCRS, MAPP, Meals & Wheels, SEVCA, Vermont Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired, Vermont Center for Independent Living, Volunteers in Action, Windsor County Partners, and WISE were present at the meeting and gave their respective presentations.

Requests for amounts less than \$500 will be contained in the General Fund budget. Anything over \$500 must be placed on the warrant as a separate article for Town Meeting.

Motion: To approve the list of appropriations as stated (including Red Cross).

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

The total amount from requests less than \$500 is \$2545 (to be added to the General Fund). Four requests will go on the warrant – HCRS (\$2683), SEVCA (\$1200), VT Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired (\$750); WISE (\$500).

Vote: Unanimous in favor

Everyone was pleased with the process and thanks were given all around.

6. Approve 2018 Certificate of Highway Mileage

Mr. Morris and Mr. Hazeltine agreed that there were no changes from the last year.

Motion: To approve the 2018 Certificate of Highway Mileage

Made by: Mr. Boyer **Second:** Ms. Main

Vote: Unanimous in favor

7. Approve Loan for New Snow Plow

Mr. Morris said the voters had already approved the money for the new truck and plow.

What was needed now was for the Board to approve taking out the loan. The truck is ready to be shipped and have the plow put on.

Motion: To approve the loan for \$156,520 from Peoples United Bank for five years at a rate of 2.75%.

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

Note: At the March 2017 Town Meeting, the voters authorized borrowing up to \$170,000. The actual cost is \$156,520.

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Vote: Unanimous in favor

8. Fire Discussion

AVFD Chief Darrin Spaulding appealed to the Board to restore \$5000 to his budget (that had been cut following last week's meeting) and provided a list of approximately \$6000 worth of air-mask filters, radios and other small equipment that he claimed his department needs.

It was agreed to address this matter during the budget discussion.

9. Fiscal Year 2019 Budget Discussion

At the start of the discussion, the budget contained a 2.4% total increase for highway and general fund (down from a 6% increase).

Ms. Murphy said the Board had had an excellent meeting with the School Board on January 8th. The boards discussed ways to work together and share information. The state representative was also present to speak to what may be coming from the legislature.

The school budget was down \$23,000 from last year; but due to state-imposed taxes, the budget will increase by 9-10 cents.

The Select Board met after the joint meeting and went through their budget again and Mr. Morris made the necessary changes to the budget.

The library was going to review their budget again on Sunday and were at the meeting to present their revisions.

Roderick Bates, library trustee, presented an adjusted budget of \$128,448.00 of which \$126,648 is to be raised from taxes (\$1800 is derived from other sources). This number is shown in the administration budget.

Ms. Murphy asked the trustees to discuss the budget at Town Meeting and include the statistics that show the increased use of the library.

(Mr. Cole joins the meeting by telephone.)

Ms. Murphy brought Mr. Cole up to speed on what had transpired at this meeting prior to his joining in by phone.

Mr. Morris said he went through the budget over the weekend – added up all the columns by hand to make sure the spread sheets were working properly. That partly explains the drop

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to a 2.4% increase – he found that a formula wasn't working right and we were losing \$22,000 in revenue. He has been talking with CCI – we need to replace our server, so the cost of that was added to the administration budget (\$10K). (Note: The cost to transition to cloud-base will be similar to a new server – it is a discussion for later.) There were a few other minor changes.

Mr. Morris and Mr. Hazeltine also went through the Highway budget and made a few adjustments and judicious cuts.

Nancy Heatley asked for clarification of the library director increase to full time and any connection to the parks and recreation committee. There was some confusion regarding the budget for “Town Parks” and the budget for the Parks & Recreation Committee (they are not connected).

There were additional questions about the Parks & Recreation reserve fund -what it is intended for and how it was set up. Additional research was called for.

Motion: To extend the meeting for 30 minutes

Made by: Mr. Leach **Second:** Ms. Main

Vote: Unanimous in favor

There were no further questions. Ms. Murphy asked for guidance from the Board.

Mr. Cole said he would like to see \$30,000 for each of the fire departments. Mr. Boyer said he would like it to stay at \$27,500. Mr Leach said that the department needs outlined by Mr. Spaulding were immediate and should be addressed now, not in the next budget cycle. Mr. Cole agreed.

Employee raises will be 2% across the board. Insurance contributions will remain at 5%.

There were no further questions and no further discussion.

Motion: Town of Weathersfield approve the expenditure of \$1,356,570 for the Town General Fund with \$1,056,805 to be raised by taxes.

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

Vote: Unanimous in favor

Motion: Town Highway fund expenditure of \$1,111,653 with \$922,053 to being raised by property taxes.

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

Vote: Unanimous in favor

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Motion: To approve \$270,935 for the Solid Waste

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

Vote: Unanimous in favor

10. Review and approve Annual Meeting Warning

Articles 2 and 3 are to be removed. The remaining article numbers will be changed accordingly.

Article 9 calls for \$50,000 to be deposited into the highway maintenance fund.

Mr. Morris said the town needs to start setting aside money in a reserve for repaving of Center Road.

The fire department is asking for \$32,000 to be put into their motorized equipment reserve.

The non-motorized reserve is at \$6500.

The police reserve has not been getting funded. It's falling behind.

Mr. Morris said he wanted the board to discuss reserves and how many to put on the warning. He maintained that building reserves is a priority for the Town. How much can be handled at one time is up for discussion.

Ms. Main said the police reserve funding should be requested every year, despite the fact that it may get turned down periodically.

Mr. Morris said we need to keep to talking about the value of reserves at each Town Meeting – building the reserves is the best way to stabilize the tax rate over time.

Ms. Main asked if Mr. Butler's spread sheet showing capital expenditures over time could be resurrected. Mr Morris said he could do that – that the sheet showed that ten cents needed to be put into capital spending to really help. (Seven cents is already be spent on paying debt.)

Ms. Main asked that the voters be informed as to what the tax increase would be (above the 2.4%) if all of the articles are passed.

Ms. Murphy asked about the \$50,000 that is in Article 9 – is that the reserve that's tapped into for paving of Center Road. Mr Morris said yes – that's for highway maintenance. We may use some of that for Reservoir Road depending on how this year's surplus comes out.

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We had \$105,000 that we'll put into reserves soon and moved back out to be spent on that project. The project came in at \$160,000, so we had about \$55,000 there. Wes said he thought he could find \$20,000 - \$30,000 from this year, so we may be tapping that a little bit. Highway Capital Maintenance is now at \$66,743. If we need to take \$20,000 out, that pulls this down to \$46,000.

Ms. Main mentioned something about a certain percentage the board decided to keep in reserve – maybe 7% or 10%. Mr. Morris said yes, the board did put that in its policy, but the board didn't break down each and every reserve. The board talked about the undesignated reserve to over 75% funded. If it fell below that, the board would decide how to build it back up. But he said what the board really needs to focus on is what needs to be purchased and building up the reserves to be prepared.

Ms. McMenemy asked about changes to the Grand List from the Velco improvements. Mr. Morris said he is expecting that, but the numbers won't be available until April, so he prefers to go into Town Meeting with known figures from the previous years for budgeting purposes.

Ms. Murphy called for suggestions for the reserves. When no one offered any ideas, Ms. Murphy suggested \$50,000 for highway maintenance; \$5,000 for non-motorized fire; \$5,000 for the police cruiser; and \$20,000 for motorized fire – for a total of \$80,000. Mr. Cole agreed to that.

Motion: To extend the meeting for another 25 minutes

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

Vote: Unanimous in favor

There was substantial discussion about how to help voters understand the need for funding the reserves.

Mr. Leach proposed adding \$2500 to the police cruiser reserve (for total of \$7500). Mr. Cole agreed with that.

Motion: To set the reserves at \$50,000 for highway maintenance; \$5,000 for non-motorized fire; \$7,500 for the police cruiser; and \$20,000 for motorized fire.

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

Vote: Unanimous in favor

Motion: To approve the warning as designed tonight for Saturday, March 3, 2018 and Tuesday, March 6, 2018 based on information provided tonight.

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

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Vote: Unanimous in favor
(Mr. Cole left the meeting at this point.)

11. Appointments

Nancy Heatley asked that descriptions of the appointment positions be provided – Mr. Morris said he is working on having them in the Town Report this year and on the website.

Ms. Murphy suggested forming the budget committee right after Town Meeting and start meeting on July. Mr. Morris said he starts meeting with department heads in August.

12. Approve Warrants

Motion: To approve the warrants for 1/15/2018 as follow:

General Funds	Operating Expenses	\$19,953.62
	Payroll	\$12,760.84
Highway Fund	Operating Expenses	\$139,973.79
	Payroll	\$11,424.11
Solid Waste Management Fund		
	Operating Expenses	\$4,552.45
	Payroll	\$1,391.51
Library	Operating Expenses	\$1,744.76
	Payroll	\$1,498.17
Grants	Operating Expenses	\$0.00
Agency Monies	Operating Expenses	\$
Reserves		\$
Grand Totals	Operating Expenses	\$166,224.62
	Payroll	\$27,074.63

Made by: Mr. Boyer **Second:** Mr. Leach
Vote: Unanimous in favor

13. Future Meeting Agenda Items

14. Adjourn

Motion: To adjourn the meeting
Made by: Mr. Boyer **Second:** Ms. Main
Vote: Unanimous in favor

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The meeting adjourned at 9:52 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
deForest Bearse

WEATHERSFIELD SELECTBOARD

Daniel E. Boyer, Selector

C. Peter Cole, Vice-Chairperson

Amy Beth Main, Clerk

Kelly Murphy, Chairperson

Tom Leach, Selector