

TOWN OF WEATHERSFIELD, VERMONT

SELECT BOARD

Select Board

Martin Memorial Hall
5259 Route 5, Ascutney VT
Monday, October 1, 2018
7:00 PM

REGULAR MEETING

MINUTES

APPROVED WITH ADDITION 10/15/2018

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

Select Board Members Absent: Kelly Murphy

Ed Morris, Town Manager

Others Present:

Edith Stillson	Mychael Spaulding	Josh Dauphin	Ray Stapleton
J. Compo	Tracy Dauphin	Levi Parker	Lucas Anderson
David Picknell	NaToshya Spaulding	Darlene Kelly	Fran Renaud

1. Call to Order

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

2. Comments from Select Board and Town Manager

a. Decision on the Mount Ascutney/Kaskadenak name change proposal

Mr. Cole read an email from the US Board of Geographic names which stated that the Board did not approve changing the name of Mount Ascutney to Kaskadenak. They cited objections from local governments and “a reluctance to change a longstanding name”.

b. Village Center Designation for Ascutney and Perkinsville (Ed Morris)

Mr. Morris announced that village center designation had been confirmed for both Ascutney and Perkinsville. Tax credits and grant awards will be available to people wanting to improve their properties within the villages.

c. Town Events

Mr. Morris announced the following upcoming events:

- Saturday, Oct. 6th is the town festival. There are activities going on all over town.
- Oct. 9th - Author Micky Smith will be at the library
- Oct. 27th - Trunk or Treat at Hoisington Field (4:30 – 6:30)
- Nov. 4th – Author Tom Fontaine at the library

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- Nov. 10th – Architect and historian Jane Griswold (library?)

3. Comments from Citizens on topics not on the agenda

There were no comments from citizens.

4. Review minutes from previous meetings – 09/17/2018

Motion: Accept the minutes of Monday, September 17th

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

Additions/corrections/deletions:

- a. Item #7 should say “Rerword” not “Reward”

Vote: Unanimous in favor

5. Fireworks Permit Fran Renaud 10/6/2018

Lucas Anderson, licensed pyrotech, presented an application for a fireworks permit on behalf of Fran Renaud at 1267 Route 131, property of Bob & Betsy Stoughton. The display is in honor of Mr. Renaud's daughter's wedding. Mr. Anderson described his plans for meeting safety guidelines.

AVFA Chief Darrin Spaulding stated that he and (Police) Chief Daniels had viewed the proposed location and asked that it be moved to the southwest corner of the field to maximize separation distance between the fireworks and all the other properties. Mr. Anderson and Mr. Renaud had agreed with the request.

Mr. Arrison pointed out that the application had not been received with the required 21-day lead time and asked if the board planned to waive it.

Motion: To grant the fireworks permit with the location changes

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

Vote: Unanimous in favor

6. Municipal Fire Service Discussion

The board had received Mr. Morris's comprehensive fire study on creating a single municipal fire department at its last meeting. Anyone with questions was directed to send them to the town manager, who was directed to collect the questions and bring them for discussion at this meeting where they could be answered in public session. Mr. Morris addressed the questions that he had received.

Mr. Cole recognized Mr. Spaulding, who raised/stated the following:

1. It was stated that the AVFA grant is not complete. Mr. Spaulding disagreed, stating that he had confirmation that the grant is complete, but the government doesn't

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have the close out module. Mr. Morris said he had stated that in his presentation – that the close-out was not completed.

2. He would like a copy of the ISO report. Mr. Morris said he would get copy to him.
3. Mr. Spaulding stated that Mr. Morris had said (in his presentation) that he (Mr. Morris) had met with both chiefs and the fire commission. Mr. Spaulding said Mr. Morris never called nor met with him, which he felt was disrespectful after 38 years of service to the town, that Mr. Morris needed input from both chiefs – not just one. Mr. Morris said he purposely did not call either chief to ask questions for this study. He spoke briefly to Mr. Dauphin about finances, but otherwise sought to keep opinions from both chiefs out of the report until it was complete. Then there could be discussions.
4. Mr. Spaulding cited Mr. Morris's statement that the new chief would do “auto aide”. Mr. Spaulding claimed that AVFA has had auto aide for the last ten years. Mr. Morris said the auto aide to which he referred in his report is a signed, formal agreement between the towns – more formal than the current mutual aide agreement. ISO will use it as part of the town's ISO rating.
5. Mr. Spaulding disputed Mr. Morris's claim that the highway department tests the dry hydrants. Mr. Morris said he meant test and maintain and with a full time fire chief, the highway department would not be involved in any part of caring for the hydrants.

Mr. Morris had received two other questions:

1. Why wasn't a vehicle for the fire chief included in the study? Mr. Morris said he plans on the chief being first out in a response, so for the first little while the chief could use the forestry vehicle.
2. Reducing code 3 (?) response? Mr. Morris said primary response protocols will be set up more formally with the new system such that everyone will know what to expect.

These were the only questions that Mr. Morris had received.

Mr. Arrison asked when the fire commission would be part of this process. Mr. Morris said this is something the select board needs to decide on first. He said once the decision is made then it would be more up to the fire departments to determine how it will happen.

Mr. Arrison said that WWVFD has given their opinion on he matter. He felt that something formal must also come form AVFD. Mr. Morris disagreed, stating that it needs to be official from the select board whether they are going forward with it or not. If the select board wants to seek out AVFA's opinion before voting on the decision, they could. But state statute gives the board the authority to make the decision on its own.

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Mychael Spaulding said the WWVFD members are still committed to moving forward with the change.

Darrin Spaulding said the AVFA monthly meeting would be next Tuesday.

Mr. Cole asked what would be needed to get this on the ballot. Mr. Morris said that VLCT had informed him that the decision (to change) rests with the select board. The money part of it could be done in several ways – as part of the budget or as a separate article for a municipal fire chief. Mr. Morris said he preferred to see it in the budget so as to assess the tax impact. He believes much of the expense can be absorbed into the budget with little residual increase.

It was agreed that the board would make a formal vote on this at the meeting on October 15th. A straw poll showed the four members present as being in favor of moving to a municipal department.

Any questions that arise should be directed to Mr. Morris.

Mr. Dauphin said the WWVFD membership will start discussing property ownership at their next meeting and will have an answer for the board at the October 15th meeting.

7. Noise Ordinance

Mr. Morris said there have been numerous complaints about people shooting on their own property and the noise that it generates. Most of the complaints have been resolved using various ideas, not including enforcing the noise ordinance. Mr. Morris said that under the current ordinance, most gunfire would be a violation and he doubted that this was the intention when the ordinance was written. He asked the board to recall the history of the ordinance. He also said the ordinance is difficult to enforce because someone has to be present when the sound is being generated to measure it with the appropriate equipment.

Mr. Morris said that noise ordinances are complicated and difficult to compose and that he did not intend to rewrite the ordinance at this meeting, but rather to discuss it with the board.

Mr. Boyer said the ordinance was written to address noise from the night club in Ascutney and noise from dirt bikes and motorcycles.

Everyone acknowledged the difficulty of writing a reasonable ordinance that addressed the numerous attributes of noise.

The consensus of the board was to move ahead with amending the ordinance.

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8. Cady Hill Road Discussion

Mr. Morris said that the select board has the authority to close the road for the winter so long as they give ample advance notice of the closure. However, if the board were to move forward with the hearing to reclassify the road to a trail, then closing it for the winter may not be necessary. Thirty-days notice is required for the reclassification hearing. The board agreed to move forward with the hearing.

Motion: To set the hearing date for reclassification of a portion of Cady Hill Road to a trail for the evening of November 19th, 2018.

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

Vote: Unanimous in favor

9. Update FEMA Buyout of Amsden Store Building

Mr. Morris said that the owner is in favor of moving forward with the buyout. He is working with Otis at RPC, who in turn is working with people all across the state to finalize the numbers. There won't be time to complete a full asbestos/lead inspection, but the grant may be written to cover that cost.

Mr. Morris he is looking into applying for a second grant to mitigate washout damage on Little Ascutney Road (from storm last July). It would be about \$24,000. Some of the work will have to be done for Act 64 anyway.

10. Budget Discussion

Inspired by a talk he heard at the recent ICMA conference, Mr. Morris decided to momentarily shift the focus away from things that need to be done in town or problems that need solving, and focus for a bit on what has gone well, is going well, or things that have been accomplished in the recent past. He asked the board members to do the same.

Mr. Leach complimented the great job done by the highway department and the new ideas for solving old problems.

Mr. Boyer said he was proud of paving Amsden Schoolhouse Road.

Mr. Arrison said he likes that the board members work well together and respect each other. He's happy that there are no big controversies in town right now.

Mr. Cole was pleased with the transition to zerosort at the transfer station.

Mr. Morris then gave his lengthy list of successes and efficiencies that had been accomplished in each of the town departments, from how waste is picked up at the transfer

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station to the new check scanner that saves on trips to the bank and many, many more. Each item saved time, tax dollars, or improved a process – all to the benefit of the taxpayers. Mr. Cole thanked Mr. Morris for the exercise. He said people don't always hear about these things. Put them all together and the dollars add up. The list is reproduced here:

Office Efficiencies

1. We bought a check scanner for cash receipt/tax collection. This helped cut down on the cost of copying all the checks and the time it took to add up the checks (sometimes multiple times). We are also saving staff time running to bank and helping maintain cash flow since deposits hit the bank the same day.
2. We enclosed the automated tax payment form in the tax bills mailed out in July and about 20 more taxpayers signed up for this. This cuts down on processing paper checks or collecting taxes in person.
3. Looking to order supplies via Mark's library contract, the town can be set up with their own account but getting the same low prices. (Shopping around to find lower prices)
4. We are only sending out interest due on taxes on a quarterly basis. These were sent each month after interest was posted but we don't see many taxpayers paying from that notice. We have seen more activity from sending out notices after a quarterly payment is due. (savings of approximately \$400)
5. Cleaned out supply closets and organized office supplies to see what we really had before ordering more. Planning to create an inventory to keep from ordering too much.
6. We have helped multiple resident file their homestead declarations and property tax adjustments. This has helped many with their current tax bill, so they can make a bigger payment to their delinquent bills.
7. We are looking to change phone systems, which will streamline phone calls in to save time. It will also have voice to email service, so voicemails can be answered quicker.
8. We have combined the HR/Payroll position with Executive Assistant position, now Susanne does both jobs. (saved about \$36,000)
9. GIS will save a lot of time - abutters list, allowing people to access a lot of information from home, decreased research time with the addition of land use files being uploaded.
10. Adobe pro to help with converting documents instead of retyping them.
11. New website to help residents and staff to services the town offers, agenda center will reduce the time it takes for Selectboard Packets.
12. Increased lister office hours without adding time.

Highway Department Efficiencies

1. Rental of excavator for one month ditching 3 miles of road, stone lining 2,500' of ditch, and seeding and mulching exposed areas
2. Adjusted oil change cycles from 100 hrs. to the recommended 250 hrs. for trucks and 500 hrs. for equipment.
3. Purchased roller style winter chains and increased size from 7 mm to 8mm (no tools needed to replace cross chains and an expected three to one wear out ratio) also should cause less tire cutting making tires last longer. (Chains should last about 3 times longer and will decrease the need to replace tires as often)
4. Purchased different carbide cutting edge for grader (put on in the spring and is not showing a lot of wear and should last well into next season)
(Blades were cheaper and will last longer)

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5. Purchased recap tires for trucks saving about 50% per tire (\$250 savings per tire \$3000+ so far)
6. Took advantage of tire sale saving \$200 each on four loader tires (\$800 Savings)
7. Purchased plow cutting edges and tire chains all at same time to avoid a 10% increase that was expected from trade embargo's (about \$560 savings)
8. Rebuilt old mowing machine for tractor mowed approximately 10 miles of road ourselves instead of paying \$250 a mile to contractor (\$2500 savings)
9. Purchase of leaf blower resulting in removal of leaves in ditches and increased grader productivity
10. Increased chloride use to aid in gravel compaction resulting in longer road wear and less damage due to water damage (roller for grader will increase compaction more)
11. Adding gravel to roads to make it possible to meet better roads standards for crown resulting in longer times between needed maintenance
12. Removal of grader/plow berms resulting in better drainage and less water damage
13. Used PACIF grant to purchase new traffic control signs, flammable liquids storage cabinets, and dump truck body locks saving 40% on the overall cost and increased safety (\$4,680 savings)
14. Taking advantage of trainings for entire highway department to help with meeting better roads and act 64 standards allowing us to more efficiently and productively address issues as they are identified
15. Established ditching spoils sites to reduce travel times and save on fuel
16. Saved 6 hours of overtime so far by utilizing on duty police to standby when a highway worker was cutting a tree. (\$180 savings so far)

Solid Waste Efficiencies

1. Have Casella pick up trash weekly instead of trying to fill container reducing overtime costs from highway having to come in on weekends to change containers.
2. Closed Swap Shop (savings approximately \$10,000)
3. Change pick up times for metal reducing the need for OT.
4. Burning brush regularly reducing the need for highway department help
5. Automatic pick ups for recycling and trash reducing administrative costs.

Police:

1. We have switched over to uniforms that cut uniform cleaning cost down and replacement cost down
2. We have purchased equipment through grant programs keeping equipment cost down (radars, tire deflation devices, hi vis vests, etc)
3. Used lease programs spreading costs over five years vs. one time purchase. Taser will save money over the cost of the lease versus purchasing due to included cartridges, batteries and repair costs
4. Wash our cruisers versus getting them washed at a car wash as has been done in the past.

Land Use:

1. Adding more detail to zoning application including State contact information and details of how to calculate fees to reduce number of telephone and in person inquiries
2. Scanning all incoming documents and applications to reduce time needed to retrieve information for residents and applicants

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3. Work on modification of habitat area bylaws to reduce application processing time, reduce costs to applicants, reduce necessity of conditional use hearings while maintaining current level of habitat protection

Library:

1. As a cost saving measure, the Weathersfield Proctor Library has changed its procurement providers from SCOOP (a Maine based consortium) to the Massachusetts Higher Education Consortium which has multiple suppliers and over 500 supplier contracts, over 4,000 brands on contract, over 26,000 products on contract. They provide WPL accountability and audit tracking.
2. Our primary jobber for books was Brodart, who we still use, but we have started using Ingram more heavily because of the new consortium. This has led to a greater discount, quicker turn around (Ingram uses a tiered warehousing system based on regions in the United States). I can now work my way from warehouse to warehouse until I get the items I need. This faster turnaround allows us to get our patrons the items they want on a timely basis. The cost savings will be tracked by the Library over this fiscal year. The administration tools from Ingram have cut backorders and cancelled orders dramatically.
3. Heat pumps for the Children's Room, Foyer, and Vermont History Room were installed this spring. Vents were added from the oil based heating system in the old basement. We are monitoring cost savings for both cooling and heating for the current fiscal year. Heat pumps can be added to the rest of the building (already roughed in) if the numbers justify it. Rebates from Efficiency Vermont helped with the current system, and we are researching rebates and updating the lighting in the old part of the building.
4. The Library has actively pursued joint programs in effort to improve community programming in Weathersfield. We have sponsored programs in conjunction with the Weathersfield Historical Society, the Town of Weathersfield, Weathersfield Parks and Recreation, and the Vermont Humanities Council. Examples range from public speakers to Trunk or Treat. This allows us to share costs as well as to tap into local expertise.

Returning to the budget, Mr. Morris presented some large projects he would like to be considered in the FY20 budget, including Center Road; Town solar project; and heating/cooling system for Martin Memorial Hall.

Other projects to consider included town forest trails; a boat launch on the Connecticut River; a park in Ascutney; and implementing the interchange master plan.

We have run out of shovel-ready projects, so we may be looking to get some engineering done for a few projects.

Mr. Stapleton said we will be needing a new salt shed soon.

Also for consideration are the Lavigne bridge; sidewalks in Ascutney; and a sewer system in Perkinsville.

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Mr. Morris introduced Cynthia Porter, the lone budget committee member. Ms. Porter is the finance director for the RPC.

11. Appointments

No appointments were requested.

12. Approve Warrants

Motion: To approve the warrants for October 1, 2018 as follow:

General Funds	Operating Expenses	\$75,999.14
	Payroll	\$11,125.82
Highway Fund	Operating Expenses	\$48,151.30
	Payroll	\$11,358.61
Solid Waste Management Fund		
	Operating Expenses	\$14,860.27
	Payroll	\$1,436.89
Library	Operating Expenses	\$4,126.72
	Payroll	\$1,771.60
Grants	Operating Expenses	\$2,910.15
Agency Monies	Operating Expenses	\$0.00
Reserves		\$0.00
Long Term Debt		\$0.00
Grand Totals	Operating Expenses	\$146,047.58
	Payroll	\$25,692.92

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

Vote: Unanimous in favor

13. Future Meeting Agenda Items

14. Adjourn

Motion: To adjourn the meeting

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

Vote: Unanimous in favor

The meeting adjourned at 8:28 PM.

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Respectfully submitted,
deForest Bearse

WEATHERSFIELD SELECTBOARD

N. John Arrison, Selector

Daniel E. Boyer, Selector

C. Peter Cole, Vice-Chairperson

Tom Leach, Clerk

Kelly Murphy, Chairperson