

Select Board

Martin Memorial Hall

5259 Route 5, Ascutney VT

Monday, November 19, 2018

6:00 PM

Special Meeting

MINUTES

Select Board Members Present: Daniel Boyer, Peter Cole, Tom Leach, and Kelly Murphy

Select Board Member Absent: N. John Arrison

Ed Morris, Town Manager

Others Present:

Nancy Nutile-McMenemy, Vermont Standard

Darrin Spaulding, Chief, Ascutney Vol. Fire Assn.

Colby Hodgdon, Chuck Vivian, Ernie Shand, Sean Brown,

Robert Knight

Josh Dauphin Chief, West Weathersfield Vol. Fire Department

Josh Compo, Mychael Spaulding, Tracy Dauphin, Travis Compo,

Tim Austin, Levi Parker, Ben Waters, Jordan Bagalio

Julia Lloyd Wright, Recording Secretary

1. Call to Order

Ms. Murphy called the meeting to order at 6:08pm

2. Fire Services Discussion 6:00 to 8:00pm

A draft copy of the “Fire Chief Hiring Procedure” requirements compiled by Ed Morris was handed out for review. Hiring decisions for the new staff position, Town of Weathersfield Fire Chief, will be made by the Town Manager.

Ms. Murphy said that no decisions have been made and the selectboard are seeking thoughts on the proposed procedure from the fire departments.

Mr. Josh Dauphin said that WWFD had made a decision, as a whole (department), to move forward. We are in agreement and we want to make sure the town knows WWFD are putting any past differences aside and to make it better for the town we are willing to do this. It’s time to change and we are willing to step up and make the commitment for it to happen.

Ms. Murphy said that the process is going to continue past Town Meeting and we need to correct any hearsay for WWFD and Ascutney. We need to think about the future with a Fire Chief coming in, a time in which to envision going forward and we want input to help.

Mr. Morris said they should start with the thought process and read through Items 1 through 9 on the Procedure sheet

1. Create a job description with the help of both departments, citizen input and the Selectboard during the municipal fire meetings.
2. Selectboard gives final approval of job description and recruitment brochure.
3. Advertise the position Nationwide with a New England Concentration
4. A hiring committee consisting of the following members will be created:
 - a. Three department members from each department

(Mychael Spaulding suggested that the the chiefs from the two departments and not three members from each department.)

- b. Three citizens at large
 - c. Two Selectboard members
5. This committee with guidance from the Town Manager) will review the applications and create a list of possible candidates

(Darrin Spaulding, citing past experience, suggested a final list with at least two candidates in case the top selection decided not to take the position.

There was a general discussion on how to hire a new manager and have three to four pages of tasks from the fire chiefs and firefighters. Mr. Tom Leach said it would be great to get more people involved.

Mr. Morris said they are looking for leadership qualities. Mr. Tim Austin suggested a list of criteria to check off and to bring to the committee. Discussions will continue after Town Meeting.

Ms. Nancy Nutile-McMenemy asked if the Fire Commission will be dissolved, Mr. Morris said that had not been determined)

6. This committee will conduct the first round of interviews and make recommendations to the Town Manager
7. The candidates for the next round of interviews will be determined by the Town Manager
8. The second interviews will be conducted by:
 - a. Town Manager
 - b. Selectboard Chair
 - c. One or more fire chiefs from another town
9. With help of the second interview board, the Town Manager will make the final decision
10. The final determination will be brought to the Selectboard before a formal job offer is made

STRUCTURE

Officer Structure

Mr. Morris said the focus is on one department and will get away from 'this side of town and that side.'

The proposed new officer structure sheet reads as follows:

Citizens of Weathersfield

Selectboard

Fire Chief

Deputy Chief

of Operations

Deputy Chief

of Policy and Safety

Equipment	Training
Captain	Captain
2 Lieutenants	2 Lieutenants
Maintenance	(instructors)
and	
Operations	

It was suggested that the Lieutenants should both be senior officers

There was a discussion on the number of officers on both sides of the town to staff the proposed new structure and how they should cover both stations. Mr. Morris said they will need a time frame and stability on people with authority to make decisions and need an ebb and flow in managing. Also the structure depends on how fire departments are set up with volunteers. Ms. Murphy said the new fire chief will need a structure (in place) as a first step as they walk into positions. Mr. Josh Compo suggested that the new fire chief should appoint his own deputy chiefs. Staffing of various positions (such as drivers) can be strained during the days when volunteers who are working are unable to get to the station(s). Ms. Murphy said the Selectboard should not be involved with the department. Ms. Nutile-McMenemy said the Fire Commission was set up to work with the departments but Ms. Murphy said the Fire Commission needs an overhaul and it will have to be addressed as we move forward.

Mr. Josh Dauphin asked about maintenance of the department and will a person be paid to set up the training, and who is in town to cover this and should it be shifted on the fire chief? Other suggestions were: Getting a resume of every volunteer, asking individuals of the departments what they are interested in vis-a-vis training and compiling a list of every member with skills, experience and strong points for the new chief.

Ms. Murphy commented that excitement is growing tonight, change is never easy doing fire service for the Town of Weathersfield.

The meeting ended at 7:40pm

The next meeting will be the first Selectboard Monday (of the month), the 4th of February, 2019

After a short break the Budget Review convened from 8 to 9pm.

3. Budget Review

Budget sheets for the FY2020 Estimated Municipal Tax Rate Computation were reviewed. The General Fund taxes are estimated at \$1,253,560 with approximately \$30,000 needed to level fund at last year's rate. Mr. Morris is currently working on funding the \$30,000 to close the gap. The amount to be raised by property taxes will be \$1,125,428

The final and fully-funded budget will be available for Selectboard approval at the next meeting then ready for the printer.

4. Review Warning for Town Meeting

The Warning for the Annual Town Meeting on Saturday, March 2, 2019 to be held at the Weathersfield School at 12:30pm was also reviewed. Articles One through Four will be voted from the floor. Monetary Articles Five through Twelve will be voted by Australian ballot at Martin Memorial Hall on Tuesday, March 5, 2019 from 10am to 7 pm.

5. Adjourn

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Peter Cole, seconded by Dan Boyer. Voted: Unanimously in favor.

The Meeting adjourned at 8:24pm

WEATHERSFIELD SELECTBOARD

N. John Arrison, Selector

Daniel E. Boyer, Selector

C. Peter Cole, Vice-Chairperson

Tom Leach, Clerk

Kelly Murphy, Chairperson