

**TOWN OF WEATHERSFIELD, VERMONT**

**SELECT BOARD**

Select Board  
Martin Memorial Hall  
5259 Route 5, Ascutney VT  
Monday, June 19, 2023  
6:30 PM  
REGULAR MEETING

**Select Board Members Present:** Michael Todd, David Fuller, Paul Tillman, Kelly O'Brien, Wendy Smith

**Select Board Members Absent:**

**Brandon Gulnick, Town Manager**

Others Present:

|                        |                       |               |
|------------------------|-----------------------|---------------|
| Olivia Savage          | Donald Brocher        | Patrick Spurr |
| Joseph Bublat (remote) | Lee Pudvah            | Mike Jackson  |
| Ray Stapleton          | Crystal Pudvah        | Randy Wiggin  |
| John Arrison           | Ann Marie Christensen | Julia Gumbart |
| Kathy Brocher          | Mary Beth Malorey     | Amy Beth Main |
| deForest Bearse        | NEMC (remote)         | Rick Bates    |

**1 Call to Order**

Mr. Todd called the meeting to order at 6:30pm.

**2 Pledge of Allegiance**

Mr. Todd led the pledge of allegiance.

**3 Comments from Citizens, SB, and TM on topics not on the agenda**

Ms. Christensen stated that she was disappointed about the vote regarding the sidewalk and/or bike path in Perkinsville and stated how dangerous that road can be, and how beneficial a sidewalk or bike lane would have been for the village. Discussion followed about the need for community input on such decisions and ways to get information out to the public prior to a vote. The Select Board discussed that items should not move to action the first time they are on the agenda, but also pointed out that some items are time sensitive, such as the deadline for the sidewalk/bike path grant.

Mr. Fuller wanted to clarify his vote and stated that the grant was for a study that would cost \$40,000, with \$8,000 coming from the Town, with which has frozen budgets. Mr. Fuller stated that recreation will not resurrect the village

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of Perkinsville, ongoing septic and water concerns are forefront, and pointed out that solutions lay with Weathersfield uniting with other towns for recreation, such as West Windsor with Mt. Ascutney for a 4 season recreation center.

Many residents of Melody Lane spoke about issues surrounding a fellow neighbor, with concerns about safety and how waste water is damaging the property of neighbors. The Town Health Officer stated that the state has been notified and the Chief of Police has done a site visit, and the concerned group will be updated. The Select Board acknowledged that resolution to the issue might take time but it sounds like the process is moving forward and that this issue should be in future agendas so it can be monitored.

Ms. O'Brien reminded everyone about the local parade on Saturday, June 24<sup>th</sup> at 12pm and that anyone who wants to be in the parade should meet at the Weathersfield School at 11:30am.

#### **4 Review minutes from previous meeting(s): 06/05/23**

##### **Additions/corrections/deletions:**

a. None.

**Motion:** To approve.

**Made by:** Ms. O'Brien

**Second:** Mr. Fuller

**Vote:** All in favor

#### **5 Legislative Update: Rep. John Arrison**

Rep. Arrison stated that you can go online and look up the General Assembly and view anyone's [voting record](#). Rep. Arrison discussed some high points in the budget: FEMA, emergency housing, tech upgrades, workforce development, organic dairy, emergency training, and state college systems as some of the buildings are in need repair, and clean water.

Rep. Arrison spoke of a study regarding public safety in regards to how much it would cost to fund fire gear equipment across the state and a bill to offer life insurance and treatment for certain kinds of cancers for firefighters up to age 65.

There was a suicide prevention bill that passed that has some language about guns that requires safe storage of guns in the home and a three day waiting period for a gun purchases.

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Rep. Arrison stated that there are significant changes to zoning in regards to water and sewer, with a goal of development in more concentrated spaces and pointed out how these changes should not affect Weathersfield.

#### **6 Vote to approve Fire Works Permit**

**a.** Michael Dawson: 144 Kiernan Rd., Perkinsville, VT on 7/1/23 from 9pm-10pm.

**Motion:** To approve the Fire Works Permit for Michael Dawson at 144 Kiernan Rd., Perkinsville, VT on 7/1/23, with a rain date 7/2/23, from 9pm-10pm, pending evidence of insurance.

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

**Vote:** All in favor

#### **7 Town Reappraisal Discussion**

According to Rep. Arrison, municipalities that exceed the 20% COD will be ordered to do a town reappraisal in the 1st of 2nd week of July. Weathersfield exceeds the 20% COD, so the Town will see if it receives a letter during this time ordering a reappraisal. The Town already advertised an RFP and received 2 proposals to do the work. Both companies have a lot of experience conducting town-wide reappraisals in the State of Vermont, and both companies also provide assessor services for cities and towns in Vermont.

NEMRC is proposing \$174,000 to do the reappraisal. This includes inspections of all property, data entry, sales analysis, and the development of schedules incorporated into computer assisted mass appraisal system, digital pictures, and formal grievance and Board of Civil Authority hearings. This rate is based on a parcel count of 1,657, which does include exempt properties. Any parcels beyond this will be charged \$100 per parcel. Hearing requested beyond BCA hearings will be billed at \$150 per hour. If awarded, NEMRC will begin the reappraisal process in 2025, and they estimate the completion of reappraisal in 2027.

NEMC is proposing \$172,000 to do the reappraisal. This includes the complete reappraisal identified in the invitation to bid, along with the installation of the AssessPro CAMA software on the Town's hardware. They will be charging an addition \$2,500 for the annual support/license fee of \$2,500, which increases their proposal to \$174,500. The proposal is based on the parcel counts submitted by the Town as supplied in the RFP. In the case the parcel counts exceed 1,680 total accounts, an overage charge of \$85 per parcel will be imposed at the completion of the contract. This company did not disclose whether they will charge a rate for hearings requested beyond the

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BCA hearings. This company will begin the reappraisal in 2024 and estimate the completion of the reappraisal in 2026.

The Select Board discussed the pros and cons of the two companies and how these are not the only companies that do appraisals, and agreed that more inquiry is needed. The Town Manger will do more research about these companies from other towns. The Select Board also wanted to let citizens know that this appraisal doesn't mean their taxes will go up and that there is enough money in reserves to cover the cost of appraisal.

#### **8 ARPA Expenditure Proposals**

There have been several Public Input meetings at the 1879 Schoolhouse and meetings with others in the community about their thoughts on the expenditure of the remaining funds. The Town has committed \$480,267 to date, and have \$337,787 remaining to allocate. So far, the following proposals have been received:

- 1) Hoisington Field Project
- 2) Tree Maintenance
- 3) Replace posts at Veterans Memorial Park
- 4) Martin Memorial Hall Drainage Project
- 5) Trail improvements
- 6) Mapping Scenic Views
- 7) Digitization of Town Clerk Records
- 8) Martin Memorial Hall Paving
- 9) FD Training Stipends
- 10) Town Welcome Signs
- 11) Highway Garage Generator
- 12) Electrical for Martin Memorial Hall

Below is a high level list of the projects and expenditures the Town has had so far, including the amount allocated and the percentage of total ARPA funds per each of those expense categories.

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| Approved Expenses         | Expense | % of ARPA |
|---------------------------|---------|-----------|
| Small Businesses          | 12,000  | 1%        |
| COVID (Supp, Test, Clean) | 4,344   | 1%        |
| Fire Departments          | 20,159  | 2%        |
| Police Department         | 45,724  | 6%        |
| Late Filing fees          | 13,818  | 2%        |
| Roofing Projects          | 252,629 | 31%       |
| Water District            | 75,000  | 9%        |
| Food Shelf                | 9,290   | 1%        |
| Martin Memorial Hall      | 41,475  | 5%        |
| Building Assessments      | 5,828   | 1%        |

The list was presented to the Select Board for them to review and ask questions about but no action was required. The Select Board discussed what to prioritize and see what grants are available. Mr. Fuller inquired if there was anything that the Highway Department might need and to think about it.

## 9 Town Manger Update

### a. Roofing Projects

Connecticut River Roofing and the Town Manager are signing a contract amendment on Tuesday, June 20th, to extend project completion dates forward. The Town Garage project will now be set with a completion date of July 9th, and the West Weathersfield Fire Department will be set with a completion date of July 31st. Extending the due dates is primarily because the weather has not been cooperating.

### b. Norwich Solar

The Norwich Solar issues have been resolved. The Town's lease payment has been made and is up to date. Lease payments will be made no later than the 13th of October each year. One invoice has been distributed to us with the Account Allocation sheet. The invoice and account allocation has been reconciled with GMP and everything works out to the cent. A meeting between Norwich Solar and the Prudential Committee will be held on Wednesday, June 21st, to discuss the NMA.

The Town anticipates receiving an invoice during the first week of July, and from month to month after and will continue monitoring this as invoices are received from GMP and Norwich.

### c. Request for Bids

1. FY24 Paving – Sunset Blvd., Cherry Lane., Thrasher Road

a. RFB advertised: May 22, 2023

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- b. Pre-Bid Conference: June 14, 2023, at 10am
  - c. Bids Due: June 22, 2023, at 11:30am
  - d. Select Board Review/Decision: July 3, 2023
2. Covered Bridge Repairs
- a. RFB advertising: June 6, 2023
  - b. Pre-Bid Conference: June 14, 2023 at 11am
  - c. Bids Due: June 25, 2023, at 11am
  - d. Select Board Review/Decision: July 3, 2023

**Motion:** To authorize the Chair to meet with the Town Manager about the two pending RFPs to go out for the Grants in Aid grant for \$42,600 and the Highway Structures grant for \$108,900.

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

**Vote:** All in favor

#### 10 Approve Hot & Cold Weather LEMP Plans

The Emergency Management Director presented the proposed Hot and Cold Weather Preparedness Guidance Plan for Weathersfield. Its purpose is for emergency personal to have a list of residents that might be vulnerable in an emergency situation, such as a power outage. This would benefit the vulnerable individuals and emergency personal by speeding up response times. The list would be voluntary. The Select Board suggested putting in an insert about the plan with the tax bills so individuals can sign up at their own discretion.

**Motion:** To approve having the Hot & Cold Weather LEMP Plans added to the Emergency Management Plan.

**Made by:** Mr. Tillman **Second:** Ms. O'Brien

**Vote:** All in favor

#### 11. Appointments

There were no appointments but the list below are the vacancies.

- a. Budget Committee (5 Vacancies)
- b. Conservation Commission (2 Vacancies)
- c. Energy Coordinator (1 Vacancy)
- d. Green Up Coordinator (1 Vacancy)
- e. Lister (1 Vacancy)
- f. Parks and Recreation (2 Vacancies)
- g. Veterans Memorial Committee (2 Vacancies)
- h. Zoning Board of Adjustment (2 Vacancies) Evaluation Process discussion

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**13. Warrants**

**Motion:** To approve the warrants for 6/19/2023 as followed:

General Funds

Operating Expenses: \$68,676.59

Payroll: \$15,970.22

Highway Fund

Operating Expenses: \$12,285.23

Payroll: \$8,336.63

Solid Waste Management Fund

Operating Expenses: \$3,009.94

Payroll: \$1,769.47

Library Grant: \$90.64

WWVFD ARPA: \$3,085.00

Library

Operating Expenses: \$0.00

Payroll: \$2,112.40

Grand Totals:

Operating Expenses: \$87,147.40

Payroll: \$28,188.72

**Made by:** Mr. Tillman

**Second:** Mr. Fuller

**Vote:** All in favor

**14. Any Other Business- Executive Session 1 V.S.A. § 313 (1) (A)**

**Motion:** To go into Executive Session, with the inclusion of the Town Manager Brandon Gulnick.

**Made by:** Mr. Fuller

**Second:** Ms. Smith

**Vote:** All in favor

The Select Board went into executive Session at 9:11pm.

The Select Board came out of executive session at 9:24 PM

Actions taken:

**Motion:** To give the Highway Superintendent, Ray Stapleton, a \$2500 year-end bonus for 2022/2023 fiscal year.

**Made by:** Mr. Fuller

**Second:** Ms. Smith

**Vote:** All in favor

**Motion:** To give the Weathersfield ARPA Administrator, Brandon Gulnick, \$3,000 from ARPA funds to be paid for the 2022/2023 fiscal year.

**Made by:** Mr. Fuller

**Second:** Mr. Tillman

**Vote:** All in favor

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**Motion:** To allow the Chair to sign an additional Warrant for the two motions made.

**Made by:** Mr. Fuller

**Second:** Ms. Smith

**Vote:** All in favor

**15. Adjourn**

**Motion:** To adjourn the meeting.

**Made by:** Mr. Tillman

**Second:** Mr. Fuller

**Vote:** All in favor

The meeting adjourned at 9:26pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Nichole Gagnon

**WEATHERSFIELD SELECTBOARD**

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Michael Todd, Chairperson

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Wendy Smith, Selector

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Paul Tillman, Vice-Chairperson

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Kelly O'Brien, Clerk

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David Fuller, Selector