

Select Board
Martin Memorial Hall
5259 Route 5, Ascutney VT
Monday, October 2, 2023
6:30 PM
REGULAR MEETING

Select Board Members Present: Michael Todd, David Fuller, August Murray, Kelly O'Brien, Wendy Smith

Select Board Members Absent:

Brandon Gulnick, Town Manager

Others Present:

Olivia Savage	Steve Hier	
Ray Stapleton	Mark Richardson	
Flo-Ann Dango		
John Arrison		
Andrea Murray (remote)		

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 Agenda Review

The Select Board added item 6, *Appointment of Vice-Chair*.

4 Comments from SB, TM, and Citizens on Topics not on the Agenda

Mr. Arrison and Mr. Todd discussed Deliberative Session verses Executive Session and procedures.

The Highway Superintendent gave an update on the status of roads, such as the structures, culverts, and ditching grants on Goulden Ridge and Mountain View, the paving bid on Sunset, Cherry Lane, and a section of Thrasher Road. The crack sealing bid for paving from last year, which is tied to Stoughton Pond Road and any class 2 roads, will also target Reservoir Road and Center road on the week of October 9th.

5 Review Minutes from Previous Meeting(s): 9/18/23

Additions/corrections/deletions:

a. None.

Motion: To approve the 9/18/23 minutes.

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

Vote: All in favor

6 Appointment of Select Board Vice-Chair

Motion: To appoint Dave Fuller as Vice-Chair of the Select Board.

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

Vote: All in favor

7 ARPA Discussion

During the Select Board meeting on August 21st, the Select Board asked the Town Manager to review the expenses proposed by residents & board members during the Public Input meetings, prioritize them, and propose expenditures of \$200,000 leaving \$100,000+ remaining for future allocation.

The Town Manger prioritized the expenses and excluded certain expense requests for future consideration based on the information provided & further review, with many of the proposed expenses being rough estimates. If the board agrees with the prioritization & the expenses, the Town Manager will begin the process to obtain estimates for these projects, many of which will require the RFP process.

A list of the expenses funded to date using ARPA funding.

Approved Expenses	Expense	% of ARPA
Small Business Grants	12,000	1%
COVID (Supp, Test, Clean)	4,344	1%
Firefighting Gear	14,230	2%
Fire Dept. Wash Extractor	5,929	1%
Fire Dept. Hose	15,175	2%
Building Assessments	5,828	1%
Police Cruiser	45,724	6%
Late Filing Fee Waiver	13,818	2%
MMH Roof Replacement	51,000	6%
WWFD Roof Replacement	72,600	9%
Town Garage Roof Replacement	131,918	16%
Water District Subgrant	75,000	9%
Food Shelf Refrigerator	9,290	1%
MMH Basement Project	13,311	2%
MMH Generator	28,164	3%
Total	498,331	55.85%

This second chart shows the proposed expenses ranked by priority. This proposal will expend an estimated \$200,000 in ARPA funds.

Proposed Expenses	Expense	% of ARPA
MMH Drainage Engineering	\$ 5,000.00	1%
MMH Drainage Project	\$ 15,000.00	2%
MMH Security System	\$ 7,500.00	1%
Virtual Meeting Improvements	\$ 5,000.00	1%
MMH Electrical Improvements	\$ 35,000.00	4%
Town Garage Generator	\$ 45,000.00	6%
1879 SH Generator	\$ 12,000.00	1%
Town Office Redesign	\$ 30,000.00	4%
Tree Maintenance	\$ 15,000.00	2%
Hoisington Field Master Plan	\$ 10,000.00	1%
Updated Hoisington Field Surveying	\$ 8,000.00	1%
Trail Improvements	\$ 10,000.00	1%
Gardening Club Allocation	\$ 2,500.00	0%
Total	\$ 200,000	24.45%

Starting Balance	\$ 818,054
Expended to date	\$ 498,331
Remaining Balance	\$ 319,723
Proposed Expenditures	\$ 200,000
Balance if Proposed Expenses are funded	\$ 119,723

The Town received \$818,054 in ARPA funds and have expended \$498,331 to date on the expenses outlined on page 1. The Town has a remaining balance of \$319,723. This amount is lower than calculated during the meeting on 8/21/23 as the Town received a bill from Alva Waste for \$2,888.91 to dispose of the C & D from the Town Garage Roof project. In the RFP and the Contract for the roof replacement project, the Town committed to providing a dumpster for the roofing projects, the Town being unaware of how much it would cost to dispose of. This \$2,888.91 was expensed to the Town Garage Roof Project.

The board asked that the Town look into grants for the Mapping of Scenic Views, and that the Town Clerk utilize her reserve accounts for the digitization project. The Town Clerk did note that the project she is proposing is to digitize Town Proceedings, and that the money in her reserve account is earmarked for other projects. Posts for Veterans Park, Martin Memorial Hall

paving, Fire Department Stipends, and Town Welcome signs were also removed from the chart above.

Proposed Expenses not Included in Request for Funding to Carryover for future consideration OR other funding opportunities (including grants)		
Posts - Veterans Park	\$ 30,000.00	25%
Mapping - Scenic Views	\$ 15,000.00	13%
MMH Paving	\$ 28,000.00	23%
FD Training Stipends	\$ 20,000.00	17%
Town Welcome Signs	\$ 43,200.00	36%
Digitization of Town Proceedings	\$ 25,000.00	21%
Total	\$ 161,200.00	134.64%

The Town can either seek grants or future budget allocations for these proposed expenses. The Town does have reserve accounts and there might be grant opportunities that some of these expenses may be eligible to apply for. If the proposed expenses are approved, there is still \$119,723 remaining the board could allocate to any of these expenses.

The Select Board discussed and agreed that the drainage at Martin Memorial Hall has become a top priority. The Select Board is going to review the rest of the items on the list and come back with a plan when it comes to prioritizing items.

Motion: To authorize the Town Manager to solicit three bids for engineering for the drainage at Martin Memorial Hall, to select the best option with the Board Chair, and for the funds to be allocated from the ARPA funds balance.

Made by: Mr. Fuller

Second: Dr. Murray

Vote: All in favor

8 Solid Waste Fee Assessment Policy

The Select Board reviewed the Solid Waste Fee Assessment Policy (Adopted 8/5/04; Amended 11/18/10). The purpose of this policy is to establish a standardized procedure for the assessment and collection of solid waste management fees on property within the Town of Weathersfield.

The Select Board discussed Section 11, Item C and how this effects the Exceptions section. The Town Manger stated that there had been an amendment strictly dealing with the permit sticker policy, which is different from the assessment policy. The Town Manager will get the two policies together and identify the differences.

9 Signing Orders

The normal process for paying the Town's bills is for the Town Office to prepare a warrant which the Select Board reviews and approves thereby authorizing the Treasurer to sign the checks. While this process works well in the vast majority of cases, it is not without issues. The Select Board meets twice a month so there is usually a meeting every two weeks (and occasionally, every three weeks when there are five Mondays in a month). On occasion there are bills that have payment due dates prior to the next scheduled regular meeting. On occasion other circumstances call for a bill to be paid prior to the next meeting. On occasion meetings are cancelled, rescheduled, or otherwise postponed.

Currently, the Select Board has authorized a check to be issued outside of the normal process in order to avoid late fees as long as the Town Manager, Accountant, and Treasurer all agree in writing that such is the case. The check then appears on the next warrant presented to the Select Board. This process works in some cases but does not address all of the reasons why a check needs to be signed in advance of the next Select Board meeting. It leaves the Town Office to choose between ignoring the current need and exceeding authority. The thought is to generate some Select Board discussion on this topic.

The Select Board discussed possible solutions such as putting a dollar threshold, requiring three signatures, and having a Board member come sign for it. The Town Manger will draft a policy on what this might look like and bring it back to the Select Board.

10 Liquor License – The Inn at Weathersfield

- a. First Class Restaurant/Bar License**
- b. Third Class Restaurant/Bar License**
- c. Outside Consumption Permit**

Motion: To renew the Inn at Weathersfield's First Class Restaurant/Bar License, Third Class Restaurant/Bar License, and Outside Consumption Permit.

Made by: Mr. Fuller

Second: Ms. O'Brien

Vote: All in favor

11 Town Clerk Project

According to the Town Purchasing Policy, all purchases over \$10,000 require a sign-off on the purchase order. The Town Clerk has requested \$22,000 from her Computerization Reserve Fund to have Cott Systems index data from the period of 6/1983-9/1993. The policy also states that there must be three bids, however, this is a "Sole Source Purchase" as the Town Clerk is contracted

with this company for Land Records. The Town Clerk attached the Order Summary for the Select Board to review.

Motion: To waive the purchasing policy for the Town Clerk project and authorize the Town Clerk to move forward with Cott Systems at a cost not to exceed \$22,105.00, to be expended in the FY23-24 Municipal Records Fund.

Made by: Mr. Fuller

Second: Ms. O'Brien

Vote: All in favor

12 Storm Damage/ FEMA Reimbursements

To date, we completed the Request for Public Assistance, Exploratory Call, Recovery Scoping Meeting, and Site Inspections. The Town has held four (4) meetings since the site inspection to complete the Damage Inventory, and Essential Elements of Information. The next step is procurement.

1) Ascutney Basin Bridge: The Town already has a design for the bridge deck. This design will replace the bridge as it was before the storm. This will not increase hydraulic flow capacity. If the Select Board approves this option, the Town will send the project out to bid.

2) Little Ascutney Bridge: The Town will need to advertise an RFQ for engineering to repair the erosion on the western wingwalls and abutment. This will replace the bridge as it was pre-storm. Engineering is required to obtain the design for proper repair. This design will be used to send the project out to bid.

3) Upper Falls Covered Bridge: The Town needs to advertise an RFQ for engineering to design the replacement of the riprap on the northern side of the bridge. Following the design, the Town will need to send this project out to bid.

4) Perkinsville Dry Hydrant: Once the Town receives the preliminary results, they will need to send this project out to bid.

The Select Board discussed fixing bridges verses mitigation. The Select Board discussed the areas in town that flood and how there won't be damage to fix again if they went with mitigation in needed areas. Difficulties some of the projects might bring was discussed, as well as how it would be essential in some cases to put in a temporary bridge deck so heavier loads can safely get across. The Select Board weighed in on costs and funding, speaking of reimbursements, government funds, and grants.

The amount of time each stage of projects was discussed and it was pointed out that it could about a year for the engineering of the project and two years before the project could begin. The Select Board agreed that these storm are becoming more common, that mitigation has been recommended by FEMA,

and that there is tremendous opportunity for reimbursements with this projects.

Motion: To send out an RFP for Ascutney Basin Bridge.

Made by: Ms. Smith

Second: Dr. Murray

Vote: All in favor

Motion: To authorize an RFQ to repair the Little Ascutney Bridge.

Made by: Ms. Smith

Second: Dr. Murray

Vote: All in favor

Motion: To advertise an RFQ for the Upper Falls Covered Bridge project.

Made by: Mr. Fuller

Second: Ms. O'Brien

Vote: All in favor

There was no action needed at this meeting by the Select Board for Perkinsville Dry Hydrant. Mr. Todd and Dr. Murray expressed interest in checking out the Ascutney Basin with the Highway Superintendent.

13 Village Wastewater Committee (Draft Policy)

The Select Board reviewed the draft [Village Wastewater Committee Policy](#) and discussed the Town Plan, development and density in the village areas, and the purpose of the committee. The Select Board concluded that more time is needed to review the policy so that thoughtful feedback can be given and that a policy needs to be in place before appointing a committee. Additionally, a few more names are needed for appointment. The Select Board discussed having a representatives serving as liaison between Otter Creek and the Towns engineering firm. The Select Board concluded that this was only a first read of the policy.

14 Town Manager Update

a. Health Insurance

The Town Health insurance rates came back. The Gold Plan from MVP is increasing by 12.44%, meaning if all plans stay the same, there will be a total cost increase of \$25,594. The deductible decreased by \$200 for single and \$400 for family, with the Gold Plan only. The Town will be looking at all of their options and bring forward an analysis for the Board to review.

b. Fire Department Roof

The was a little bit of a delay on the West Weathersfield Fire Department roof project and will take a week to two weeks to complete.

c. Martin Memorial Hall Updates

The hazard tree has been removed from the Martin Memorial Parking lot. Additionally, the propane tank will be buried and that is scheduled for the middle of November.

d. First Quarter Finance Report

The Towns First Quarter Finance Report will be given on Oct. 16th and will consist of the first three months of the General Fund, the Highway Fund, and Solid Waste Fund.

e. VTCTMA Conference

On Oct. 26th and Oct. 27th, the Town Manager will be attending the Vermont Towns and City's Managers Association Conference. This will be the first one attended in his new role on the Board of Directors. Topics will include Storm Water Management; the Local Legislative Panels; Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion; and Lessons from Vermont's Neighbors. The Town Manager will be taking vacation on Oct. 17th-Oct. 24th.

15 Appointments

- a. Budget Committee (5 Vacancies)
- b. Energy Coordinator (1 Vacancy)
- c. Green Up Coordinator (1 Vacancy)
- d. Lister (2 Vacancies)
- e. Parks and Recreation (1 Vacancy)
- f. Planning Commission (1 Vacancy)
 - i. Brian Bosenberg
- g. Veterans Memorial Committee (2 Vacancies)
- h. Village Wastewater Committee
 - i. Andrea De Luna-Murray
 - ii. Ann Marie Christensen
 - iii. John Arrison
 - iv. Mark Richardson
- i. Zoning Board of Adjustment (2 Vacancies)

Mr. Todd stated that the public has one more week to put their name in for the Planning Commission vacancy and that the Village Wastewater Committee is to be continued until after the policy is adopted.

16 Approve Warrant

To approve the warrants for 10/2/2023 as followed:

General Funds
Operating Expenses: \$28,188.36
Payroll: \$15,440.92

Solid Waste Management Fund
Operating Expenses: \$22,568.61
Payroll: \$1,792.20

Highway Fund
Operating Expenses: \$13,749.77
Payroll: \$8,869.50

Library
Operating Expenses: 0
Payroll: \$2,391.97

Gulden Ridge Culvert:
\$11,325.00

Grand Totals:
Operating Expenses: \$76,456.76
Payroll: \$28,494.59

SIU Grant: \$625.00

Made by: Mr. Fuller

Second: Ms. O'Brien

Vote: All in favor

The Library's Fund Raising money for engineering/expansion (\$5,524.00) ended up on the warrant in error and actually belonged on the warrant for the Library Board of Trustees. The funding raising money was used to do an engineering study and also to pay for a construction estimate needed for a grant.

The Select Board inquired about who has jurisdiction over fundraising money. The Town Manager explained that Select Board and the Library Board of Trustees are elected members of the Town to oversee the Library. The fundraising money from the Library does have to come into the Town so that a check can be issued and signed by the treasurer, which requires a warrant to be drawn on. The Library Board of Trustees approve that warrant. The Select Board agreed that the Library should be able to spend their own fundraising money.

The Town Manager continued that all expenses for the Town have to go through the warrant process. The difference between other fundraising monies and these fundraising monies is that this one goes through the Town account. The Select Board pointed out that with ARPA, there were instructions to spend money in such a way that will incur any annual costs and that if the size of any building is increasing, that will increase the annual budget, beyond the cost of construction and costs related to the project, such as using more power, etc. Thus, there is an obligation of future costs to the Town without going through a formal process.

Library Representative reiterated that the Library Board of Trustees is an elected Board and they oversee the Library building, not the Select Board and that the Select Board provided a letter of support. The money for the building is coming from the State, from fundraising, and from grants. The Library is adamant about not asking the citizens of Weathersfield to pay for it. The Select Board inquired about the budget going up due to the Library, to which the response was that costs always go up with lights, insurance, etc and that it is only 500 square feet.

The Select Board stated that perhaps an article should have been put forward for the citizens to support the project. The Library Representative stated that

the money has come from fundraising. The Select Board reiterated that there is an annual operating cost associated that is located within the General Fund to operate the Library. The Library Representative stated that the Town had audit issues and that the Library had their own fund and that there was an agreement from the Town and that when that happens, there would be no interference guaranteed and that there are meeting minutes about this.

The Select Board stated that it is in the General Fund because the Board of Directors submit their budget to the Select Board and the Select Board includes it in the General Fund and that this year, the Select Board won't do that this year and will put it as a separate article from the Board of Directors from the Library and let the citizens vote on the Library's budget.

The Library Representative stated that he had wanted to combine the Library and the Town as the Town had audit issues and the Library had budget issues and the Library would like the Select Board to have a say about the Library and that also, the Library Board of Trustee should have the respect as elected officials. The Select Board stated that they just want to fix the mistake on the warrant. The Town Manger stated that separating the Library from the General Fund does increase overlapping costs to the Town. The Select Board stated that this can be discussed at a later date.

Motion: To remove the funding raising money for the Library in the amount of \$5,524.00 to be taken off the Select Board warrants, changing the Grand Total Operating Expenses from \$81,980.74 to \$76,456.74.

Made by: Mr. Fuller

Second: Ms. O'Brien

Vote: All in favor

17 Any Other Business

Motion: To appoint August Murray as the Solid Waste Representative and to the Solid Waste District Commission as a Voting member and to the Transfer Station Joint Committee for West Windsor, Reading, and Weathersfield.

Made by: Mr. Fuller

Second: Ms. Smith

Vote: All in favor

18 Adjourn

Motion: To adjourn the meeting.

Made by: Mr. Fuller

Second: Ms. O'Brien

Vote: All in favor

The meeting adjourned at 9:04 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Nichole Gagnon

WEATHERSFIELD SELECT BOARD

Michael Todd, Chairperson

August Murray, Selector

Wendy Smith, Selector

David Fuller, Vice-Chairperson

Kelly O'Brien, Clerk

