

Select Board Meeting
Zoom Meeting
DRAFT of Special Select Board Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, June 20, 2022 6:30 PM

Select Board Members Present:

Paul Tillman
Kelly O'Brien
Michael Todd
Wendy Smith
David Fuller
Brandon Gulnick, Town Manager

Attendees: John & Patti Arrison, Maureen R., Ginger Winberg, Jonah Blum, Beth Gorton, Ken Blum, Roxane Blake, Marilyn Nichols, Ross Edwards, Robin Dawson, Steve Akenhead, Mandy & Greg Martel, Rika Henderson, Evelyn & Tom Leach, David & Mary Gulbarnsen, Tina and Willis Wood, Lisa Mair, Ken Poland, David Ainley, Marina Garland, George Ainley, Craig Jewett, Julie Levy, Stephanie & David Lynch, deForest Bearse, Annemarie Christiansen

Online Attendees: Ryan Gumbart, Land Use Administrator, Joseph Bublat, Edward Gibbs, Nat Stoddard, Mark, Anne Redmond, Brian Bosenbert, Beth Huton, Michael Dawson, Bart Mair

- 1.) Call to Order by Michael Todd, Selectman at 6:31 pm
- 2.) Pledge of Allegiance was led by Paul Tillman.
- 3.) Agenda Review – no changes
- 4.) Comments from Citizens not on the agenda

John Arrison said that several weeks ago he had sent a note to the Town Manager and to the Chair with the recommendation that we ask all the departments to come up with possible plans for fuel savings. He was curious if that had gone anywhere.

Brandon Gulnick said that they were definitely looking into fuel savings considering the cost of fuel right now. It will take a bit for them to get that plan together, but the conversation has been started.

- 5.) Review minutes from previous meetings: 6-6-2022;6-16-2022

There were no minutes for 6-16-22 available for this meeting. There were tabled until the next Selectboard meeting on 7-5-22.

Paul Tillman made a motion to accept the meeting minutes from 6-6-22.

Wendy Smith – 2nd

No Discussion

47 Vote - unanimous
48
49

50 6.) Public Hearing: Adoption of Bylaw Amendments and Zoning Map
51

52 Michael Todd said that although this agenda said "Public Hearing" this is not a public
53 hearing. The public hearing is over and was closed at the last Selectboard meeting.
54

55 Michael Todd made a motion to adopt the bylaws as presented by the Planning
56 Commission.
57 2nd by David Fuller. That motion was tabled, making it the first item of business on this
58 agenda.
59

60 Michael Todd explained that a quasi-judicial process in State law allows a board to go
61 into deliberative session. The Zoning Board does it all the time. The Selectboard is
62 allowing you to observe a deliberative session. You are not allowed to participate, you
63 are not allowed to ask questions, you are not allowed to comment in any way.
64

65 After the deliberative session it was determined that there were still a lot of questions
66 regarding the land use map. It was decided to send the bylaws and the land use map back
67 to the Planning Commission for further review and adjustments.
68

69 7.) FY23 Tax Rate Discussion
70

71 Nate Stoddard attended the meeting via Zoom and said that there were recent changes.
72 About 3 weeks ago, the District Advisor at PB & R assigned to the Town of
73 Weathersfield, reached out to Barb and Nate and wanted to know where they were at.
74 They showed by way of applications, 6 solar projects within the Town that could need to
75 be addressed and have a value put on it.
76

77 Barb tracked down the owner of these sites, sent out the forms and last week they
78 received one back and sent it back to the district advisor. The district advisor put it
79 through their solar utility evaluation tool that is used State wide and came back with a
80 value on that property. Barb and Nate created a parcel and put a value on that parcel
81 based on that information.
82

83 The number Brandon is referring to that was given last week has changed. Your total
84 municipal grand list number was \$3,315,906.95 and now with the change with that one
85 parcel the new number is \$3,318,936. So, it went back up a little.
86

87 The biggest question is why did it go down from last year. Nate said the biggest reduction
88 came from the VT Transco property also known to some as Velco. It is a utility company
89 that saw almost a \$3.4 million dollar decrease in its evaluation. That comes from the
90 utility providing information to the State and the State putting it into their utility
91 evaluation tool.
92

Michael Todd wanted to know if there was a notification that they Town could receive that this was happening and if there was any communication that this was happening. Nate said he could look at the exact letter that the Town received on all of the utilities and the dates they were received by the Town. It happens around the April 1st time frame.

David Fuller asked Nate if he had anything to do with plugging in the numbers or anything for Velco. Nate said he did not, this is all State generated. Dave asked if it was the facility and not the Weathersfield Personal Property Tax? Nate said that is correct, it has nothing to do with the Personal Property Tax. It is a Utility tax generated by the State. Dave also wanted to know if this could become a trend if we could see if go down again in another year or two. Nate said the biggest reason it's gone down so much is because the CLA was applied to the value.

The Grand List is completed as of today.

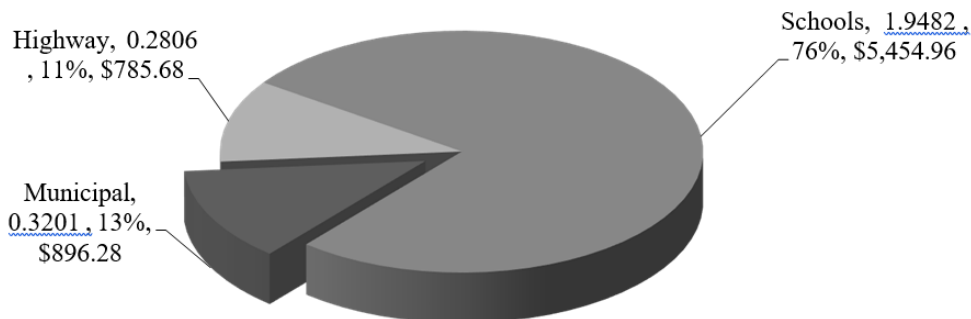
Michael Todd asked Nate to explain what causes the CLA to rise and fall. Nate said the CLA is the calculation between your total sales for a 3-year time period that the State does a study on divided by your assessed values.

The Selectboard is not able to set a tax rate tonight. They will need a new school rate and Brandon is hoping to have this at the first meeting in July.

RE: FY23 Tax Rate Discussion (Prior to the change with the additional parcel)

Following the receipt of our homestead and non-homestead rates, a similar set of graphs will be provided to the Town. The General Fund rate as shown in the graph below includes county & local education. For the purpose of this meeting, we are distributing the following graphs for FY22 (current fiscal year):

**FY22 Town of Weathersfield Homestead Tax Rates totaling
2.5489 and Tax Amount on \$280,000 assessed value home**



Taxes on average home = \$7,136.92

Our Assessor has released the 4/11 as of 5/25/22 (Attachment A). The CU exemptions are not finished, and he is working on obtaining information relating to Solar to determine their values.

In FY21 the Grand List was \$3,316,189. In FY22 the Grand List was \$3,327,353.29. The FY23 “Draft Grant List” this year is \$3,315,906.95.

The Local Education Rate cannot be calculated until we receive the education tax rate (e.g., the additional 30K on Veterans Exemptions). For the purpose of obtaining a draft municipal tax rate the same Local Education Rate was used from FY22.

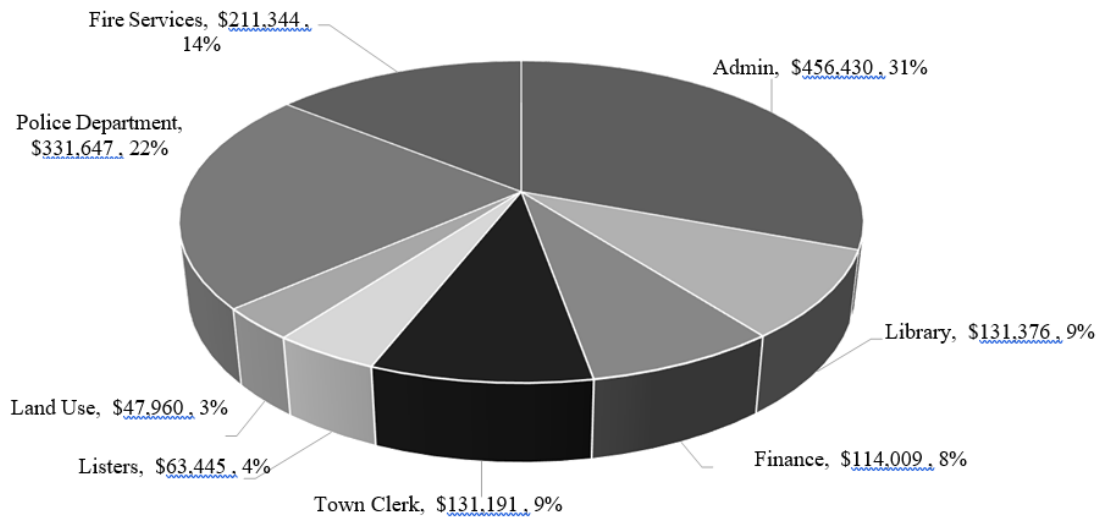
Total Draft FY23 Municipal Tax Rate				
Total Taxes to be Raised	Budget	FY23	FY22	Change
General Fund	1,049,016	0.3164	0.3054	0.0110
County Tax	26,433	0.0080	0.0079	0.0001
GF Special Articles	18,033	0.0054	0.0000	0.0054
Highway Fund	930,341	0.2806	0.2845	-0.0039
Highway-Separate Article	33,000	0.0100	0.0000	0.0100
Local Education	22,665	0.0068	0.0068	0.0000
Total Municipal Taxes to be Raised	2,079,488	0.6272	0.6046	0.0226

Proposed Quarterly Tax Payment Due Dates

August 17, 2022
November 16, 2022
February 15, 2023
May 17, 2023

The Tax Rate will need to be set no later than the first meeting in July. Following this meeting, we will send the bills to Doolittle’s to print/mail. Last year, the Selectboard set the tax rate on July 13, 2021.

FY23 General Fund Expenditures



Admin includes personnel, water district, office, utilities, legal fees, insurance (auto, property, boiler, etc.), tax collection, county taxes, contracted services, ambulance, custodian, parks, 1879 schoolhouse, and appropriations.

8.) Perkinsville & Ascutney Wastewater Feasibility Study

Dear Board Members,

We held a meeting with Tom Brown, ANR/Water Supply Division. Mr. Brown explained there is funding to complete a Wastewater Feasibility Study in the form of a 100% forgivable loan. The first step is to secure an engineer to do the project. We advertised an RFQ and received four (4) responses. A meeting was held with Regional Planning to open the responses and rank them based on criteria. We contacted Tom Brown to ask whether he has worked with our #1 choice. Mr. Brown stated that he is familiar with Otter Creek and has worked on projects with them/approves of our selection.

See Attachment A – Agreement

See Attachment B - Application

Otter Creek Engineering will be present at the 6/20 meeting to answer questions.

Craig Jewett was present from Otter Creek Engineering to present the Wastewater Feasibility Study. This is a State ARPA run program. These are loans, but forgivable loans. After the selection process, Otter Creek provided the Town with a scope of services, associated budget and agreement for the Town to consider and to be included as part of the loan application that gets submitted to the funding program.

Because this goes through a loan process, this will go through an underwriting process and be processed like a loan. This is a reimbursement process. You will have to pay for services and then be reimbursed. However, because this is done through the ARPA process you will get a determination on your subsidy before you sign before you move forward with your consultant.

Michael Todd asked about the anticipated turn around since we have to have the funds up front and then get reimbursed. Brandon said that he is not sure about the anticipated turn around. Craig Jewett said anticipated time from is probably 3-4 months, reimbursement time is around 2 weeks, however, wherever the money comes from up front is up to the Town.

9.) Letter to AOT: Request for Traffic Engineering Study – Route 131

Dear Ian Degutis,

We are requesting that AOT Traffic Operations conduct a review of the speed limit on 131 in Weathersfield between Thrasher Road & Weathersfield Center Road. Residents located at 2291 Route 131 have a blind driveway and feel unsafe entering and exiting their property. There have been several accidents on Route 131 near this location. We are requesting that AOT Traffic Operations conduct a traffic engineering study, as required by State Law, and forward a recommendation to the Vermont Traffic Committee for a decision. The speed limit is 40MPH on Route 131 in the vicinity of Victory Drive and Lavigne Road. Changing the speed limit between Guld Rd and Thrasher Rd on Route 131 is our recommendation.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Brandon is going to get together with Ray Stapleton to identify all areas that need to be included and send one letter.

10.) Town Manager Announcements/Updates – tabled for the next Selectboard Meeting

11.) High Priority Building Improvements - ARPA - tabled for the next Selectboard Meeting

12.) Business Personal Property Tax - tabled for the next Selectboard meeting

13.) Proposed Future Agenda Items

- Town Manager Announcements/Updates – tabled for the next Selectboard meeting
- High Priority Building Improvements - ARPA - tabled for the next Selectboard meeting
- Business Personal Property Tax - tabled for the next Selectboard meeting

223
224 14.) Appointments – tabled for the next Selectboard meeting

225 a.) Budget Committee (2 Vacancies)

226 b.) Constable (1 Vacancy)

227 c.) Energy Coordinator (1 Vacancy)

228 d.) Parks & Recreation Commission (2 Vacancies)

229 e.) Zoning Board of Adjustment - (1 Vacancy)

230
231 15.) Approve Warrant

232
233 Kelly O’Brien made a motion to approve the warrants of 6-20-22 as follows:

234
235 General Funds Operating Expenses \$65,585.01
236 Payroll \$15,841.12

237
238 Highway Fund Operating Expenses \$8,877.48
239 Payroll \$7,993.53

240
241 Solid Waste Management Fund Operating Expenses \$ 21,536.60
242 Payroll \$1,733.11

243
244 Library Operating Expenses \$0.00
245 Payroll \$1,991.08

246
247 Grants Operating Expense \$700

248
249 Dump Truck \$75,508.60

250
251 Grand Totals Operating Expenses \$172,407.69
252 Payroll \$27,558.84

253
254 Paul Tillman – 2nd
255 Vote - unanimous

256
257 16.) Adjourn

258
259 Paul Tillman
260 Wendy Smith – 2nd
261 No Discussion
262 Vote - Unanimous
263
264
265
266

267 Respectfully,
268 Chauncie Tillman
269 Alt. Recording Secretary

DRAFT

WEATHERSFIELD SELECTBOARD

David Fuller, Vice-Chairperson

Kelly O'Brien, Clerk

Wendy Smith, Selector

Paul Tillman, Selector

Michael Todd, Chairperson