

TOWN OF WEATHERSFIELD, VERMONT

SELECT BOARD

**Select Board
Martin Memorial Hall
5259 Route 5, Ascutney VT
Monday, November 21, 2022
6:30 PM
REGULAR MEETING**

MINUTES

Select Board Members Present: Kelly O'Brien
Wendy Smith
Michael Todd

Select Board Members Absent: David Fuller, Paul Tillman

Brandon Gulnick, Town Manager

Others Present:

Darrin Spaulding	FloAnn Dango	Marion Ballom	
Barb Thomas	Matt Keniston	Rick Bates	

1. Call to Order

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

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Bates led the pledge.

3. Agenda Review

There were no changes to the agenda.

4. Comments from Citizens on Topics not on the Agenda

Chief Spaulding said that two bridges have been removed in the Town Forest. He said those bridges were there for use by the power company for line maintenance and for access to all parts of the Forest. He said it also appears that there have been bike races taking place on newly cut trails and no one had notified or coordinated with his department. Emergency services are difficult to provide when there has been no prior planning and with the bridges gone, limited or difficult access. He asked if the bridges were going to be replaced.

Mr. Todd said he was aware of the new trails but not the bridge removals. He said he and Mr. Gulnick would be working with the Town's boards and committees to ensure policies are being following and the Select Board is kept apprised of activities.

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Mr. Todd urged Chief Spaulding to meet with the Conservation Commission and the Parks and Recreation Commission about this matter.

5. Review minutes from previous meetings –

November 7, 2022

Additions/corrections/deletions: None

Motion: To accept as they are

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

Vote: All in favor

November 14, 2022

Additions/corrections/deletions: None

Motion: To accept

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

Vote: All in favor

6. FY24 General Fund Budget

Mr. Gulnick said the budget being viewed at this meeting did not have the COLAs in it. He provided a separate table for the board to visualize the effect on the budget of various COLAs.

Admin/Finance Budget

Mr. Gulnick said he is still awaiting comprehensive insurance figures. He will add them to the budget when they are received.

Revenues are reduced because delinquent taxes are very low. We won't be getting the interest and penalties we have collected in previous years. \$27,500 is needed to offset the revenue reduction. Mr. Gulnick suggested using some of the audited fund balance.

Land Use

Revenue will be increased by 6% to reflect previous trends. The Land Use Administrator is requesting a 5% COLA.

Listers

This budget is being level funded. An 8.7% COLA is being requested.

Town Clerk

This budget is also being level funded. An 8.7% COLA is being requested.

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Library

A 3% increase outside of personnel is being requested to reflect the cost of maintaining the library building. An 8.7% COLA is being requested. The Trustees have not finalized their budget yet.

Fire Services

We will need to add the first payment - \$43,071 (includes principal and interest) - for the new pumper truck. The actual number shown in the budget will change when the interest payment is known.

Ascutney Fire

A 9% overall increase is requested – 7% increase for stipends; 8% increase in utilities; 7% in communications (dispatch); 23% increase for office supplies. Insurance and workers compensation are not yet known – we are waiting for VLCT to provide those numbers. Radio repeater fees increased by \$250. There is a \$7,982 overall increase in this budget.

West Weathersfield Fire

A 10% increase (\$9,187) is requested - 6% increase in stipends; building 13% increase in utilities and building expenses; equipment and fuel increases as well.

There will be a \$57,000 decrease in revenue coupled with increased expenses resulting in a \$134,907 total increase in tax need. This translates into 4 cents on the tax rate based on last year's grand list.

There are no major purchases known at this time.

Special appropriations are in the budget.

7. FY24 Insurance Discussion

There will be a \$1,766 total health insurance increase this year. Because this increase is so low, Mr. Gulnick recommended going with the plans and amenities now offered.

Motion: To offer the MVP Gold 3 Plan with a \$3,000 HSA for Single Plans and a \$5,000 HSA for Family Plans, Employer Share 86% & Employee Share 14% and the Platinum Plan with no HSA, Employer Share 90.5% & Employee Share 9.5%.

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

Vote: All in favor

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8. FY24 COLA Discussion

Mr. Gulnick created a table to compare various raises. He pointed out that when wages are raised, FICA and retirement costs go up too. Because two board members were absent, discussion on this issue was deferred until the full board was present.

9. 1879 Schoolhouse Paving

The Weathersfield Food Shelf received a \$2,500 infrastructure grant from the Vermont Food Bank. They would like to put it toward the \$3,700 cost of paving.

Mr. Keniston was asked why paving? He said because Surepack grows weeds that must constantly be removed; people catch the weeds with their feet, thus pulling them up which takes the Surepack with it. Paving is easier to shovel than Surepack.

Mr. Keniston said they would have included the paving under the ramp grant, but there wasn't enough to cover it. He said in hindsight, we should have spent the extra money and had it done when the ramp was installed. He acknowledged that paving is not historic, but neither is the ramp, although every effort was made to make the ramp blend in with the structure.

Motion: To accept the bid from Springfield Paving of \$3,750 to pave the walkway at the 1879 Perkinsville Schoolhouse, of which \$2,500 will come from a grant and \$1,250 will come from the 1879 Perkinsville School Capital Maintenance and Improvement Fund.

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

Vote: All in favor

10. Other Business

Mr. Gulnick had been given several written communications from Steve Aikenhead to Dave Moore regarding issues on the Crown Point Road (maintenance, alternate route, etc.). Mr. Todd said he and Mr. Gulnick would look into the matter and repeated what he had said earlier in the meeting about boards and committees keeping the select board apprised of activities before they happen.

11. Warrant

Motion: To approve the warrant for 11/20/2022 as follow:

General Funds	Operating Expenses	\$26,485.19
	Payroll	\$14,426.92
Highway Fund	Operating Expenses	\$15,510.88
	Payroll	\$8,168.63

Solid Waste Management Fund

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	Operating Expenses	\$13,293.09
	Payroll	\$2,192.57
Library	Operating Expenses	\$0.00
	Payroll	\$2,101.46
Lotter Lane Culvert		\$195,136.16
Generator Ad & Dehumidifier		\$1,064.50
Veterans Memorial		\$280.00
Grand Totals	Operating Expenses	\$251,769.82
	Payroll	\$26,889.58

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

Vote: All in favor

12. Adjourn

Motion: To adjourn the meeting

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

Vote: All in favor

The meeting adjourned at 7:48 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
deForest Bearse

WEATHERSFIELD SELECTBOARD

Michael Todd, Chairperson

Wendy Smith, Selector

Kelly O'Brien, Clerk

Paul Tillman, Selector

David Fuller, Vice-Chairperson