

Select Board
Martin Memorial Hall
5259 Route 5, Ascutney VT
Monday, May 1, 2023
6:30 PM
REGULAR MEETING
Draft Minutes

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	Beth Hit	
Ray Stapleton	Matt Walasewicz (remote)	
Melanie Sheehen	Beth Hitz	
Joseph Bublat (remote)	Maureen (remote)	
John Keniston		

1 Call to Order

Mr. Todd called the meeting to order at 6:32pm.

2 Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Tillman led the pledge of allegiance.

3 Comments from SB, TM, and Citizens on Topics Not on the Agenda

Mr. Todd reminded everyone about Annual Green-up day on May 6, 2023. Green-up bags are available at the Town Office. Email steve@vermonthill.net for more information.

The Highway Superintendent spoke about road closures on Little Ascutney Road due to flooding between VT Route 106 and Lottery Lane.

4 Review minutes from previous meeting(s): 04/17/2023

Additions/corrections/deletions:

a. None.

Motion: To approve.

Made by: Mr. Tillman

Second: Ms. Smith

Vote: All in favor

5 Melanie Sheehan: Overdose Awareness

Melanie Sheehan gave a presentation on substance use and reducing stigma. She discussed strategies for the town to have Narcan distribution cite in town, harm reduction kits, and for the police to utilize OD Max, which logs locations on overdoses and the days they are happening so an action plan to support that area can be implemented. She left lawn sign, pamphlets, and other additional resources with the Town Manager.

The Select Board discussed barriers to sobriety, drawing the line between helping verses enabling, how location plays a role, strategies and programs that seem helpful such as prevention initiatives, the impact of mental health, progress on current legislation, and EMS burnout. The Select Board concluded that they support efforts that aim to solve the drug crisis in Vermont.

6 Unassigned Drug and Tobacco Paraphernalia Establishments

The Select Board reviewed documents regarding the Weathersfield Select Board Amendment to the Weathersfield Zoning Bylaw Drug and Tobacco Paraphernalia Establishments and how the Select Board at the time did not have the necessary signatures. Section 7.24 states that: “The foregoing amendments shall be effective 21 days after adoption, that is, on March 9, 2016. Dated at Weathersfield, Windsor County, Vermont this 16th day of February, 2016.”

Mr. Fuller pointed out that this was a done deal, effective 21 days after the date it was signed and that a warning to sign it could be done as a correction matter. The Select Board agreed that they didn’t want to sign off for the previous Select Board. The Select Board discussed how the state and federal laws regarding some of the items in the Bylaws have changed or not changed since the Bylaw was written and discussed issues surrounding establishments that were not grandfathered in and their proximity to the school. The Select Board agreed that the Planning Commission needs to review the Bylaw.

7. Town Manager Update

a) Roofing Projects

The Town Garage roofing project is scheduled to take place during the week of the 15th of May unless the weather does not cooperate, and in this case, the project will begin during the week of the 22nd of May. Following completion of this project, the West Weathersfield Fire Department roof will be scheduled.

b) Generator Projects

The Martin Memorial Hall Generator project is moving forward on May 31st. The Town has coordinated with Irving and are awaiting an estimate for that part of the work. The Town has a site visit scheduled at the Town Garage and 1879 Schoolhouse on May 9th with

Brookfield Service. The Town is anticipating receiving an estimate to install generators at these buildings prior to the 2nd Select Board meeting in May.

c) **Overhead Doors – Ascutney Fire Department**

A claim was submitted for the overhead doors at the Ascutney Fire Department. This was an expense that was made, and one of the reasons the budget is over expended. A claim was submitted to VLCT and VLCT approved the claim. The doors cost \$4,600 to replace, with a \$1,000 deductible. VLCT sent the Town a check for \$3,600.

d) **West Weathersfield Fire Department Banquet**

The Town Manager attended the West Weathersfield Fire Department Banquet to thank first responders for their service. Several firefighters were recognized for their years of service, including Travis Comp, Jordyn Bagalio, and Dave Picknell for 5 years of service, Ben Waters and Tracy Dauphin for 10 years of service, Mike Wiltshire and Mychael Spaulding for 15 years of service, Josh Dauphin for 20 years of service, and Ray Stapleton for 25 years of service.

The Firefighter of the year award went to Dave Picknell. This award is chosen by the group and reflects the mission statement and core values. The department also recognized Ray Stapleton for his time as Chief and leadership in other roles.

e) **ARPA Update**

The ARPA meeting took place on Wednesday, April 26, 2023, at 6:30pm. The meeting was held at the 1879 Schoolhouse. The Town Manager will be holding another public input meeting in mid-May and will be advertising this again. Any resident in Town that wishes to share an idea on how to best use the remaining funds is welcomed.

The Town Manager will submit a recommendation based on the community input received at the first Select Board meeting in June, and that recommendation will not only include the expenditures for ARPA funds, but also a system to match these funds with state grant programs.

The Select Board inquired about what the public input was thus far and the Town Manger brief the Select Board on those ideas: The Hoisington Field Master Plan and Engineering, a generator for the highway department, a generator for the 1879 schoolhouse, the posts at the Veterans Memorial Park, Martin Memorial Hall drainage, trails, tree maintenance, mapping scenic views, digitalization of Town Clerk's Office, office restructure and contingency.

The Select Board discussed the generators, the cost of generators verses the electricity needs associated with each building, the need of a

study to assess these needs, and the Town emergency management services.

Motion: To allow the Town Manger to install and purchase up to \$2,500 from ARPA funds for a generator for the 1879 Schoolhouse.

Made by: Mr. Fuller

Second: Mr. Tillman

Vote: All in Favor

Motion: To authorize the Town Manager, the Highway Superintendent and the Chair to move forward with quotes for a generator for the highway garage, with funding to come from ARPA.

Made by: Mr. Fuller

Second: Mr. Tillman

Vote: All in Favor

8. Town Highway #95

There is a Town highway on private property. It is on some maps but not others but it is in the states system as a class 4 impassable road. See email from the Highway Superintendent regarding the issue:

April 26, 2023

To: Brandon Gulick

I have researched TH #95 as per your request for information.

Currently TH #95 is listed as a class 4 town highway .25 miles in length on the 2019 highway milage map. It is also marked with a U on the map to represent it is impassable/ or untraveled according to the map key.

I have done a site visit and found the road to be unidentifiable from the surrounding fields. I have found no trace of a possible road other than a gap in a stone wall that may represent a lane.

This road starts at its intersection with Cooks Pond Road and proceeds east for .25 miles over parcel span # 705-224-10852 (Keniston). It doesn't connect to a neighboring parcel or appear to be a right of way to any other parcel. The road in its entirety is on the Keniston parcel.

Currently this property is a working farm, and the location of the road is agricultural fields. Mr Keniston has stated that map companies have tried to send vehicles onto his property to get to Divoll Pasture Road. Also, according to Mr Keniston, this road is not mentioned in the deed to his property.

As a class 4 highway per act 64 I am required to inspect it annually. I am also required to repair any erosion if present (in this case no road is present).

To resolve the above-mentioned issues, I recommend the select board discontinue Town Highway #95 as per Vermont Statues Tittle 19 Chapter 7.

This will resolve the issues that Mr. Keniston has with a Town Highway passing onto his property. At the same time also relieves the Town of Weathersfield from the cost of its maintence if needed in the future.

The Select Board concluded that information for the hearing process and other legalities should be collected and ready to discuss for the next Select Board meeting.

9. Martin Memorial Hall Roofing Project

The Martin Memorial Hall roofing project has been completed. There were 2 changes as the project progressed. Premium shingles were not available & 6 pieces of plywood required replacement. The inspector agreed with both the decision to change from premium shingles to pro shingles and agreed that the 6 pieces of plywood required replacement. The cost of Pro Shingles was \$3,000 less than the cost of Premium Shingles. The total cost of plywood replacement was \$450. The net difference is \$2,550.

Motion: To reallocate the \$2,550 left over from the Martin Memorial Hall roofing project back into ARPA funds.

Made by: Mr. Tillman

Second: Ms. Smith

Vote: All in Favor.

10. Town Reappraisal Draft RFP

The Town of Weathersfield is requesting a proposal from qualified, certified reappraisal contractors to work with Weathersfield to complete a town-wide reappraisal for the 2025 Grand List. The most recent town wide reappraisal was done in 2008. The selected contractor will be responsible for a thorough analysis of local real estate market conditions and review of the existing Computer Assisted Mass Appraisal (CAMA) data leading to the development of computer models for estimating the fair market value of all taxable property in Weathersfield.

This RFP is considered advertised on May 2, 2023. Sealed proposals must be received at the Weathersfield Town Office located at 5259 US Route 5, Ascutney, VT 05030 by 11am prevailing time, June 2, 2023. Sealed bids delivered by person, overnight express, currier, or parcel post must be clearly marked "Town of Weathersfield Reappraisal Proposal." Any bids received after this date will not be accepted, even if the proposal is postmarked on the bid due date. Copies of this Request for Proposal may be obtained by calling the Weathersfield Town Office at (802) 674-2626 Ext 2, or by email at weathersfield@weathersfield.org.

This request for proposal is intended to be explanatory, but should any discrepancy appear, or any misunderstanding arise as to the intent of anything contained herewith, the interpretation and decision of the Town of Weathersfield shall be final and binding. Any corrections of errors or omissions in the request for proposal may be made by the Town of Weathersfield when such a correction is necessary for the proper fulfillment of their intention as construed by the Town of Weathersfield.

The Select Board discussed how Town Reappraisals have been done historically and what other towns may be doing for the process. The Select

Board agreed that an RFP should be done to ensure there is enough funding for a reappraisal.

11. Tax Collector Report

On April 17, 2023, the Select Board requested that the Town provide the status of delinquent taxes & agreements. The last Town Report showed that in FY22, the Town had \$290,038.33 in delinquent taxes outstanding on the books. The Town had been working to decrease the delinquencies on the books since FY20, and it takes a couple years for it to fully clear out of reporting. As of April 27, 2023, the Town has \$33,914.49 in delinquent taxes on the FY23 books, which is an 88.3% decrease since the recent annual report that was distributed. The annual report that was distributed contained delinquent taxes between July 1, 2021, and June 30, 2022.

The Town Manager reported that the Town held tax sales in 2020, 2021, and 2022, and between the tax sales that were completed and the agreements that were made per policy, it takes a couple of years for everything to work out, which is why the number still showed a high number of delinquencies in the last report. For example, in 2020, the Town had 134 total delinquencies totaling over \$300K on our books. Currently, there are 31 total delinquencies totaling \$33,914.49. Of these 31 delinquencies, 8 of these have made agreements per policy, and of these 8 agreements, 3 have defaulted. Of the remaining 22 that have not made agreements, the total delinquency is \$6,120, and the average delinquency is \$266.08.

The Town will continue efforts to collect delinquent taxes by policy and law and anticipate holding a tax sale on the 3 properties that have defaulted on their agreements and sending a notice of tax sale on the remaining 22 that have not made an effort to come to an agreement with the Town per policy.

Mr. Fuller and the Town Manager discussed the budget process. Mr. Fuller stated that he would like to find out more about what happened with \$256,123.83 between April 2020 and April 2023 in regards to income as he had not seen this happen historically and had concerns about how it will all level out in the end. It was suggested that a discussion about using a cash system instead of an accrual system might be worthwhile.

12. Appointments

- 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. Deputy Fire Warden**

- g. Green Up Coordinator**
- h. Parks and Recreation (2 Vacancies)**
- i. Veterans Memorial Committee (4 Vacancies)**
 - i.** Allison Roth
 - ii.** Mark Richardson
- j. Zoning Board of Adjustment (2 Vacancies)**

Motion: To appoint Allison Roth and Mark Richardson to the Veterans Memorial Committee.

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

Vote: All in Favor.

13. Warrants

Motion: To approve the warrants for 5/1/2023 as followed:

General Funds	Highway Fund
Operating Expenses \$91,479.04	Operating Expenses \$14,633.93
Payroll \$14,797.65	Payroll \$8,337.92
 Solid Waste Management Fund	 AP: \$274.17
Operating Expenses \$11,634.11	 Municipal Road Grant \$78.46
Payroll \$1,839.86	
 Library Operating Expenses \$0.00	 ARPA/Roofing Project \$31,314
Payroll \$2,151.34	
 Grand Totals:	
Operating Expenses \$149,414.27	
Payroll \$27,035.90	

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

Vote: All in favor

14. Any Other Business

None.

15. Adjourn

Motion: To adjourn the meeting.

Made by: Mr. Fuller **Second:** Ms. Smith

Vote: All in favor

The meeting adjourned at 8:42 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Nichole Gagnon

WEATHERSFIELD SELECT BOARD

Michael Todd, Chairperson

Paul Tillman, Vice-Chairperson

Wendy Smith, Selector

David Fuller, Selector

Kelly O'Brien, Clerk

