

TOWN OF WEATHERSFIELD, VERMONT

SELECT BOARD

Select Board
Martin Memorial Hall
5259 Route 5, Ascutney VT
Monday, May 15, 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	John Keniston	
Joseph Bublat (remote)		
Ray Stapleton		
Jacqueline Maynard		
Tim Sarsent		

1 Call to Order

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

2 Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Tillman led the pledge of allegiance.

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

The Select Board discussed current state legislation and the Select Board agreed that Rep. Arrison should attend a meeting soon and that the Select Board would like see the results of the questionnaires from last November.

Mr. Fuller stated that this is National Police Appreciation week and thanked the police for the difficult job they do. Mr. Fuller stated that the tree trimmers from TTC were doing a great job and deserve a letter of thanks from the Select Board.

Mr. Keniston stated that it would be great if there were a place in town to get free wood chips and stated that surrounding towns offer this to residents. The Town Manager will look into this.

TOWN OF WEATHERSFIELD, VERMONT

SELECT BOARD

4 Review minutes from previous meeting(s): 05/01/23

Additions/corrections/deletions:

a. None.

Motion: To approve.

Made by: Mr. Tillman

Second: Ms. Smith

Vote: All in favor

5 Large Gathering Permits

a. Wellwood Orchards Strawberry Festival – June 24, 2023 10am – 3pm

Motion: To approve a large gathering permit for Wellwood Orchards Strawberry Festival on June 24, 2023, from 10am-3pm.

Made by: Mr. Fuller

Second: Mr. Tillman

Vote: All in favor

b. Wellwood Orchards Harvest Festival – September 2, 2023 10am-3pm

Motion: To approve a large gathering permit for Wellwood Orchards Harvest Festival on September 2, 2023, from 10am-3pm.

Made by: Mr. Fuller

Second: Ms. Smith

Vote: All in favor

6 Excavation Bid Award

On April 17th, the Town advertised an RFP for excavation work on Mountain View Road that included ditching, stone removal, and some tree removal. The recommended 38,000lb machine includes a ditching bucket, digging bucket, and thumb attachment. This work needs to be completed by June 30, 2023.

The Town received 2 bids: DLX is charging \$140 per hour and TS Property Maintenance is charging \$130 per hour. The equipment between the two companies differs. DLX has a 38,000lb machine with a 1.25 cubic yard bucket. TS Property Maintenance has a 31,000lb machine with a .78 cubic yard bucket. The project requires the movement of an estimated 5,000 cubic yards, the size of the buckets moving the material, and the cost associated with each machine per the bids the Town received.

<i>Company</i>	DLX	TS Prop. Maint.	Difference
<i>Est. Hours</i>	60	60	0
<i>Hourly Rate</i>	140	130	10
<i>Mobilization Fee</i>	0	130	130
<i>Project Cost</i>	8,400	7,930	470

TOWN OF WEATHERSFIELD, VERMONT

SELECT BOARD

<i>Company</i>	DLX	TS Property Maint.	Difference
<i>Bucket Size</i>	1.25	0.78	0.47
<i>Buckets P/H (est.)</i>	120.00	120.00	0.00
<i>CY/HR. (est.)</i>	150.00	93.60	56
<i>Est. CY</i>	5000.00	5000.00	0.00
<i># of Hours</i>	33.33	53.42	-20.09
<i>Hourly Rate</i>	140.00	130.00	10.00
<i>Project Cost</i>	\$4,666.67	\$6,944.44	-\$2,277.78

The Highway Department received a grant from Grants in Aid to do this project. The total award is \$21,780, of which \$19,800 is paid through the grant, and \$1,980 is the Town's match. The \$1,980 is an in-kind match, which includes the Highway Department's work, and the administration's work associated with fulfilling the requirements of the grant.

The Select Board discussed line item costs, grant expectations, the Town's purchasing policy, and how they appreciated that this item be brought to the Select Board's attention. The Select Board pointed out that these numbers are only fictitious so it is hard to say which route is more cost effective and that not assigning a dollar amount will give some flexibility to the project.

Motion: To move with TS Property Management's noted bid for the Mountain View Project.

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

Vote: All in favor

Motion: To change the agenda by moving Item 10 (Warn Hearing to Discontinue Town Highway #95) to Item 7 and to discuss it immediately so that the citizens waiting for that item don't have to wait.

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

Vote: All in favor

7 Warn Hearing to Discontinue Town Highway #95

On May 1st, the Highway Superintendent presented a request to discontinue Highway #95. Information has been collected and a Notice of Public Hearing assembled. In the case this proposal moves forward, Selectors will examine the site on Thursday, June 15th at 6:30pm, and hold a public hearing on Monday, June 19th at 6:30pm.

The Town is hereby notified that changes are being proposed to discontinue Highway #95, which is located off Cooks Pond Road in Weathersfield. The administration is proposing the abovementioned times and dates; however,

TOWN OF WEATHERSFIELD, VERMONT

SELECT BOARD

these dates are dependent on the schedules of each of the Selectors and may change on May 15th during the Select Board meeting when this is discussed.

The Select Board discussed their understanding of the legal responsibilities of the involved parties in regards to the hearing and the best method in which to give 30 days' notice of the hearing. The Select Board agreed that notifying the abutters is not going to hurt and that this should be done by certified letter. There were concerns that if abutters are notified, then they will have say over what happens on someone else's property. The Select Board agreed that they would like to hear of any issues or conflicts that an abutter might bring to the discussion.

The Select Board agreed that they should remain neutral in the matter and that they need as much information as possible so that in the future, should an issue arise, they can demonstrate why they supported whatever decision was made. They continued that this is why more adequate information on logistics, timelines, and the legalities are needed and that the Town needs to do more research on these items, as well as any new or unknown information that comes up. There will be a site visit before the hearing.

Motion: To set the hearing for Highway #95 to Monday, July 17, 2023 at 6:30pm at Martin Memorial Hall

Made by: Mr. Fuller

Second: Mr. Tillman

Vote: All in favor

8 Town Manager Update

a. Fire Department Contracts

Meetings have been held with both Fire Departments to renew contracts by June 30th. The Fire Departments were asked to bring the contracts to both of their departments to discuss it and provide feedback on whether the contract is sufficient. The Town learned a lot over the past two (2) years working under the contract the Town has with the Fire Departments, and the contract was modified to accommodate for this.

b. Roofing Projects

Materials for the Town Garage roofing project have been delivered, and the project continues to move forward as planned.

c. 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. There was a site visit at the Town Garage and 1879 Schoolhouse on May 9th with Brookfield Service. The Town is

TOWN OF WEATHERSFIELD, VERMONT

SELECT BOARD

waiting to receive estimates for both projects to compare the similarities and differences between generator variations at both sites.

d. ARPA Update

A second ARPA working group meeting will take place at the 1879 Schoolhouse on Thursday, June 8th at 6:30pm.

e. Finance Report

A Finance Report will be given at the June 5th Select Board meeting, capturing revenues and expenses for period 11, and projecting the final month of revenues and expenses.

f. Grand List Update

The Town added \$3,000,000 to the Grand List this year from permit work, GMP utility went down by \$990,000, and VELCO went down by \$826,800. The \$50,000 exemption for personal property resulted in a \$250,000 loss when compared to last years' PP/Inv. Incomes. A few had increases in their overall total, so the PP/INV nets out at an increase of \$80,000. A comparison from last year's 411 shows an increase of \$1,273,443 in the Towns total listed value.

The Town still needs to obtain solar values from the State, which may or may not affect anything. There is the possibility that some PP/INV forms come in late, but it doesn't appear that any will exceed the 50K threshold. Grievances may also change these figures. According to the Lister Calendar from the State of Vermont, the latest abstract should be filed is June 4th. According to the previous Select Board meeting, the board thought it was May 4th, but the confirmed date is June 4th.

The abovementioned figures can and do continue to change, and the Town cannot be sure what the true number will be until after the grievance period ends. The Town also continues to wait on the final veterans' exemptions from the VA. The filing of the "final" grand list is no later than July 25th. Grievances will take place on June 15th following notifications that are scheduled to be mailed out on May 25th.

Mr. Fuller had concerns about the value of solar, how it might increase property taxes, and how insurance could go up in cost as well. The Town will see what information they can get from the State on the subject.

g. 1879 Schoolhouse Operations

The 1879 Schoolhouse Committee had remaining tasks to complete, and those tasks have been completed following their meeting on May 8th. The Committee voted to dissolve and adjourn, and the vote was unanimous.

TOWN OF WEATHERSFIELD, VERMONT

SELECT BOARD

The building will be used for rentals, board, commission, and committee meetings, public hearings, after school programming, social service and non-profit meetings, emergency operations center, yoga & meditation classes, and conferences. There will also be joint events where the building will be used during events at Hoisington field. Lastly, the building will continue to be utilized as a food shelf.

A maintenance plan has been put into effect, which includes a rental calendar and a departure checklist for rentals, in addition to an application that requires approval prior to rentals. The Gardening Club has plans to plant flowers around the building, and the Town has plans to apply for further grant opportunities to continue to improve the building without using local tax dollars.

h. Fourth Quarterly Tax Payment Due

The 4th Quarterly Tax payment is due on Wednesday, May 17th by 4:30pm.

i. Hazard Mitigation Plan

The first public meeting will be on May 25th at 6:30pm at the 1879 Schoolhouse. At this meeting, a preliminary hazard analysis will be done and a risk assessment exercise. The results of the meeting will be presented at a Select Board meeting.

9 Transfer FY23 balances to reserves

Each year, the Town receives a state grant to help fund the eventual need for reappraisal. The Town transfers that grant into the Property Reappraisal Reserve Fund. The exact amount of the grant is not known until the check is received but the Town budgets \$15,000 for this grant and transfers that amount early in the fiscal year. Once the grant is received, the Town then adjusts that transfer to match the amount of the grant. The grant this year was in the amount of \$15,808 so there is a need to transfer an additional \$808 into the reserve.

Motion: To authorize the transfer of \$808 into the Property Reappraisal Reserve Fund.

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

Vote: All in favor

The Town received an insurance check in the amount of \$35,640 to help pay for repair to a bridge due to a recent vehicular incident. Since the repairs will likely not be completed prior to 6/30/23 when the current fiscal year ends, this

TOWN OF WEATHERSFIELD, VERMONT

SELECT BOARD

amount should be put into the reserve fund so that the Town can carry it forward to cover the eventual repair costs.

Motion: To authorize the transfer of \$35,640 to the Upper Falls Covered Bridge Restoration Reserve Fund.

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

Vote: All in favor

Mr. Fuller pointed how that bridge cost a lot and to let the insurance company know that this is still an open claim.

10 Vote to discontinue Small Business Grants & transfer remaining balance (\$8,000) back to the ARPA fund.

The Town established a Small Business Relief Fund with ARPA funds for small businesses in the Town that were impacted by COVID-19. The Select Board designated \$20,000 towards this effort. \$12,000 has been expended to date. \$8,000 continues to be earmarked from ARPA funds.

Motion: To dissolve the Small Business Relief Fund & transfer the remaining balance of \$8,000 back into the ARPA fund.

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

Vote: All in favor

11. Select Board Representative to the Schoolboard

Ann Marie Redmond, Schoolboard Chair, contacted the Town with interest in finding ways the School and Town can work together. The School Board has appointed Vincent Jewell to be their liaison to the Select Board. The Town has talked about appointing someone from the Select Board to the School Board in the past.

a) David Fuller

Motion: To appoint David Fuller as the liaison to the school board.

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

Vote: All in favor

12. 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)

TOWN OF WEATHERSFIELD, VERMONT

SELECT BOARD

f. Parks and Recreation (2 Vacancies)

g. Veterans Memorial Committee (2 Vacancies)

h. Zoning Board of Adjustment (2 Vacancies) Evaluation Process discussion

13. Warrants

Motion: To approve the warrants for 5/15/2023 as followed:

General Funds

Operating Expenses: \$21,724.37

Payroll: \$14,901.56

Highway Fund

Operating Expenses: \$8,174.17

Payroll: \$8,312.29

Solid Waste Management Fund

Operating Expenses: \$3,821.21

Payroll: \$1,751.36

Library

Operating Expenses: \$0.00

Payroll: \$2,099.41

Library Fundraising: \$870.00

Grand Totals:

Operating Expenses: \$34,589.75

Payroll: \$27,064.62

Made by: Mr. Tillman

Second: Ms. O'Brien

Vote: All in favor

14. Any Other Business

The electric bill is now on a monthly basis.

15. Adjourn

Motion: To adjourn the meeting.

Made by: Mr. Tillman

Second: Ms. Smith

Vote: All in favor

The meeting adjourned at 8:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Nichole Gagnon

WEATHERSFIELD SELECTBOARD

TOWN OF WEATHERSFIELD, VERMONT

SELECT BOARD

Michael Todd, Chairperson

Wendy Smith, Selector

Paul Tillman, Vice-Chairperson

Kelly O'Brien, Clerk

David Fuller, Selector