

Select Board Meeting  
Martin Memorial Hall  
5259 Route 5, Ascutney VT  
DRAFT of Select Board Meeting Minutes  
Monday December 7, 2020 6:30PM

Select Board Members Present:

Paul Tillman  
Michael Todd  
David Fuller  
Joey Jarvis  
N. John Arrison  
Brandon Gulnick, Town Manager  
Olivia Savage

Online Attendees: Tavis Compo, Steve Heir, Rebecca Roy, Joshua Compo, Darrin Spaulding, Mychael Spaulding, Susanne Terrill, Rosalie McNamara, Ben Waters, 3 unknown callers.

1.) Call to Order by Chair, David Fuller at 6:19 pm

2.) Executive Session – 1 V.S.A § 313

Paul Tillman made a motion to go into Executive Session regarding personnel and contracts.

2<sup>nd</sup> – Joey Jarvis

No discussion

Vote – unanimous

Executive Session ended at 6:28 pm

David Fuller called meeting to order at 6:30 pm

3.) Comments from Select board/Town Manager and Citizens not on Agenda

John Arrison discussed the options for Town Meeting.

Open positions for election no longer need to take out a petition. Call the Town Clerk to sign a consent form. It will also be posted on the Town website.

Current terms set to expire in March do not expire on the date of Town Meeting. They expire the 1<sup>st</sup> warned hearing after Town Election.

David Fuller noted that everyone who was requested to attend the most recent Emergency Management meeting did. This included:

- Highway
- Food Shelves
- Library
- Town Office
- School Principal
- David Baker, Superintendent
- Fire Departments
- Golden Cross

The meeting was geared toward the function of the buildings in town.

#### 4.) Review of minutes from previous meetings:

Approve the minutes from 11-23-20:

Michael Todd made a motion to approve the minutes from 11-23-20

2<sup>nd</sup> – Paul Tillman

No discussion

Vote – unanimous

#### 5.) Town Manager Report

Brandon Gulnick, Town Manager presented his report:

The following will keep you up to date on various topics:

1. **New Website:** CivicCMS contacted our Website Design Team to begin the implementation process for the new Weathersfield Website. We scheduled a meeting on Tuesday, December 8, 2020 at 2:00pm to discuss the remainder of the project process, site content, and project dates. I will keep the Select Board and residents updated on this until the project is complete.
2. **LGER Grant:** All eligible expenses to be incurred from September 1 through December 30 must be submitted by December 11, 2020 in a second expenditure packet to finalize the grant requirements.
3. **Weathersfield Small Business Relief Fund:** The Town of Weathersfield received funding under the LGER Grant to establish a Small Business Relief Fund to provide Grants of up to \$1000 to small businesses in Weathersfield that have been affected by COVID-19. Applications must be submitted by December 18, 2020 no later than 12:00pm. Late applications will not be accepted.

#### 6.) FY22 Budget Timeline

Rosalie McNamara presented the budget timeline that has been created. Please review the SAPATV meeting to see the presentation.

#### 7.) Capital Equipment Note – Grader Loan

Steve Heir presented the Grader Loan information:

At the March 2020 Town Meeting the voters authorized the Select board to purchase a grader at a cost not to exceed \$ 240,000 to be financed for not more than seven years. Subsequently the Board voted to finance \$ 115,000 of the purchase price for seven years.

Peoples United Bank will lend us that amount for seven years at a rate of 2.5%.

The signing process for the loan paperwork will again be a bit different due to COVID-19. The Select board should vote to authorize the Chair to sign the loan paperwork instead of all the members signing as in the past. After that motion passes, the Chair should sign on pages 1, 4, and 6 and the Clerk should sign on page 4.

The Town Manager should have the paperwork for the meeting and I will phone into the meeting in case there are questions.

Michael Todd made a motion to authorize the Chair and Clerk to sign the paperwork for the grader loan.

John Arrison – 2<sup>nd</sup>

No discussion

Vote - unanimous

#### 8.) West Weathersfield Rescue Squad Discussion

Joshua Compo presented a letter from the West Weathersfield Volunteer Fire Department requesting support in creating a rescue squad.

To the Weathersfield Town Manager and Select board,

The West Weathersfield Volunteer Fire Dept is seeking support in creating a rescue squad within our department to formalize and enhance our ability to provide qualified emergency medical care. We seek to apply for an EMS Agency License through the Vermont Department of Health as a first responder agency (not an ambulance agency).

The purpose of this application is to work in collaboration with the Town of Weathersfield and Golden Cross Ambulance Service to provide:

- Faster response time of qualified volunteer medical personnel prior to the arrival of Golden Cross Ambulance Service;
- Improved quality of care and timely interventions at the first point of contact for patients;
- Appropriate licensing and insurance coverage for our department's current response to medical calls.

In addition to providing faster, more qualified patient care at the first point of contact, we believe the long-term benefits for the department and the area we serve include:

- Providing the opportunity for current volunteer members to specialize in medical training, focusing their skills and responses to calls to reduce burnout;
- Actively recruit and develop a pool of qualified, licensed volunteer medical responders willing to serve the town without the requirement of serving as a firefighter;
- Improving volunteer recruitment and retention by clarifying roles and encouraging specialization and providing formal training.

Our department has three active firefighter/EMTs who are willing to provide EMS services to the townspeople of Weathersfield. We have twelve additional members waiting to take an EMR course, pending our becoming a first responder agency with the state of Vermont in accordance with state regulations for responding to medical calls.

Weathersfield is a geographically large town. Our department already fills emergency medical needs by initiating care for townspeople that have a significant wait for ambulance service due to our rural location. WWVFD has no interest in becoming an ambulance agency, we simply want to adhere to best practices required by the state while caring for the residents of West Weathersfield in cooperation with the town and our contracted ambulance service.

We do not anticipate any additional cost to the taxpayers. We seek your support in submitting our application by:

- Creating an updated municipal response plan
- Providing input for an operational written response plan between WWVFD and GCA

Respectfully,  
WM/FD

At this time there are members of the WWVFD that are not responding to calls due to being told they are not to respond for medical care and are trained to do so.

Questions arose about insurance and Town liability.

Also, additional discussion was had how this would not cost the Town additional money with insurance, equipment, etc.

#### 9.) Discussion – Purchasing Fire Gear from Fire Fighting Equipment & Gear Reserves

WWVFD put in a request for the following gear for their department:

- 3 Ice commander rescue suits for water rescues
- 19 High-Vis parkas

Joey Jarvis made a motion to transfer a sum not to exceed \$15,000 from fire department equipment gear reserve fund for these purchases.

John Arrison – 2<sup>nd</sup>

Additional discussion was had about the necessity of the items and when they would be used.

Current rescue suits are old and unusable.

Jackets will be used in situations when full gear is not required. These will not be worn out and around Town and will remain at the Fire Station to be used on calls only.

Vote

4 – aye

1 – nay

#### 10.) Transfer Station Joint Committee Update

Brandon Gulnick, Town Manager presented an updated regarding the Transfer Station Joint Committee.

Dear Select Board Members & Weathersfield Residents:

As you know, the Towns of Weathersfield, Reading, and West Windsor established the Transfer Station Joint Committee that includes a Select Board member from each of the three (3) towns, the Town Administrator in West Windsor, and I. Since all three (3) of our Towns use the Transfer Station it is judicious for all three (3) towns to have input on Transfer Station operations.

The main issue we are working to resolve right now is an equal payment structure between our three (3) towns. To obtain an understanding of how many residents in each town use the Transfer Station, we began strictly enforcing the Permit Sticker for entrance into the Transfer Station. This resulted in a significant increase in Permit Stickers sold in West Windsor and demonstrated that the number of Permit Stickers Reading purchases annually per their allotment was not sufficient for the residents in their Town.

The next step to create an equal payment structure across our three towns is to create a Business Plan to propose at each Towns respective Town Meeting. To do this, the Town of West Windsor proposed working with DSM Environmental Services as a neutral third party.

The following tasks are in progress with DSM:

1. Utilizing the latest financial data provided to DSM by the Town of Weathersfield as the basis for development of the baseline case
  - a. Current cost data and revenues,
2. Tour the facility with the DSM to evaluate potential capital improvements/replacements that Weathersfield believes are necessary over the next several years.
3. Develop an excel spreadsheet model incorporating the up-to-date costs and revenues and expected capital needs to calculate total annual costs.
4. Use the most recent punch card revenues and sticker sales to estimate total revenues, which can be compared against costs.

This data will allow us to estimate what assessments would be necessary to cover the remaining overhead and fixed costs.

DMS will then provide an evaluation as to how assessments - to cover fixed costs not paid for through dump stickers - might be equitably apportioned among the three towns. This is an important component for two reasons. First, Weathersfield and Reading have traditionally assessed all households - either through property taxes, or through a utility fee, and then provided the vehicle permit at no cost, while West Windsor has simply charged residents who use the transfer station for the vehicle permit.

Second, there is a significant difference in the number of seasonal homes and vacant parcels among the three Towns (vacant parcels do not typically generate solid waste). For example, according to the 2010 census, Weathersfield had 1,153 households and 1,417 housing units with an 81% occupancy rate. This can be compared to Reading with 266 households and 34 housing units (occupancy rate of 61 %), and West Windsor, with 440 households and 889 housing units (occupancy rate of 51 %). In addition, many of West Windsor's housing units, both in condominiums and in a large private development contract for commercial dumpster collection of waste.

A draft memorandum outlining DMS Environmental's findings will be provided to us for review and comment. DSM will then make changes as necessary to the memorandum which we can distribute to the Select board members in anticipation of a joint meeting where DSM will present their findings and recommendations.

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

## 11.) 2014 Purchase & Sale Agreement

Brandon Gulnick presented an update to the 2014 Purchase & Sales Agreement regarding the Abbott property.

On September 21, 2020, our Administration released 2 proposals under Report 3. Proposed Solution #1 resolved the 2014 Purchase & Sale Agreement by amending the existing agreement and Proposed Solution #2 resolved the 2014 Purchase & Sale Agreement by holding a Tax Sale.

Over the course of 7 meeting regarding the 2014 Purchase & Sale Agreement the Select Board voted on each proposal and the vote failed. Therefore, it seems evident that neither proposal is acceptable to the Select Board. In an effort to obtain closure to this 6-year-old Purchase & Sale Agreement, our Administration is requesting insight from the Select Board as to what information to include in a proposal that will be acceptable for an affirmative vote.

To do this, our Administration modified Proposal #1 and Proposal #2 to include the information we collected over the course of the previous 7 meetings from both the Select Board and residents.

See the following attachments in regards to Abbott property:

ATTACHMENT A- PROPOSED SOLUTION #1  
ATTACHMENT B - PROPOSED SOLUTION #2  
ATTACHMENT C - JOHNSON EASEMENT

AGREEMENT ATTACHMENT D - BOARD OF  
ABATEMENT APPLICATION  
ATTACHMENT E- CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS, BOA MINUTES, SELECT BOARD  
MINUTES ATTACHMENT F-AMENDED PURCHASE & SALE AGREEMENT  
ATTACHMENT G - LETTER TO EMILY ABBOTT

Brandon Gulnick asked the Select Board if they would consider a vote to grant the tax collector and the Town Manager full decision-making authority to resolve the 2014 Purchase and Sales agreement to the best of his judgement and ability.

David Fuller suggested a motion to grant the Town Manager and Tax Collector the authority to negotiate finality on the 2014 Purchase and Sales agreement with the ability to amend it and to ultimately keep in place the easement, parking lot and to recover the taxes owed on the property.

Paul Tillman 2<sup>nd</sup>-

Discussion –

John Arrison would like to change to “solution to” and it would come back to the Select Board for approval.

David Fuller said that they needed to trust the Town Manager and Tax Collector and if Brandon comes back to them in a certain time frame to let them know he was not able to settle this they will take it up at that time.

Joey Jarvis asked about details and at this time David Fuller does not want to divulge that information. He noted that the tax payers nor the Town will be paying for the back taxes.

Michael Todd noted that if this is a private sale, the Select board would not be involved at all.

Vote - unanimous

## 12.) Fire Department Contracts

Brandon Gulnick presented the updated Fire Department contracts. Changes include:

### Changes Per November 30, 2020 Select Board Meeting

1. Changed date – Top left-hand corner
2. Added Section: Emergency Medical Service Response (Expectations during an EMS call/ Chain of Command)
3. Section 2.3 Removed the requirement for the Fire Departments to train together.
4. Section 4.2 (c) Removed the requirement of a Service Agreement
5. Changed section 5.2 (Town Manager to Select Board) per Ascutney volunteer Fire Association request. Typo
6. Section 8.4 Enforcement: Provides the Town with the ability to enforce the contract and gives the Town the ability to remove a member of a department if Weathersfield Policies, Rules, or Regulations and/or State/Federal law is violated. Each department respective membership will be required to vote to authorize the Town to do this.

John Arrison noted the old wordage was still being used in section 2.11.

Michael Todd made a motion to adopt the Fire Services Contract dated 12-7-20 with amendments as noted and allow for Chair to sign.

John Arrison – 2<sup>nd</sup>

Discussion:

Josh Compo discussed the issues with the following section:

#### SECTION 2.2 - EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE RESPONSE

- Hartford Dispatch tones Appropriate Fire and Golden Cross.
- Appropriate Fire Department responds to make first contact with the patient.
- Fire Department gives a radio report with any pertinent information to the ambulance crew responding
- Ambulance arrives on scene and speaks with person in charge of scene.
- Ambulance crew will make determination of transportation needs of the patient.
- Ambulance crew takes care of all patient care.
- Fire Department assists with moving equipment and patient to the ambulance.
- Ambulance crew, if they need a driver, requests this from the fire department.

The Fire Department should not provide any patient care on scene. They are not a licensed entity with Vermont EMS.

At this time there are members from WWVFD not responding to calls due to concerns their licenses could be in jeopardy and not having support of the Town.

Chauncie Tillman asked what the legal aspect is of someone who is trained, licensed, certified, etc. arriving at a scene and not providing medical care until EMS shows up when those responding are trained to do so. Can licensed individuals be fined or lose their license if they don't respond.

Michael Todd also asked about a dividing line for calls, east vs west.

Vote - Unanimous

#### 13.) Fire Department FY21 Budget Report

Brandon Gulnick present the Fire Department FY21 Budget Report:

Re: FY21 Budget to Actual - Fire Departments

Dear Select Board Members & Weathersfield Residents:

The Fire Department Budget is different than the rest of the departments in the Town of Weathersfield. Preferably, moving forward, our office will either be all-in or all-out. Being in between makes the accurate recording and accountability of financials for these



departments difficult. With the information we currently have, we were able to pull together this Finance Report.

FICA	Over by 333% (- \$109)
Dispatching Service	49.99%
Emergency Management	796%
West Weathersfield Fire Equipment Repair	55%
West Weathersfield Hose Testing	56%

#### 14.) Fire Department FY22 Budget Discussion

Brandon Gulnick presented his current discussion with the AVFD and WWVFD regarding FY22 budgets.

Re: Fire Department FY22 Budget

Discussion Dear Select Board

Members:

Our administration has held budget meetings with both Fire Chiefs to discuss the FY22 Budget. *I have* requested one additional meeting with the West Weathersfield Fire Chief to discuss their FY22 Budget.

Our Finance Team's most notable concern is the difference in budgeting between the Fire Departments and the rest of the departments in Weathersfield.

Recommendation: Transition both Fire Department Budgets in FY22 to coincide with all other Town Departments to improve financial accountability and transparency for Weathersfield Residents.

#### 15.) Appointments: None

- a. Budget Committee
- b. Connecticut River Joint Commission
- c. CRJC Mt. Ascutney Subcommittee
- d. Fence Viewer
- e. Selectman Representative to the School Board
- f. Southern Windsor County Transportation Advisory Committee
- g. Southern Windsor/Windham Counties Solid Waste Management District
- h. Tree Warden

16.) John Arrison made a motion to approve the warrants for December 7, 2020 as follows:

General Funds	Operating Expenses \$32,339.10 Payroll \$12,865.62
Highway Fund	Operating Expenses \$19,834.37 Payroll \$7,245.65
Solid Waste Management Fund	Operating Expenses \$11,052.57 Payroll \$,523.60
Library	Operating Expenses \$0.00 Payroll \$1,907.60
Grants	Operating Expenses \$0.00
Special Revenue	Operating Expenses \$0.00
Reserves	\$0.00
Long Term Debt	\$0.00
Grand Totals	Operating Expenses \$69,226.04 Payroll \$23,542.47

Michael Todd - 2<sup>nd</sup>  
No Discussion  
Vote - Unanimous

17.) Any other Business

18.) Adjourn

Michael Todd made motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:59 pm  
Paul Tillman– 2<sup>nd</sup>  
No discussion  
Vote – unanimous

Respectfully,  
Chauncie Tillman  
Alt. Recording Secretary

DRAFT