

TOWN OF WEATHERSFIELD, VERMONT

SELECT BOARD

Select Board
Martin Memorial Hall
5259 Route 5, Ascutney VT
Monday, March 16, 2020
7:00 PM
REGULAR MEETING

MINUTES

Select Board Members Present: N. John Arrison
David Fuller
Joseph Jarvis
Paul Tillman
Michael Todd

Select Board Members Absent:

Brandon Gulnick, Town Manager

Others Present:

Nikita Lenahan	Darlene Kelly		
Fred Kowalik	Ray Stapleton		
Tyler Harwell			

1. Call to Order

Mr. Fuller called the meeting to order at 7:03PM.

2. Review minutes from previous meetings – 03/05/2020

Additions/corrections/deletions:

Mr. Arrison asked to have the word “driver’s” added to the sentence:

Mr. Arrison reminded Mr. Gulnick about annual driver’s license checks.

Motion: To accept

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

Vote: All in favor

3. Comments from Select Board and Town Manager and Citizens on Topics not on the Agenda

Mr. Fuller described an issue he had with a previous Planning Commission meeting and its effect on a hearing that needs to be warned before its 65-day deadline is up.

There were no comments from the Town Manager or citizens.

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4. Town Manager Report (ask Brandon for copy of his report)

Mr. Gulnick updated the Board on several items he has been working on:

- Ascutney Fire District – Mr. Gulnick has accepted the position of Director; there are numerous pressing issues to be addressed in the district;
- A 10-member Emergency Management Team has been established – the current focus is covid-19, but a general emergency management plan will be developed;
- In response to the current pandemic, the Town Offices are closed to the public, but Town business will continue to be conducted by phone or email;
- Solid waste – our contract with Casella expires on June 30th; our recycling costs will increase from \$58.50 a ton to \$135 a ton; Mr. Gulnick is reviewing our contract with Casella with the Regional Planning Commission; he will look into what neighboring towns are doing; Paul Tillman is participating in this issue;
- Mr. Gulnick is talking with both fire chiefs regarding fire services; both departments are being very proactive; he sees much positivity;
- Highway Department – two RFPs were released for roadside mowing and ledge materials – Mr. Gulnick wants to put both back out to bid for various reasons; he would like to revise the purchasing policy to include a length of time between advertisement of the RFPs and the deadline to receive bids; he also would like to change the practice of sending letters of bid solicitation to known providers as he feels this gives them an unfair advantage; the roadside mowing bids were submitted by email, not as sealed bids to the manager's office; there was no public bid opening;
- The highway department has received a grant of \$175,000 for the Lottery Lane culvert project; the office is currently working on a capital planning grant for \$25,000 for additional culvert replacements next year;
- Mr. Gulnick would like to review the description of the highway representative; he would like to define this role as it relates to the highway department;
- Land Use Administrator position – 3 candidates have been selected as suitable for the position; interviews will be added to the Planning Commission meeting agenda for the March 23rd meeting. Mr. Gulnick wants to move forward on this as quickly as possible as we have been paying the Regional Planning Commission \$30/hour to staff the position.
- New contact cards can be made when the emergency management coordinator position is filled

Mr. Arrison expressed concern regarding putting the mowing contract back out to bid. He said it would not be fair to the lowest bidder from the first round as now those numbers are known.

5. February 2020 Financial Report

Finance Director Darlene Kelly reviewed the report with the Board. She warned the Board that the Town may have to get a tax anticipation loan given current circumstances; that there may be a collection issue in May.

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On the whole, finances are acceptable, with the exception of solid waste. The Downers store did not buy its usual large order of punch tickets in February for unknown reasons, which resulted in a \$14,000 loss to the solid waste budget.

6. Designate a Newspaper of Record for Weathersfield

Motion: To use the Valley News as the interim newspaper of record for advertising town notices

Made by: Mr. Arrison **Second:** Mr. Todd

Vote: All in favor

Mr. Gulnick will research newspaper costs and present to the Board at the next meeting.

7. Appoint a Selectboard Representative to Solid Waste

Motion: To name Paul Tillman as the Selectboard representative to solid waste

Made by: Mr. Todd **Second:** Mr. Jarvis

Vote: Mr. Tillman abstained; all others voted in favor

8. Liquor Licenses

The Board didn't have the applications in their packet so they asked to table this item until the next meeting. (The current licenses expire on April 30th, so the delay would not cause harm.)

Motion: To table item 8 until the April 6th meeting

Made by: Mr. Arrison **Second:** Mr. Todd

Vote: All in favor

9. Selectboard/Town Manager Goals

Mr. Fuller said Mr. Gulnick's report is a big start. He would like to get the Land Use Administrator position filled; and the solid waste and fire contracts completed. He would rather have a smaller list of goals that actually get completed than a long list of ones that don't. He solicited thoughts from Board members.

Mr. Tillman would like the big-ticket items to get done; office security; and the computer network addressed, but he is ok with sticking to Mr. Gulnick's list.

Mr. Jarvis said he wants the fire department issues addressed; open board seats filled; and to increase public involvement.

Mr. Todd said fire department; solid waste; the budget process; planning commission hearings (a lot coming this way); and IT.

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Mr. Fuller said he sees manager tasks as streamlining payroll; the security system; and fuel. He has issues with the auditors lumping everything in one pot and would like to see management sort it out.

Mr. Tillman wants a budget committee to be formed and made active earlier in the year.

Mr. Gulnick wants to do the RFP for the grader and the new dump truck; recycling; fire departments; emergency management and training; complete the emergency management plan and get the team operating; do a performance analysis of the office staff; work on team building and training; put monthly town manager reports online and on Facebook; foster more collaboration with boards, reduce delinquent taxes; improve the website; improve safety and security; work on implementing the Town Plan; foster small business collaboration and support through a variety of tools.

Mr. Todd wants to see the School Board and Selectboard come together more; reduce the “us versus them” perspective.

Mr. Fuller expressed concern with the consolidation mandate from the state and said the school is vital to the community; the library will crumble without it and Route 5 will look like Route 106 in Perkinsville.

10. Review RFP for Ledge Blend Material and Consider Revising

Both Mr. Gulnick and Mr. Stapleton want to rebid the ledge material contract, but Mr. Stapleton needs material right now and cannot wait until the bid process is complete. He has hit his limit of \$10,000 for purchasing material and needs the Board to authorize him to go above the \$10,000 until the bid process is done. He has \$50,000 in his budget for materials and vowed not to go above that.

Motion: To grant a waiver of the purchasing policy to permit Mr. Stapleton to spend up to \$5000 to purchase ledge product

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

Vote: All in favor

(The bid goes out tomorrow.)

Discussion turned to the roadside mowing bid. Mr. Arrison repeated his opinion that to rebid it would be unfair to the lowest bidder on the last bid process.

Motion: To reconsider the RFP for roadside mowing

Made by: Mr. Todd **Second:** Mr. Jarvis

Vote: None

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Motion: To reject the bid we got and to reconsider the RFP for roadside mowing

Made by: Mr. Todd **Second:** Mr. Jarvis

Vote: Mr. Arrison opposed; all others were in favor

11. Appointments

No appointments were made at this meeting.

12. Approve Warrants

Motion: To approve the warrants for 3/16/2020 as follow:

General Funds	Operating Expenses	\$35,394.96
	Payroll	\$13,471.56

Highway Fund	Operating Expenses	\$30,516.73
	Payroll	\$8,082.30

Solid Waste Management Fund		
	Operating Expenses	\$6,228.51
	Payroll	\$1,507.50

Library	Operating Expenses	\$0.00
	Payroll	\$1,908.96

Grants	Operating Expenses	\$
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Special Revenue	Operating Expenses	\$0.00
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Reserves		\$
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Long Term Debt		\$
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Grand Totals	Operating Expenses	\$72,140.20
	Payroll	\$24,970.32

Made by: Mr. Arrison **Second:** Mr. Jarvis

Vote: All in favor

13. Any Other Business

14. Adjourn

Motion: To adjourn the meeting

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

Vote: All in favor

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The meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
deForest Bearse

WEATHERSFIELD SELECTBOARD

N. John Arrison, Selector

David Fuller, Chairperson

Joseph Jarvis, Clerk

Paul Tillman

Michael Todd, Vice- Chairperson