

TOWN OF WEATHERSFIELD, VERMONT

SELECT BOARD

Select Board
Martin Memorial Hall
5259 Route 5, Ascutney VT
Monday, February 6, 2023
6:30 PM
REGULAR MEETING

DRAFT MINUTES

Select Board Members Present: David Fuller, Kelly O’Brien, Michael Todd, Paul Tillman, Wendy Smith.

Select Board Members Absent:

Brandon Gulnick, Town Manager

Others Present:

Marie VanDrunen	Darrin Spaulding	Suzanne Carrener (remote)
Deborah Hanley	Ray Stapleton	Hugh Stevens
Rick Bates	Molly Stevens (remote)	Jordyn Bagzlio (remote)
Steve Hier	Dan Stevens	Kenneth Young
BarbaraThomas	Daniel Smith	Josh Compo (remote)
Mychael Smith (remote)	D. Zuphin (remote)	Olivia Savage
Maureen Bogosian	Ben Waters (remote)	

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 Agenda Review

There were no changes to the agenda.

4 Comments from Citizens on topics not on the agenda

A moment of silence for Chip Steele, who served on the Weathersfield Select Board for many years.

5 Review minutes from previous meeting(s): 1/17/2023

Additions/corrections/deletions:

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a. Section 7: 88% of their fuel to full. At the heading, change “Monday” to “Tuesday.”

Motion: To approve.

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

Vote: All in favor

6 Treasure’s Memo –ARPA Transfers

At the 12/19/22 meeting, the Select Board voted to transfer \$20,000 from ARPA to the Firefighting Equipment and Gear Reserve Fund. The final rules issued for ARPA prohibit ARPA money from being used to directly fund reserve funds. ARPA funds can, however, be used to directly purchase such equipment or gear. The Board also voted to purchase a total of \$14,230 in turnout gear from that reserve fund and approved \$5,929 for a washing machine extractor directly from ARPA funds.

Motion: To pay \$14,230 for turn out gear directly from ARPA Funds and \$5,929 for the washing machine that washes the gear for a total of \$20,159.

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

Vote: All in favor

Motion: To reconsider not transferring \$20,000 of ARPA funds to the firefighting equipment and gear reserve fund.

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

Vote: All in favor

7 Town Manager’s Report

a. Annual Town Meeting

The Annual Town Meeting will be held in person & virtually on Saturday, March 4, 2023 at the school. The school Meeting begins at 10am. Town Meeting begins at 12:30pm. The Google Meet link is:
meet.google.com/ikz-mniv-ogv Phone: (US) +1 413 752-0273 PIN: 604 283 179#.

The Town Meeting Warning has been signed, attested, and posted. Town Annual Reports have been submitted. The Town Meeting Warning & details are on the front page of our website as an urgent alert.

b. President’s Day

President’s Day is Monday, February 20, 2023. The Select Board meeting will be moved to Tuesday, February 21, 2023.

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c. Martian Memorial Hall Roof Replacement

Ira Brusco, Connecticut River Roofing, provided a color option. Color selections were reviewed, and a color selection was decided upon by MMH Board of Trustees Point Person, Lisa Slade, and the Town Manager.

d. Hazard Mitigation Plan

The Town received an \$8,362 grant award to update the Hazard Mitigation Plan. The agreement was signed, and the process of procuring a consultant has begun. The consultant will move forward with the planning process, with anticipated completion by next year.

e. Transfer Station Joint Committee Meeting

The next Transfer Station Joint Committee Meeting will be held this week. Attendees include Robert Allen (Reading), Matt Kantola (West Windsor), Paul Tillman (Weathersfield), and Tom Kennedy (MARC).

f. Emergency Operations Center Enhancement Grant

The EOC Enhancement Grant was accepted to install a generator at Martin Memorial Hall. The subgrant agreement is currently being drafted by the VEM Finance Department.

8 Norwich Solar Invoices –Accountant Review

The Town entered an agreement with Norwich where there was a land lease agreement and they were granted permission to build solar energy area with the promise that Weathersfield would be able to save 10% on power.

Mr. Fuller expressed concern over if the credits would be worthwhile in the future if power need grows or if a lease payment for the 5 acres would be more worthwhile. Mr. Todd pointed out that it might take a year or two before the results of the contract are clear.

9 Ferry Road Discussion

Ferry Road has been managed as a class 4 highway for many decades and was discovered to be listed as a class 3 road recently. The roadway has been traditionally used as an access to several agricultural fields, and a primitive camping area along the banks of the Connecticut River. The highway department has maintained the road at a limited level to assist the farmers in accessing their agricultural fields.

The Select Board and meeting participants, including some of the residents of Ferry Road, discussed at length concerns about road access and conditions, illegal dumping, public and private access, gates, and further declassification

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of the road. Upper Valley Land Trust has involvement with the road. Many residents have written to the town with their concerns about Ferry Road (below).

The Select Board is to have a hearing on the matter.

I cannot attend the selectmen's meeting on Monday. I am part owner of 60 acres abutting the road on the south, and the road is also used to access a large field further south. These properties are actively farmed for corn silage and hay, and provide an access to serve a maple orchard. Several hundred trips a year are required.

We would not be opposed to limiting vehicular traffic as long as any gate is placed beyond our first field entrance near the Skyline entrance. We would provide a secure gate to our field entrance. A gate across the road at this location then controls access to the Carreker property, resulting in the most minimal use of the gate. Skyline has a secure gate.

We would not be opposed to the removal of trees to provide a few parking spaces.

We would want access to any gate to access our frontage further along the road as needed.

Thank you,

Warren Stevens

10 Ascutney Fire Budget Projections

a. As of January 31, 2023, the AVFD budget has expended to \$75,577. The Town Manager, Select Board, and Voters approved \$79,776 to be allocated to this department for Fiscal Year 2023 (July 1, 2022–June 30, 2023). The department has \$4,199 remaining in the budget until June 30, 2023.

b. Over expended accounts

Account	Budget	Actual (Jan 31, 23)	Overage	Percent of Budget
Supplies	\$4,550	\$22,312	(17,762)	490%
Vehicle Maintenance	\$15,975	\$18,499	(2,524)	116%
PPE	\$5,000	\$5,186	(186)	104%

c. Budget Projections have been completed for essential functions, and other regular monthly expenses, including: Fire Chief, Fire Warden, and President Stipends, FICA, Workers Compensation, Fire Warden Mileage Reimbursement, Electricity, Telephone, Dispatch Services, and Fuel.

d. These projections indicate that Ascutney Fire Department will end the year in a \$16,105 deficit, which would include freezing the following expense accounts:

i. Supplies, Maintenance & Repairs (non-vehicle), Vehicle

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Maintenance, PPE, Hose Testing (already completed for this fiscal year), and supplies.

- ii. Any expenses in frozen accounts will require Select Board approval through reserve or ARPA transfers.
- e. Ascutney Fire Department had unbudgeted & unanticipated expenses. The total cost of these unanticipated expenses was \$28,985. A breakdown of these expenses were included in the Select Board Packet.

The Select Board discussed how there needs to be better communication with the Town and the departments and that departments should follow the purchasing policy. There was extended discussion about how the Town had not paid Ascutney Fire Department's bills on time in the past. It was concluded that the other town departments are not having these issues and bills are paid on time. The Ascutney Fire Department is to work with the Town Manager to find a resolution and discussions can be had at a later date.

11 Emergency Management: VT-Alert

The Vermont Emergency Management Division of the VT Department of Public Safety sponsors an emergency notification system called VT Alert. In the event of an emergency, residents who have signed up for VT Alert will receive notice of weather concerns, road closures, power outages, boil water notices, and a variety of other weather emergency and disaster situations. Participation in VT Alert and the related training are free services of VT Emergency Management.

Motion: To approve the use of VT Alert by the local EM team.

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

Vote: All in favor

12 Comparative Budget: FY21-FY24

Not Discussed. Moved to the next meeting.

13 SB Annual Report

The Select Board reviewed and approved.

14 Draft Town Meeting Articles and Powerpoint Presentation

Not Discussed. Moved to the next meeting.

16. Appointments

a. Planning Commission

Will discuss at a future date.

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17. Warrants

Motion: To approve the warrants for 2/6/2023, with a correction to the Grand Total Operating Expenses, changing it from \$73,424.14 to \$100,369.10.

Made by: Ms. O'Brien

Second: Mr. Fuller

Vote: All in favor

General Funds Operating
Operating Expenses \$26,944.96
Payroll \$24,483.48

Highway Fund Operating
Expenses \$58,126.99
Payroll \$15,544.06

Solid Waste Management Fund
Operating Expenses \$15,297.15
Payroll \$23,787.55

Library Operating Expenses \$0.00
Payroll \$3,181.58

Grand Totals:
Operating Expenses \$100,369.10
Payroll \$66,996.67

18. Adjourn

Motion: To adjourn the meeting.

Made by: Mr. Tillman

Second: Ms. O'Brien

Vote: All in favor

The meeting adjourned at 9:35 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Nichole Gagnon

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Michael Todd, Chairperson

Wendy Smith, Selector

Paul Tillman, Selector

Kelly O'Brien, Clerk

David Fuller, Vice- Chairperson