

**TOWN OF WEATHERSFIELD, VERMONT  
SELECT BOARD**

**Select Board  
Martin Memorial Hall  
5259 Route 5, Ascutney VT  
Monday, December 16, 2019  
6:00 PM  
REGULAR MEETING**

**MINUTES  
APPROVED 1/6/2020**

**Select Board Members Present:** N. John Arrison  
Daniel Boyer  
David Fuller  
Kelly Murphy  
Michael Todd

**Select Board Members Absent:**

**Sven Fedorow, Interim Town Manager**

**Others Present:**

Paul Tillman	Barbara Slaton	Lisa Slade
Edith Stillson	Nikita Lenahan	Ray Stapleton
James Lockridge	Fred Kowalik	Darlene Kelly

**1. Call to Order**

Ms. Murphy called the meeting to order at 6:02PM.

**2. Agenda Review**

Ms. Murphy read a revised version of the agenda. Copies of it were distributed to board members and the audience.

Lisa Slade asked if citizens could comment under “Agenda Review”. There seemed to be no objection to that.

Mr. Fuller continues to have difficulty getting emails from the board Chair.

**3. Non-profit Requests: Presentations**

The board reviewed the policy for non-profit requests. Requests for \$500 or more go on to the ballot for Town Meeting. Requests for less than \$500 can be placed directly into the General Fund budget by the board. Once approved, the funding is secure for two years. New requests, changes to previous requests, and returning requests must be presented to the

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board at a public meeting.

Ms. Murphy said she works exclusively with non-profit organizations in her profession and would be abstaining from voting on any of the requests due to the high likelihood of working with a non-profit that is seeking funding from the Town.

**a. Big Heavy World**

James Lockridge presented the request for \$250. His organization helps musical artists across the state. It archives and supports Vermont musicians and runs a radio station. It hosts livestream events and podcasts interviews. It has about 5000 recordings which they are making accessible by the public library system. The organization is grant funded, but they are reaching out to Towns across the State for additional support.

**b. Cover Home Repair, Inc.**

Bill Neukomm presented the request for \$400. Cover Home Repairs provides a wide variety of services to (generally) low income residences in the Upper Valley including urgent home repairs, weatherization, fall prevention for the elderly, accessibility ramps and roof replacements on mobile homes. They rely on 400+ volunteers to supply the labor for their projects. They have recently doubled in work load and have had to carry over 30 projects this winter. They have a store in White River Junction to provide low-cost goods and to gather additional revenue. They spent \$5,000 on supplies for jobs in Weathersfield this past year, including a large access ramp in Perkinsville. They coordinate with SEVCA, but their work does not overlap.

**c. Vermont Adult Learning**

There was no one at the meeting to present the request.

**d. Vermont Family Network**

Claire Giroux-William made the request for \$500 via telephone. This organizations' mission is to support families with children with special needs. They work statewide as a parent-to-parent organization, helping parents navigate the medical/insurance/educational systems following diagnosis. Last year they supported 3 Weathersfield families.

**e. Windsor County Mentors**

Barbara Slaton presented the request for \$480. This organization provides adult mentors to children ages 7 to 18 across Windsor County. At present they have one community-based match in Weathersfield (activities take place in the community). They are working with the school to provide school-based mentoring (mentoring occurs at the school during school hours). They are working to double the number of mentors (50 to 100). The program builds meaningful and lasting relationships between the children and their

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mentors. This organization was previously known as Windsor County Partners. Their office is in Windsor. It has been previously supported by Weathersfield.

**f. Windsor County Youth Services**

This request has been removed because of incomplete documentation.

The board did not make any decisions at this meeting regarding these requests.

**4. Comments from Select Board and Town Manager**

Mr. Fuller continues to have difficulty receiving emails regarding board business. It may be related to the source of the messages. Mr. Fedorow will try sending a message from the Town Office to see if that works better.

Mr. Fedorow learned that information obtained during an executive session had been inappropriately shared. He urged everyone to respect the integrity of executive sessions.

Mr. Arrison expressed concern about the Town Report, but was assured that it is in good hands.

The board will need to call an executive session to choose a Citizen of the Year.

The cost of printing the Town Report has almost doubled. Including the full audit report may be cost prohibitive, but the auditors do not wish the Town to print a Town-generated summary of the audit on the grounds that they feel it is not a fair representation of the entire audit. Ms. Kelly was asked to find out what the auditors would be willing to provide. A single page with a link to the website where the full audit can be found was deemed appropriate.

Mr. Arrison noted that the board has not yet seen this year's audit. Ms. Kelly assured him that it will be available soon. The numbers are done (and can be used for budget proposes), only some of the text portions remain to be completed.

**5. Comments from Citizens on topics not on the agenda**

Lisa Slade said on November 18<sup>th</sup> she had submitted to the board a letter which was accompanied by 90 signatures, asking the board to rescind their motion to create a municipal fire department. She complained that the board had not addressed her letter since that date, while a matter brought to the board by Patti Arrison had been addressed right away. Ms. Murphy stated that the letter would be addressed at the Wednesday special meeting when the fire department budgets will be discussed.

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Mr. Todd started to make a motion rescinding the board's earlier motion on the fire department, but did not complete it on a point of order that this item was not on the agenda.

Mrs. Slade went on to point out that Mr. Todd had asked for a discussion of a Town emergency shelter at that same November 18<sup>th</sup> meeting, and that had yet to appear on the board's agenda. Ms. Murphy said that Mr. Fedorow is reaching out to the school principal to start that discussion. She also stated that time constraints require prioritizing what goes on the agenda, especially now during budget season. Mrs. Slade that that just goes to her point that the board has spent so much time debating the fire department issues that it has neglected other Town matters.

**6. 2020-2021 Budget Preparation & Discussion**

**a. Town Clerk**

- Revenues have increased slightly; recording fees have increased to \$15 per page
- Funding for additional clerical help has been added to the budget
- The election budget line has doubled to cover the cost of the two major upcoming elections
- Tax need is up by 8%
- Some of the clerical expense might be taken from reserves and vault supplies; Ms. Kelly will check

**b. Highway Department**

- The grader will be on the ballot again. In the event that it gets voted in, the first payment (\$38,000) will be placed in the reserves to cover it. If the grader is voted down, the funds will stay in the reserve account.
- Revenues are close to the same as last year; service to police is the biggest change – the department is not doing oil changes and such anymore
- Service to the Ascutney Fire District has been added – one of the employees is testing water
- Proposing to use \$75,000 from capital reserves to a down payment on a dump truck (we have \$40,000 from the sale of another truck); the first payment on it won't be due until 2022
- Employee health insurance cost has decreased
- Building and vehicle insurance has decreased
- Employees have been given a 2% raise
- IT services will be reduced by the reduction in the number of "managed users" in the department (some corrections are needed on the total IT services as it appears to have been double-entered)
- There is no money in the budget for the salt shed
- The antenna on Yewell Lane has been turned off and is not costing anything. The equipment is still there in case it is needed in the future.
- Paving repair funds have been taken out of the paving line

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- There is \$50,000 in the budget again for paving; any surplus will go into reserves at the end of the year
- Mowing still needs improvement
- No comments on fees and permits
- Debt service –
  - \$75,000 is the down payment on a truck (offset by reserve)
  - \$38,000 is payment to ourselves for paving Center Road
- Tax need for the department has gone up by 3%.

### Grader Plan

Westley Hazeltine started a program five years ago where we would own the grader for five years, during which all repairs would be under warranty; then trade it in while the value is still high, giving us \$275,000 towards the next \$432,000 machine. However, the replacement grader was voted down last year. The warranty is now gone and the price of a new grader has gone up. There will be a \$15,000-\$20,000 increase every year. The plan was to use the equity of the machine to help pay for a new one, and to always have a machine under warranty. Without a warranty, repairs are hard to budget for. Mr. Stapleton would like to apply the same practice to the trucks.

There is a fund balance of \$117,756. The board discussed having a fund balance in highway budget, with some in favor and others opposed. The GFOA (Government Finance Officers Association) recommends having a 10% surplus as a general practice, with anything above that automatically going back into the budget. The board will revisit Mr. Morris's fund balance policy presentation.

There was additional discussion about whether to put both the truck and the grader as separate articles.

No decisions were made.

### **c. Solid Waste Budget**

- We need to set aside \$12,000 a year for the next year toward a new compactor
- This may need to be accompanied by a \$010 increase in the sticker price
- \$25,000 must be retained in the reserve account for decommissioning the transfer station
- A change was made to the method in which West Windsor buys their dump stickers – they now pre-pay for the tickets and take on the burden themselves of collecting the money for each ticket
- It would be fairer if all towns were charged by the parcel.
- If everyone were to pay \$40, it would cover all overhead costs

At 9:00 PM, Mr. Fuller moved to extend the meeting a half hour. Mr. Todd seconded the motion and all were in favor.

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**Motion:** To send letters to Reading and West Windsor indicating that we are going to ask to move to a per parcel fee of \$40

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

**Vote:** All in favor

Ms. Kelly said that Weathersfield needs a representative on the solid waste management board. Mr. Fuller said he would consider it.

**7. Approve Warrants**

**Motion:** To approve the warrants for 12/16/2019 as follow:

General Funds	Operating Expenses	\$18,416.23
	Payroll	\$14,167.60
Highway Fund	Operating Expenses	\$19,969.61
	Payroll	\$11,875.53
Solid Waste Management Fund		
	Operating Expenses	\$6,007.99
	Payroll	\$1,692.21
Library	Operating Expenses	\$0.00
	Payroll	\$2,056.24
Grants	Operating Expenses	\$0.00
Special Revenue	Operating Expenses	\$45.00
Reserves		\$0.00
Long Term Debt		\$0.00
Grand Totals	Operating Expenses	\$44,438.83
	Payroll	\$29,791.58

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

**Vote:** All in favor

**8. Discussion of Tenney Tree at Park and Ride**

Local arborist, Lee Stevens, visited the tree and gave a list of actions that could be taken to preserve the tree. However, it is not clear if the Town would be liable for the costs of those alternative actions. Since we don't own the tree or the land on which it grows, the board was opposed to taking on any contractual obligations. The consensus of the board was to voice

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our appreciation, encourage pursuit of Lee Stevens' prevention measures, and urge the State to consider memorial options.

**9. Review minutes from previous meetings: 11/4/2019, 12/4/2019**

**a. 11/4/2019**

**Motion:** To approve as amended

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

**Vote:** All in favor

**b. 12/4/2019**

**Motion:** To table

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

The board wanted to check the SAPA TV coverage of the meeting to confirm some details from the meeting.

**10. Amendment of September 3<sup>rd</sup> Minutes**

A motion made at the September 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting, as stated in the minutes of that meeting, did not match the actual motion as captured on the SAPA TV coverage. According to VLCT, there is no legal barrier to changing the minutes to match the actual motion. It is recommended that the minutes at which the revision is made clearly indicate the action taken.

**Motion:** To approve amending the minutes

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

**Vote:** All in favor

**11. Early Office Closure – December 24<sup>th</sup>**

**Motion:** To authorize the Town Office to close at noon on Tuesday, December 24<sup>th</sup> with hourly employees receiving compensation for the portion of the day during which the office is closed.

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

**Vote:** 4 in favor, 1 did not vote

**12. Appointments**

No appointments were requested or made.

**13. Executive Session per 1 VSA§313(3) Personnel**

**Motion:** To enter executive session as per 1 VSA §313(3) Personnel

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

Mr. Fedorow asked to be allowed to join the session for the first few minutes. Permission was granted.

**Vote:** All in favor

The board entered executive session at 9:25 PM.

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The board came out of executive session at 10:09 PM. No action was taken.

**14. Adjourn**

**Motion:** To adjourn the meeting

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

**Vote:** All in favor

The meeting adjourned at 10:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

*deForest Bearse*

**WEATHERSFIELD SELECTBOARD**

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N. John Arrison, Selector

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Daniel E. Boyer, Selector

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David Fuller, Vice-Chairperson

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Kelly Murphy, Chairperson

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Michael Todd, Clerk