

TOWN OF WEATHERSFIELD, VERMONT

SELECT BOARD

Select Board
Martin Memorial Hall
5259 Route 5, Ascutney VT
Tuesday, January 26, 2021
6:30 PM
REGULAR MEETING

MINUTES

Select Board Members Present: David Fuller
Joseph Jarvis
Paul Tillman
Michael Todd

Select Board Members Absent: N. John Arrison

Brandon Gulnick, Town Manager

Others Present:

The Public was permitted to attend this meeting in person. Remote public participation was facilitated via the GoTo Meeting video-conferencing platform and conference calling. The number for people to join or call in to the meeting was published on the meeting agenda and on the Town’s website. Mr. Gulnick monitored the calls and the video-platform while Mr. Fuller ran the meeting. The meeting was recorded.

1. Call to Order

Mr. Fuller called the meeting to order at 6:33 PM.

2. Review minutes from previous meetings – January 19, 2021

Additions/corrections/deletions:

a. None

Motion: To accept the minutes for 1/19/2021

Made by: Mr. Tillman Second: Mr. Todd

Vote: All in favor

3. Annual Town Meeting Warning

Mr. Fuller read from the Town Meeting warning. The meeting will be held on Saturday, February 27th at 12:30 PM and the voting will be Tuesday, March 2nd. Due to the state of emergency, the Town Meeting will be held virtually. Voting is by Australian ballot.

TOWN OF WEATHERSFIELD, VERMONT
SELECT BOARD

All articles will be by Australian ballot – there will be no floor votes. The school meeting is at 10:00 AM. The meetings will be via ZOOM; each meeting will have a different link. Administration will ensure that the public has sufficient notice. Polls will open at 10AM on voting day and close at 7PM. Mail-in ballots can be requested from the Town Clerk.

Mr. Fuller read articles 1-5 from the warning. There were no corrections or changes. Mr. Fuller called for a motion to approve the articles.

Motion: To approve the warning for articles 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 as written January 26, 2021

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

Vote: All in favor

Mr. Fuller read article 6.

Motion: To approve article 6 on the warning.

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

Mr. Gulnick confirmed that the numbers in the article are correct.

Vote: All in favor

Mr. Fuller read article 7.

Motion: To approve article 7 as written

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

Again, Mr. Gulnick confirmed that the numbers are correct. Mr. Fuller noted for those watching that the tax amount is identical to last year. The actual tax rate may be less than last year because it was based on the same grand list as last year. Generally, the grand list increases a bit every year.

Vote: All in favor

Mr. Fuller read article 8.

Motion: To approve article 8.

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

Again, Mr. Gulnick confirmed that the numbers are correct.

Vote: All in favor

Mr. Gulnick said the Town Clerk had requested an article 9, which asks the voters to consider not mailing the Town Report. Mr. Fuller said this had been decided by a floor vote at an earlier Town Meeting.

Motion: To approve article 9

Made by: Mr. Todd

TOWN OF WEATHERSFIELD, VERMONT

SELECT BOARD

There was no second. The motion died. The article will not be included in the ballot for this town meeting.

4. Annual Town Meeting Discussion

Mr. Fuller spoke about the challenges of holding virtual meetings.

Mr. Gulnick will present the general fund budget.

The Board has a couple of meetings before the town meeting to work out details.

The warning will go to the printers on Thursday, so there was still time for improvements. Mr. Gulnick said his report was still a rough draft. He said he still needs to include public affairs and human resources. He asked Mr. Todd to review economic development; Mr. Tillman to review the transfer station joint committee; and Mr. Fuller to review the emergency management section. He said he would get with Mr. Jarvis on public affairs.

5. Any Other Business

Mr. Fuller said he had been spent some time with senior lister, Carolyn Hier, at Mrs. Hier's request. He said he learned that elected officials are under the management (so to speak) of the Board moneywise - not the Town Manager. People who are hired are under the Town Manager's watch. He asked the Board to consider granting Mr. Gulnick the opportunity to go over some of the information that has been brought forward to the Board and the listers to identify potentially – "I know we received those 144 town comparisons and we learned that maybe that wasn't all the of the cost of the listing department was for different towns. I would like an opportunity to grant them time to keep working on what may or may not be the amount of work or associated pay involved with it. Carolyn fired back an email to me this afternoon this was what we did a month or two ago. I want to move forward. I would like Brandon to develop a schedule of time or whatever or to work with the listers and to do that. Carolyn happens to be the senior lister. She specifically asked to speak with me. So that he would learn for us an outline of the times spent on the various functions. I think that could be really important to move forward. So, what does the Board think about that concept?"

Mr. Tillman said, "So the end goal is to understand the amount of time the listers spend, the duties that they spend, that they do, and to evaluate the pay structure." Mr. Fuller said yes. He said when Mr. Gulnick found out that an outside entity could do it for 33-40% of the cost that we're now spending, we also did not know whether that was all of the cost that was involved. He said he promised Mrs. Hier the Board would look into it.

Motion: That we grant Brandon the opportunity to work with the listers to look at the amount of time that is spent; the duties that the three of them carry out and to look further into the pay structure of towns in Vermont against our town based on the information he finds (?)

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

Vote: All in favor

TOWN OF WEATHERSFIELD, VERMONT

SELECT BOARD

Mr. Tillman congratulated Mr. Whidden for being sworn in as an attorney in the State of Vermont.

6. Adjourn

Motion: To adjourn the meeting

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

Vote: All in favor

The meeting adjourned at 7:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
deForest Bearse

WEATHERSFIELD SELECTBOARD

N. John Arrison, Selector

David Fuller, Chairperson

Joseph Jarvis, Clerk

Paul Tillman

Michael Todd, Vice- Chairperson