

**TOWN OF WEATHERSFIELD, VERMONT
SELECT BOARD**

**Select Board
Ascutney Volunteer Fire Department
540 US Route 131, Ascutney VT
Monday, February 21, 2022
6:30 PM
REGULAR MEETING**

MINUTES

Select Board Members Present: David Fuller
Joseph Jarvis
Kelly O'Brien
Paul Tillman
Michael Todd

Select Board Members Absent:

Brandon Gulnick, Town Manager

Others Present:

Bev Strobel			
Josh Dauphin			
Brian Bosenberg			

1. Call to Order

Mr. Fuller called the meeting to order at 6:31 PM.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

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

Ms. O'Brien asked about the status of the mask mandate, as it had apparently expired prior to the first meeting in January. After discussion, the consensus of the Board was to not reinstate the mandate except for on voting day.

Motion: To lift the mask mandate for all town buildings in Weathersfield except to require masks on voting day, March 1st, 10AM – 7PM.

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

Vote: All in favor

Mr. Tillman thanked Mr. Fuller and Mr. Jarvis for their time on the Board. (Mr. Fuller is running for re-election, Mr. Jarvis is not.)

Mr. Gulnick said that Nate Stoddard and his team will be out and about in Town doing inspections on zoning permit projects.

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Mr. Todd said there needs to be a meeting of the Board warned for March 3rd for the purpose of re-organizing following Town Meeting and elections. Mr. Gulnick took note.

There were no comments from the public.

4. Review minutes from previous meetings – 2/7/2022

Additions/corrections/deletions:

a. Change the name “Ray Morris” to “Ray Moore”

Motion: To approve the minutes of the February 7th meeting

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

Vote: All in favor

5. Town Manager Update

Mr. Gulnick shared the following:

Martin Memorial Hall Project

“The main part of the project will be complete on Thursday, February 24th & the room will be ready for Town Meeting on the 26th. After Town Meeting the contractor will finish the wainscoting & some other odds and ends.”

Town Garage Solar Project

“HB logging remobilized equipment and returned the crew to the site after the pause. Tree tops that had been felled previously were mostly skidded to a chipper for export to biomass plants. Six (6) tractor trailers were exported. The remainder of tops, stumps, and butt logs discovered were ground and stockpiled in the northeast corner of the site. Several test pits were dug to probe for ledge to help inform potential array layout optimization. Horizons Engineering discovered the location of the spring fed water line leading to the Town Garage for array location optimization. GMP and NST met on the site to discuss utility work.

Next Steps:

1. HB Logging will continue stumping and begin grading
2. Horizons Engineering will return for stakeout on the array and ditch line
3. Britelite Electrical will work with HB Logging to install conduit
4. Deliveries of racking and electrical supplies”

There were questions about Rick Butler’s access to his storage trailers and confirmation that the location of the Belliveau well easement is known and will not be damaged by the project.

West Weathersfield Volunteer Fire Department

“On December 7, 2020, WWVFD discussed applying for a non-transport license due to their geographic location. The board had questions on whether our insurance would increase if we moved forward with this plan. Since this time, we held a meeting with our insurance company. For officers that pass the course to become certified, the additional cost will

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be \$150 annually. In addition, we reviewed equipment needs. WWVFD currently has most of the equipment they will need to do this. There are a couple of small things they will need, but these equipment needs can be purchased with the existing budget and would be needed with or without this license. Under the existing arrangement with Golden Cross, paramedics are included under the Golden Cross license. This was an interim plan until we established our own license.

“To be clear, this is not a medical transport license, and this is not an ambulance service. This is a Non-Transport license that costs \$30 to obtain. AVFA does not need this license because Golden Cross can respond to Ascutney fast. It takes Golden Cross much longer to get to Perkinsville from Claremont, and this license will give WWVFD the ability to help Weathersfield Residents that are in an emergency situation until Golden Cross arrives to transport patients to the hospital if needed. WWVFD plans to begin this application process this week. I will keep the Town informed as more information.”

This item spurred a lengthy discussion, focused primarily on what was being asked for, what it would cost the Town annually, and what improvement would it make. West Weathersfield Volunteer Fire Department Chief, Josh Dauphin, was on hand to assist with explanations and answering questions.

[At 7:01 PM, the meeting was stopped on account of a mandatory computer re-boot. No one lost connection to the meeting during the event. The meeting resumed at 7:07 PM.]

Mr. Todd asked to see the scope of service, the liability insurance policy, the business plan, and asked how many people would be pursuing this license. (Mr. Gulnick said 8-10 people would be trained at a cost of \$150/year/person.)

Mr. Dauphin said this would improve service to residents on the west side of Town. He said his department already has 90% of the equipment needed to perform the services.

6. ARPA Funds Continued Discussion #2

Mr. Gulnick introduced the discussion with, “On February 7, 2022, the Weathersfield Selectboard kicked off ARPA discussions by holding their first public input session. Several ideas were discussed, including a new Small Business Relief Fund Grant, Ascutney Water District Improvement Project, Septic in the Villages of Ascutney & Perkinsville, and Broadband. In addition, there have been requests from the Police Department and the Weathersfield Food Shelf.”

Mr. Gulnick read the following:

a. Update: Septic - Ascutney & Perkinsville

“The board requested that we reach out to Windsor and Springfield to see if there’s any interest in running septic from Perkinsville to Springfield and from Ascutney to Windsor. Additionally, the board requested to reach out to Regional Planning and an Engineering firm.”

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Windsor Discussion

“According to Windsor TM, it is probably not realistic. Windsor has a small ‘package plant’ about 2.75 miles from the Ascutney intersection. That small plant doesn't have the capacity to expand beyond 8,000 gallons a day. We could not cover the cost of the pipe with that small of a flow. Besides, Cedar Hill nursing home would want the capacity if Windsor did that and they would use all of the available capacity. Windsor’s main plant is about (?) miles away, but he believes there is ledge along route 5 which is why Windsor built the small plant rather than running a pipe. Windsor TM thinks we would be better off building a small plant in Ascutney Village. Hartland has asked the same question and received the same answer.”

Springfield Discussion

“The Springfield Water Superintendent stated that having a small treatment plant in Perkinsville is an option we should look at. If the Town is against this option, then he recommends an engineered study on what it would take to get the sewer to Springfield. To him, the expense of getting it to Springfield would not be cost effective. Springfield is currently focusing on their projects along main street with their ARPA funds, so extending the sewer line to the airport is not in their near future plans at this point.”

Regional Planning Discussion

“According to Jason Rasmussen, Executive Director, A water and sewer feasibility study was conducted by DuBois & King in 1999. What they recommended for the water system is more or less in place now. The sewer recommendations (i.e., new treatment facility down near Deep Meadow Farm) was about \$3M in 1999. There was also talk of extending a sewer line south from Windsor. Similar to extending a sewer line to Perkinsville from North Springfield, this would be a few miles of new pipe, which would be very costly. There is no record from Regional Planning of a previous study for Perkinsville. Costs, rules and technology have changed a lot since 1999. Mr. Rasmussen strongly recommend that the town consider using ARPA or DEC funding to develop new feasibility studies to determine the most cost-effective wastewater solutions for both villages.”

Heritage Engineering Discussion

“We reached out to David (Todd) Hindinger at Heritage Engineering. Mr. Hindinger said he has definitely thought about this. According to Mr. Hindinger “Sewer and water capacity limitations do challenge all of our villages, especially when owners and prospective purchasers want to change or expand, the answer is usually no due to water/wastewater limitations. I do agree that wastewater capacity should be a priority, as it is ALWAYS a limitation on progress.”

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Mr. Hindinger provided a draft outline of how he would approach the project. It is similar to what he put together last year for Mount Holly in the village of Belmont.

“Mr. Hindinger stated that he can help get a batch of summary points and decision requests together to put to the Selectboard for how to get the process going. Mr. Hindinger said he will help get the ball rolling, and if he dedicated time to this, including public meetings to get the decision package to the Selectboard, he estimates \$1,200. He stated that once the project is defined, and if the scope is small, and the RFQ process is simple, he would probably be interested in taking the project on.”

Mr. Fuller said the Town needs to know what the development potential is for either village. He favored getting the feasibility study updated.

Mr. Todd felt the state septic laws should be available for the public in the Town Office.

Mr. Jarvis felt landowners should be responsible for their own septic systems.

b. Update: Water

Mr. Gulnick stated:

Ascutney Water District

“It was suggested that we designate some funding to the Water District for improvement projects. The Ascutney Water District serves over 200 residents & approximately 400 people. It also services the Weathersfield School, which provides education to students throughout the entire Town. There’s a large stabilization project the District is currently working on. The project will provide meters to 90 unmetered residents. When a resident is unmetered, we charge them the unmetered rate. This is very ineffective because we don’t know how much water each resident is using. Additionally, it’s difficult to isolate where leaks in the system are when we don’t know which residence the leak is coming from. The project also includes removing a pipe that currently exists under several homes and moving this pipe to the street.”

“This project is estimated to cost \$721,959. We can leverage State ARPA funds to complete this project if we have a 10% match toward the total projects cost. The Water District is requested \$75,000 in Town ARPA funds to leverage the other \$650,000 in State ARPA funds.”

Mr. Fuller asked that the discussion about water include water for fire suppression. There was discussion about the dry hydrant in the Black River in Perkinsville – possibly upgrading it - and the need to address the refilling of the 10,000-gal tank at the Mormon Church in Ascutney. Chief Dauphin mentioned the abandoned quarry off Quarry Road that has 100 feet of water in it consistently. Perhaps that might be tapped into for fire suppression.

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Mr. Fuller again wanted to know more about the development potential and called for a map of the known users on the Water District lines. (Mr. Gulnick said he already has such a map.) He asked that the Board be provided with at least the summaries of previous feasibility studies, development potential of both villages, recent building activities, and a list of needs from both fire departments.

Mr. Fuller then asked for other ideas from those present. Mr. Jarvis asked to have all of the Town's roads fixed. Mr. Fuller mentioned a generator for Martin Hall. Mr. Dauphin spoke about improvements to the West Weathersfield Fire Station.

Motion: To authorize providing \$75,000 of Town ARPA funds to the Ascutney Water District to provide a 10% match with which to leverage additional state funds for a \$721,959 stabilization project for the Ascutney Water District.

Made by: Mr. Todd **Second:** Ms. O'Brien

Vote: All in favor

c. Update: Broadband – the Board did not discuss this item

d. Update: Small Business Relief Fund

Motion: To provide \$2,000 to each of up to 10 applicants as grants for small businesses in Weathersfield from Town ARPA funds with the total not to exceed \$20,000.

Made by: Ms. O'Brien **Second:** Mr. Tillman

The application format will remain the same. The deadline to apply will be March 17, 2022. Awards to be made at the March 21st select board meeting.

Vote on the motion: Mr. Fuller, Mr. Tillman, and Ms. O'Brien voted in favor; Mr. Jarvis and Mr. Todd abstained on the grounds that they each plan to apply for the grants.

e. Other Requests

From Mr. Gulnick:

Weathersfield Food Shelf

The Food Shelf is located at the 1879 Schoolhouse. Throughout the Pandemic the Weathersfield Food Shelf has increased by approximately 25%. With the continuation of COVID and the increased demand for Food at the Food Shelf, Mr. Brian Bosenberg is requesting that we use ARPA funds to purchase a commercial upright freezer to store all of their frozen products and other perishable items. They receive frozen food from the Vermont Food Bank and purchase frozen food from local farms but have only stored a portion of all frozen food at the Food Shelf. They currently use two old chest freezers and one small "new" chest freezer, which are all full. For now, their farmers and some of their volunteers store the excess frozen food for the Food Shelf. However, a new freezer would significantly increase their storage capacity and help make all frozen products available to families in need in Weathersfield. Last fall, John Arrison ran a new

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dedicated circuit to their commercial refrigerator. He pulled a 12/3 wire, allowing them to add another outlet to the dedicated circuit with little cost and work. At that time, John donated his labor and materials to the food shelf; he has since sold his business. He might be willing to donate more time to the other dedicated outlet and another circuit breaker to the main panel.

Mr. Bosenberg has obtained 3 estimates for freezers:

Alternative Sales Corp	\$10,474
Kitteredge Food Service Equipment & Supplies	\$10,177
B & G Restaurant Equipment & Supplies	\$9,290

Motion: To approve paying \$9,290 to B & G Restaurant Equipment & Supplies for the purchase of a new freezer for the Weathersfield Food Shelf using ARPA funds.

Made by: Ms. O'Brien **Second:** Mr. Tillman

Vote: All in favor

7. Title 19 VSA 1109-1110/Town Highway Weight Limits

Motion: To approve posting appropriate weight limits for the Town's highways for mud season pursuant to 19 VSA §1109-§1110, and Section 12 of Act no. 246 of 1990

Made by: Mr. Tillman **Second:** Ms. O'Brien

Vote: All in favor

8. Vote to Approve Highway Mileage Certificate

Motion: To adopt the Certificate of Highway Mileage dated 2/10/2022

Made by: Mr. Tillman **Second:** Ms. O'Brien

Vote: All in favor

9. Tax Sale – February 24, 2022 @ 10AM

There are nine properties on the list. Mr. Fuller asked that the Town not bid on any unlanded properties.

Motion: To authorize the Chair to bid on behalf of the Town of Weathersfield at the upcoming Tax Sale on 2/24/2022.

Made by: Mr. Tillman **Second:** Ms. O'Brien

Vote: All in favor

10. Draft Town Meeting Presentation

The annual Town Meeting is Saturday, February 26th. Mr. Gulnick has a slide presentation prepared. If anyone has any questions, they should contact him.

11. Proposed Future Agenda Items

12. Approve Warrant

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Motion: To approve the warrant for 2/21/2022 as follow:

General Funds	Operating Expenses	\$55,786.76
	Payroll	\$15,076.96
Highway Fund	Operating Expenses	\$19,005.13
	Payroll	\$9,531.26
Solid Waste Management Fund		
	Operating Expenses	\$12,082.52
	Payroll	\$1,581.66
Library	Operating Expenses	\$0.00
	Payroll	\$2,733.54
Library Fundraising Expense		
	Operating Expenses	\$690.00
Grand Totals	Operating Expenses	\$87,564.41
	Payroll	\$28,923.42

Made by: Mr. Todd **Second:** Mr. O'Brien

There was a question about the library payroll. Mr. Gulnick will look into it.

Vote: All in favor

13. Any Other Business

The Board did not discuss any other business.

14. Adjourn

Motion: To adjourn the meeting

Made by: Mr. Tillman **Second:** Ms. O'Brien

Vote: All in favor

The meeting adjourned at 9:47 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

deForest Bearse

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David Fuller, Chairperson

Joseph Jarvis, Selector

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Kelly O'Brien, Clerk

Paul Tillman, Selector

Michael Todd, Vice- Chairperson

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