**Minutes of special meeting of the Whitingham Selectboard**

**December 22, 2015**

These Minutes shall be accepted into the public record (with any corrections noted)

at the next meeting of the Whitingham Selectboard.

The Whitingham Selectboard held a special meeting on Tuesday, December 22, 2015 at 7:30pm in the Selectboard Office of the Municipal Center, 2948 VT Route 100, Jacksonville, VT.

Selectboard members present: Chair, Keith Bronson; Vice Chair, Allan Twitchell; Members, Greg Brown, Karl Twitchell and Robin Kingsley.

Others present: Gig Zboray, Selectboard Administrative Assistant; Kristen Mehalick, Brattleboro Development Credit Corp.; R.T. Brown of Windham County ED Project (VY Fund); Laura Sibilia, SeVEDS; Almira Aekus, Town Clerk/Treasurer; Alison & Phil Edelstein, residents; Stanley Janovsky, Road Commissioner; Cara Cheyette, Deerfield Valley News.

1. **Call to Order. Additions or Changes to Agenda.**

Chair, Keith Bronson called the meeting to order at 7:30pm.

1. **Hearing of Visitors.**

Greg Brown addressed Cara Cheyette about the error in her newspaper article regarding the Town provided medical insurance. If anyone reads the article it sounds as if the Selectboard gambled $110,000 on the medical insurance, but the medical insurance premiums and deductible is fully budgeted and there is no risk to the Town. Also, Ms. Cheyette reported that the Robohm’s discovered that the Town voted in 1995 to not pay stipends for health insurance to employees not covered by the Town policy, it was actually discovered by Greg Brown and addressed immediately upon discovery.

Greg Brown takes issue with the reporter taking an objective opinion of a resident and reporting it as fact when it was not the opinion of, or even discussed by, the Selectboard.

1. **Brattleboro Development Corp/SeVEDS/Windham County Economic Development.**

R.T. Brown, Windham County ED Fund; program is all about job creation. Program offers low cost (2%) loans for small businesses and competitive grants for non-profits.

Laura Sibilia, SeVEDS; update on 3 big projects – green building/economy cluster analysis, Southern Vermont business accelerator; and work force development. SeVEDS receives some financial backing from the State but they are asking for an appropriation of $3 per person.

Laura Sibilia as Legislative Representative, discussed Act 46 and school consolidation, penalty box and the need for the Town to prop up the school budget. Ms. Sibilia is hopeful that in a few years these problems will be corrected. Discussion of Carbon Tax, Selectboard is strongly opposed to it. Ms. Sibilia feels that it will not come into effect for several years and hopes that if it does that the State of Vermont will not do it alone but in conjunction with nearby states.

1. **Debra Pierce/Hurd Lane driveway access permit**

Phil Edelstein addressed the Selectboard and provided copies of a map. Debra Pierce noted the purpose of the application is “get farmer to field” Mr. Edelstein stated that the permit does not mention her plans to build a house. There was a long discussion about safety. Stanley Janovsky presented photos showing the sight lines of the proposed access. Mr. Janovsky also referred to Statue B71 table 2.2 regarding access and showed that the proposed access was indeed legal. The underground power line is not under the jurisdiction of the Town, the stipulations that Mr. Janovsky added cover several issues including culverts and working with Green Mountain Power. Access cannot be less than 90 feet from the property line.

Mr. Edelstein mentioned that if the Selectboard approved the permit he would like to suggest the Selectboard consider a new resolution that the Town take over responsibility for plowing Hurd Lane or paying a pro-rata share (example 5% of the $100 cost). Corse Excavating would bill the Town some amount to plow Hurd Lane to protect the Edelstein’s from liability. The Selectboard will think about this suggestion and address it at their next meeting.

**A motion was made by Greg Brown to approve Debra Pierce’s Access Permit Application with the stipulations included, seconded by Robin Kingsley, all in favor.**

1. **Review and sign VTrans Bridge #47 report**

Mr. Janovsky explained that the bridge was posted however the State lowered the rating, therefore a new sign must be posted and it is also required that signage be posted on both sides of the bridge. The signage will be posted by July 30, 2016 and all members signed the form.

1. **Approval of Payables Warrant – December 23, 2015**

**A motion was made by Karl Twitchell, seconded by Greg Brown, to approve Payables Warrant W1626 dated December 23, 2015. All in favor.**

1. **Approval of Payroll Warrant – December 23, 2015**

**A motion was made by Greg Brown, seconded by Allan Twitchell, to approve Payroll Warrant W1625 dated December 23, 2015. All in favor.**

1. **Approval of Minutes of December 9 and December 16, 2015**

**A motion was made by Greg Brown, seconded by Allan Twitchell, to approve the Minutes of December 9 and December 16, 2015 as written. All in favor.**

1. **Miscellaneous/Old Business/Mail:**
   1. **Division of Property Valuation and Review Certified Equalized Education Property Value (effective 1/1/2016)**

The school will use the CLA of 112% as the new partial reappraisal will not be complete before Town Meeting. The COD, although high, will be corrected because the Listers are going to continue on with the partial reappraisal.

* 1. **Review Selectboard annual report / draft Warning**

Warning: Article 8 needs to be corrected (extra 1,). Article 7 needs to turn black. Article 9 needs to turn black. Article 12 needs to turn black. Article 13 (Gig check if we received anything from Deerfield Valley Rescue). 15 turns black. Article 18 says 8 (Gig make sure Valley Youth Sports received letter about need for petition). Article 19 must have a petition. Almira will find out about Wings summer program (Article 19) Article 25 can turn black (EDG budget is same as last year).

Annual Report: tabled until next meeting.

1. **Executive Session to discuss litigation**

**A motion was made by Greg Brown, seconded by Allan Twitchell, to enter executive session at 9:23 to discuss ongoing litigation with TransCanada. All in favor.**

**With no motions made the Selectboard exited Executive Session.**

1. **Adjourn**

**A motion was made by Greg Brown to adjourn, seconded by Karl Twitchell, all in favor.**

**Keith Bronson adjourned the meeting.**

Respectfully submitted,

~Gig Zboray