**Minutes of regular meeting of the Whitingham Selectboard**

**January 6, 2016**

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 regular meeting on Wednesday, January 6, 2016 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; Almira Aekus, Town Clerk/Treasurer; Phil Edelstein, resident; Cara Cheyette, independent reporter; Johanna and John Robohm, residents.

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

Chair, Keith Bronson called the meeting to order at 7:32pm. Karl Twitchell would like to add under “other business” how the BDCC could help Riggs Distler with expansion and staying in town.

**Hearing of Visitors**

Cara Cheyette has some questions about the insurance but will bring them up at old business.

**Hurd Lane Plowing Discussion**

Phil Edelstein is happy with the way the Pierce access permit stipulations were written. Discussion of plowing Hurd Lane: Mr. Edelstein feels there is plenty of room for a plow turn-around and states that he is willing to pay for it. Greg Brown would rather consider a payment to Wayne Corse by the Town to pay for the plowing. Karl Twitchell feels that due to the legal steps taken in 2006 to not plow Hurd Lane considering either of these options might open a can of worms with other Class 3 roads in Town. Karl feels that research needs to be done to find the proper way to undo what had been done in 2006.

Mr. Edelstein understands that Hurd Lane and Smith Road were thrown up (for plowing) due to safety issues and difficulty plowing the roads. The safety issue on Hurd Lane has been addressed by Mr. Edelstein with the improvements he made to Hurd Lane. Karl Twitchell feels strongly that when the original agreement was done there were warnings and a hearing and that undoing what was done in 2006 needs to be looked into to do it properly. Greg Brown would like to look into a fair stipend for a contractor to plow and the implications behind paying them. Gig to contact VLCT about this.

Phil Edelstein exited at 7:45pm.

**Review of Selectboard Annual Report**

Looks good, minor tweeks made. Selectmen will think of any others they may need to thank.

**Review of Telephone System Proposal**

Almira Aekus explained the proposal. This company is local and would be around if maintenance is needed (one year of maintenance is included in the price). Sovernet VOIP would be $130 per month and subject to crashing if any problems exist locally or all the way up in Burlington. All agree that local telephone service is the better option. Karl suggested getting one more estimate just for comparison. Karl also questioned if these lines are private or if someone can pickup and listen in. Almira will get another estimate and find out about the privacy question.

**Review of Adjustments to Budget for 16/17**

Almira corrected the fund balances ($88,112 is correct amount of fund balance on the General Fund) on the budget that was voted on at the December 16, 2015 meeting. Other adjustments include: cell tower rental income was increased to reflect the 3% increase per year, BOH & ZA wages, FICA and retirement were increased and Highway prior year fund balance to $18,981. Almira did a rough calculation based on this year’s grand list the tax rate would go down 2 cents.

Based on the CLA from the state the threshold for the penalty box should be lowered drastically. Greg would like to be updated every time the school budget numbers change.

Discussion of sewer capital improvements and the search for the detailed maintenance plan. Karl will talk to David DiCantio about it. Almira and Gig will look again for the improvements schedule. Gig will invite the Sewer Commissioners (or at least get Dave Dumaine) to a meeting as soon as possible.

The revised budget vote will be when the warning and budget are finalized.

**Review of Draft Audit Report for f/y end 06/30/15**

The Board will look at the draft audit and address any questions are the next meeting.

**Miscellaneous/Old Business/Mail:**

**Fishing Derby:** **Greg Brown made a motion, seconded by Allan Twitchell, all in favor, for the following:**

***Beginning at 8am on Friday morning, January 15, 2016 to 8pm on Saturday, January 16, 2016 the following will be in force:***

***Sadawga Lake Road from Town Hill Road to Kentfield Road will be One Way Vehicular Traffic (north to south).***

***The second lane of Sadawga Lake Road will be reserved for parking.***

***Head of Pond Road will be open to include Recreational Vehicle travel.***

***It is anticipated the Recreational Vehicles will be in use on Sadawga Lake Road, Kentfield Road to Head of Pond Road and on Head of Pond Road.***

**Medical Insurance:** Cara Cheyette questioned payments made to an ex-employee in lieu of medical insurance. Was 2015 the only year that employee receive that payment? Greg Brown clarified that the employee did receive payments for a number of years. The exact amount that was paid out over the past 10 years is unknown at this time. The Board is moving forward and not looking back. Almira stated that Cara can find the amounts by looking in the Town Reports.

**Deerfield Valley News** Greg Brown was disappointed that last week’s article about Whitingham did not report about the visit from Laura Sibilia (wearing two hats as Project Director, Economic Development for the Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation and as State Representative) and that the board is engaged in the Town’s economic outcome and are voicing their concerns about Carbon Tax and other matters.

**Review of Sadawga Dam information** Keith Bronson is concerned that the gate house building will not be replaced when the dam alteration project is complete and disappointed that the State Historic District is not concerned about the loss of the building. The Selectboard would like to send a letter to Steven Hanna of the State Dam Safety Program voicing concerns that the gate house will not be replaced upon completion of their repairs.

**Brattleboro Development Credit Corp. (BDCC)** Karl would like a letter drafted to Laura Sibilia requesting help for Riggs Distler to stay in town. Riggs would like to expand and add to the work force and it would be a great benefit to Town if they could stay here. Gig will call Laura to find out how the Selectboard can help.

**Certificate of Highway Mileage:** Stanley Janovsky had reviewed the “Certificate of Highway Mileage Year Ending February 10, 2016” and recommended that the Selectboard sign and submit the form as there were no changes in mileage. Each board member and Town Clerk, Almira Aekus signed the document.

**Approval of Payables Warrant – January 7, 2016**

**A motion was made by Karl Twitchell, seconded by Allan Twitchell, to approve Payables Warrant W1628 dated January 7, 2016. All in favor.**

**Approval of Payroll Warrant – January 7, 2016**

**A motion was made by Robin Kingsley, seconded by Greg Brown, to approve Payroll Warrant W1627 dated January 7, 2016. All in favor.**

**Approval of Minutes of December 22, 2015**

**A motion was made by Greg Brown, seconded by Allan Twitchell, to approve the Minutes of December 22, 2015 as written. All in favor.**

**Executive Session to discuss litigation**

**A motion was made by Greg Brown, seconded by Robin Kingsley, to enter executive session to include Almira Aekus and Gig Zboray at 8:39 to discuss possible litigation where premature general public knowledge would clearly place the public body or a person involved at a substantial disadvantage. All in favor.**

With no decisions made the Selectboard exited Executive Session.

**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