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

**March 29, 2017**

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

at a future meeting of the Whitingham Selectboard.

The Whitingham Selectboard held a regular meeting on Wednesday, March 29, 2017 at 7:30pm in the Municipal Center, 2948 VT Route 100, Jacksonville, VT.

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

Others present: Gig Zboray, Whitingham Selectboard Administrative Assistant; Almira Aekus, Tax Collector; Attorneys Robert Fisher, Town Counsel; James Valente, Neilay Shah and Adam Waite of Costello, Valente & Gentry, PC and Jeff Morse; Mike Eldred, Deerfield Valley News.

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

Vice Chair, AllanTwitchell, called the meeting to order at 7:31pm. There were no additions or changes to the agenda.

**Education Funding**

Karl Twitchell asked for an opinion if we would present a better case to have a school budget as presented or a “skeleton” budget that keeps us out of the penalty box. Mr. Fisher indicated there were pros and cons of both options and it would be better to discuss in executive session. The new budget up for vote on April 12th is $68,000 less than the one presented at Town Meeting. There was discussion about a committee and who would be on it and how to communicate between the two Selectboards and the School Board. The three separate boards should meet alone to discuss amongst themselves how they want to proceed and what their goals are and then all come together to see if any chose the same direction.

**A motion was made by Karl Twitchell to find that premature general public knowledge regarding the town’s proposed litigation against the education funding method would clearly place the town at a substantial disadvantage if its legal strategy was made public, seconded by Greg Brown, all in favor.**

**A motion was made to enter executive session to discuss education funding litigation under the provisions of Title 1, Section 313(a)(1)(A) of the Vermont Statutes to include Gig Zboray, Almira Aekus, Bob Fisher, James Valente, Neilay Shah, Adam Waite and Jeff Morse, seconded by Greg Brown, all in favor.**

With no decisions made **a motion was made by Greg Brown to exit executive session at 9:36pm, seconded by Robin Kingsley, all in favor.**

After exploring different strategies with legal counsel the Selectboard feels they have a better idea of the direction they want to take and discuss with the Wilmington Selectboard. They are not ready to form any committees at this time.

**Transfer Station / WSWMD**

Gig notified the board that she attended the Windham Regional Commission meeting to hear Bob Spenser speak about WSWMD. Mr. Spenser spoke about what the district will continue to offer after collection of recyclables ends on July 1st. Gig spoke up to make clear that WSWMD is in a financial crisis. Mr. Spenser had not even mentioned the $75,000 loan that was recently taken to meet current expenses. **A motion was made by Greg Brown to appoint Gig Zboray as alternate representative to the WSWMD Board of Supervisors for the Town of Whitingham, seconded by Karl Twitchell, all in favor.** Almira will write a letter to WSWMD about this appointment.

**Decide on attorney for Tax Sales**

The scope of work presented by the firm of Salmon & Nostrand was clearer. Fisher & Fisher are the town attorneys and have ties to the community. The Selectboard feels that it would be better to hire a tax sale attorney that has no connections in town and can’t be accused of bias. **A motion was made by Greg Brown to engage Salmon & Nostrand to conduct tax sales, seconded by Robin Kingsley, all in favor.** As collector of delinquent taxes Almira Aekus will sign the contract with Salmon & Nostrand.

**Open Town Hill mowing bids**

Two bids were received for Town Hill mowing:

Vermont Roadworks - $4,700 per year for three years, to be billed monthly at $783.34 May through October.

Deerfield Valley Property Maintenance $4,150 per year for three years, any additional work to be authorized by the board and billed at $32.50 per hour. Will provide insurance certificates upon request. **A motion was made by Greg Brown to accept the Deerfield Valley Property Maintenance bid, seconded by Karl Twitchell, all in favor.**

**Review and sign Animal Control Officer annual contract**

**A motion was made by Greg Brown to sign the Animal Control Contract, seconded by Robin Kingsley, all in favor.**

**Approval of Payables Warrant – March 30, 2017**

**A motion was made by Greg Brown to pay the Payables Warrant W1740 dated March 30, 2017 after check #2248 totaling $8,291.90 payable to Windham Solid Waste Management District, seconded by Keith Bronson, all in favor.**

**Approval of Payroll Warrant – March 30, 2017**

**A motion was made by Robin Kingsley to pay the Payroll Warrant W1739 dated March 30, 2017, seconded by Greg Brown, all in favor.**

**Approval of Minutes of March 15 & 22, 2017**

**A motion was made by Robin Kingsley to accept the Minutes of March 15 & 22, 2017 as written, seconded by Greg Brown, all in favor.**

**Adjourn**

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

Allan Twitchell adjourned the meeting at 9:55.

Respectfully submitted, ~Gig Zboray