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

**June 14, 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 special meeting on Wednesday, June 14, 2017 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 and Karl Twitchell.

Others present: Gig Zboray, Selectboard Administrative Assistant; Dave DiCantio, Sewer Plant Operator; Sewer Commissioners: Dave Dumaine, Marshall Dix and Lyman Tefft, Chair.

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

Keith Bronson, called the meeting to order at 7:30pm. There were two additions to the agenda; prepare agenda for WSWMD meeting and Education Funding Litigation.

**Hearing of Visitors**

None.

**Sewer Commission**

Approximately 40 water meters don’t work at this time. The price of a new meter is roughly $225 to purchase plus the cost of installation by a licensed plumber. Greg Brown asked if there were different metering systems, perhaps more reliable meters; Dave DiCantio answered yes. All the meters that do work are old. The problems with the meters breaking is that wires get cut by weedwhackers and because everyone is on private wells (clogging). Dave DiCantio fixes external meter issues as soon as he can. If he can’t fix it he asks permission to go into the basement to read the actual meter. Greg Brown asked if there might be a grant out there to fix or replace the meters. The Selectboard would like Marylee Putnam to look into grants.

Fixed rate option was looked over. A few account rate changes don’t seem fair. With the proposed rate system residential customers seem to be going up but rental properties/commercial seem to be going down. The school would go up significantly ($11,000). Marshall Dix noted that the school is still paying a full sewer rate at the old school in Wilmington even though no students are there. There are other options in the rate system, for example a big user like the school could be billed by meter usage and others could be on the fixed rate method. It was suggested that businesses be metered in the first year, if their meter is broken they would need to replace it or they could have the option of choosing the fixed rate. No decisions were made.

The expert helping with the rate change will be at the Sewer Commission meeting on June 21st at 6pm to explain the different options. The Sewer Commissioners were hoping to vote in a rate plan at that time to take effect on July 1st. Greg Brown hopes to be available to attend that meeting. The Sewer Commissioners should forward any pertinent documentation to the Selectboard. If necessary a special meeting could be held by the two boards to review and approve the rate change. It is unclear when/how the rate change will be implemented by the Town Treasurer and bookkeeper. The Sewer Commissioners will attend the July 5th Selectboard meeting to share these options (if a special meeting is not held before). Fair and equitable is what everyone is aiming for.

The Selectboard supports the Sewer Commissioner and the increase in rates because repairs need to be made and the Capital Improvements fund needs to grow to be prepared for a catastrophic failure. The sewer expenses should not fall on all the taxpayers just the sewer users.

Sewer Commissioners and Operator left at 8:15pm.

**Education Funding**

**Keith Bronson moved to find that premature general public knowledge regarding the town’s education funding litigation would clearly place the town at a substantial disadvantage if its legal strategy was made public, seconded by Karl Twitchell, all in favor.**

**Allan Twitchell moved to enter into 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, seconded by Greg Brown, all in favor.**

With no decisions made Executive Session was exited.

**Prepare agenda for WSWMD meeting**

The meeting will basically follow the write up explaining the history of events and problems. Gig will talk to VLCT to find out if we can go into executive session for this meeting. The Selectboard agreed to hire attorney Bob Fisher to help us exit the District, to make sure we take all steps required in state statute.

**Adjourn**

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

Keith Bronson adjourned the meeting at 8:55pm.

Respectfully submitted, ~Gig Zboray