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

**September 6, 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, September 6, 2017 beginning with a Special Town Meeting at 7:00pm in the Meeting Hall of the Municipal Center, 2948 VT Route 100, Jacksonville, VT followed by a joint meeting with the Whitingham Sewer Commission.

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

Keith Bronson called the Special Town Meeting to order at 7:00pm agreeable to the warning.

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; Linda Donaghue, Deerfield Valley News; Terrie Morse, Sherrie Adams, Don and Betsy McKinley, residents.

**Special Town Meeting**

Keith Bronson read the Warning.

**Article 1**

**A motion was made by Greg Brown to terminate the Town’s membership in the Windham Solid Waste Management District and approve the terms and conditions contained in the Termination Agreement, seconded by** **Karl Twitchell.** Greg Brown discussed the reasons that the Selectboard wishes to terminate membership. The District no longer picks up our recycling and has never picked up our trash. The Town’s assessment is approximately $16,000 this fiscal year to be in the District and our exit costs will be approximately $5,200. Karl Twitchell pointed out that we will have to provide Hazardous Waste Collection, it will be an unknown cost but we expect it to be more cost effective than to continue membership. There are avenues to take to control the costs on our own. We have no control over the District. Keith Bronson talked about the lack of service, the District’s financial situation, the District veering off into composting and the solar array. Our membership in the District helped to pay the legal and other fees towards the solar array but the Town will not benefit with lower electric costs because our power is not provided by Green Mountain Power. Sherrie Adams asked about the new compactor, did we buy it or are we leasing it? Greg Brown explained that leasing the new compactor seems to be cost savings because we are probably doubling our load but lowering our trucking costs. Also if our old garbage compactor breaks down (it is about 30 years old) then we can use the paper compactor for the garbage while waiting for a replacement. Karl Twitchell explained that with the new recycling hauler we get a commodities payment which helps offset the cost of the rental. Sherrie Adams was in favor of getting in control, says it sounds like a “no brainer”. Linda Donaghue asked, “what’s next?”. The Board answered that we are full members of the District paying our quarterly assessments through June 30, 2018, effective July 1, 2018 we will be on our own. There being no further discussion, the motion was called and carried by voice vote. **All in favor.**

**Article 2**

To transact any other business that may legally come before this meeting.

**A motion was made by Allan Twitchell to authorize Keith Bronson to sign the Termination Agreement.**  Ms. Aekus stated the agreement should be signed during a Selectboard meeting not the Special Town Meeting.  **Allan Twitchell rescinded his motion.**

**Adjourn**

**A motion to adjourn the Special Town Meeting was made by Greg Brown, seconded by Allan Twitchell, all in favor.**

Keith Bronson adjourned the Special Town Meeting at 7:20pm.

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

Keith Bronson called the Special Joint Meeting with the Sewer Commission to order at 7:25pm. There was no additions or changes to the agenda.

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

Sewer Commissioners present: David Dumaine.

Others present: Gig Zboray, Selectboard Administrative Assistant; Dave DiCantio, Chief Sewer Plant Operator; Mark Johnson, RCAP; Marylee Putnam, bookkeeper, Almira Aekus, Town Clerk.

**Joint meeting with Sewer Commission to discuss rate options**

Mark Johnson of RCAP Solutions (Resources for Communities and People), a non profit organization funded by the US Government. They provide training and technical assistance to waste water treatment plants and operators. Dave DiCantio engaged RCAP to help with creating a fair and equitable rate structure for the sewer system creating a budget that will allow the growth of a Facilities Fund to help pay for repairs that will be needed in the future.

Currently approximately one third of the accounts are being averaged or estimated because the meters don’t work. Mr. Johnson began working on a rate study to find what is fair, equitable and affordable based on median income of the community based on industry standards. He has three rate structure options in his draft report right now. 1 – don’t change anything, 2 – flat rate only, 3 – create two classes of users – residential and non-residential. With option 3 the residential users would have a flat rate (no meters necessary) and non-residential users would have a combination of flat rate and volumetric fees. Mr. Johnson feels option 3 is the fairest. He explained it as a capacity to serve, just like a Fire Department, everyone helps pay for fire protection whether they use the service or not, it should be available.

Dave DiCantio is working with an engineer to create an Asset Management Plan that will provide detail of what equipment needs repair/replacement, the cost and the time frame. When that report is finalized it will help to create a proper budget (revenue requirements) and then a rate system change can be implemented. After much discussion is was decided that no changes in the rate structure should be made now.

**Other Business/Administrative Assistant – as needed**

**A motion was made by Greg Brown to authorize Keith Bronson to sign the Termination Agreement with WSWMD, seconded by Allan Twitchell, all in favor.**

**Adjourn**

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

Keith Bronson adjourned the Joint Meeting at 8:16pm.

Respectfully submitted,

~Gig Zboray