



**Town of Whitingham
Office of the Selectboard**

MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 19, 2025

These Minutes are considered a DRAFT until accepted into the public record (with any corrections noted) at a future meeting of the Whitingham Selectboard.

The Whitingham Selectboard held a regular meeting at 6:30pm in the Selectboard office of the Whitingham Municipal Center on Wednesday, February 5, 2025.

Selectboard members present: James Weber, Vice Chair; Lyman (Skip) Tefft, Jr., and Travis Wheeler

Others present: Gig Zboray, Selectboard Administrator; Rick Gramlin, candidate for Selectboard. George (Skip) Sansoucy, Sansoucy & Associates; Donnie Boyd, resident; Howard Dix, Assessors Clerk; Kristine Sweeter, Librarian; Almira Aekus, Clerk/Treasurer.

Call to Order. Additions or Changes to Agenda

James Weber called the meeting to order at 6:30pm. Any changes to the agenda were noted on the meeting copy.

Hearing of Visitors for concerns not on the agenda none

Assessors:

Meet with Sansoucy & Associates regarding Great River Hydro (GRH) value

Skip Sansoucy introduced himself, he is a specialist in valuing special purpose properties. He provided a lot of information about how utility values are tied to the Common Level of Appraisal (CLA), he suggested that we write to our legislators about this problem.

Sansoucy & Associates is suggesting a 5 or 6-year contract with town – the first year would provide a complete reappraisal of the utilities in Whitingham. It would break out the land lines, include New England Power and Green Mountain Power lines and substations as well as Jacksonville Electric, and, of course, include Great River Hydro.

The cost of the reappraisal is \$35,000. The following 4 or 5 years (depending on the contract) would be \$12,000 per year and they would update each of the utility's values. They would average the contract over the span of the contract (5 or 6 years). For a 5-year contract the cost would be \$16,600 ($\$35,000 + \$12,000 \times 4 = \$48,000$ total of \$83,000 divided by 5 years = \$16,600 per year). Skip Sansoucy would need to start right away to get the work done in time for grievances on the new reappraisals. He will handle the grievance process, if it goes to Board of Civil Authority, it will cost extra.

Gig will speak with Cy Bailey at the state to see how much of this expense would be covered and if the state supports the yearly update. We will have to have a special meeting to sign a contract with Sansoucy (probably next Wednesday).

Ratify signing of Commercial Appraisal and Litigation Assistance program Appraisal Request Form (PVR-5413) Last week Gig received a call from Cy Bailey of the state. He was aware that we had scheduled a meeting with Sansoucy & Associates and suggested that we make a request for the state to help pay for the appraisal of the Great River Hydro. Gig spoke with Vice Chair James Weber; he agreed that Gig should sign the request and submit it right away. **A motion was made by James Weber to ratify Gig's signing of PVR-5413, seconded by Skip Tefft, all in favor.** Gig noted that the state approved this application today. As mentioned above, she needs to find out more about what is covered.

Informational session to discuss proposed budget and Town Report

Donnie Boyd thinks everyone's budget should be cut by 10%. It was recommended that he bring up the topic at Town Meeting for the voters to decide.

Highway: nothing

Approval of Payables Warrant – February 20, 2025

A motion was made by Skip Tefft to approve Payables Warrant #W2534, dated February 20, 2025, seconded by Travis Wheeler, all in favor.

Approval of Payroll Warrant – February 20, 2025

A motion was made by Skip Tefft to approve Payroll Warrant #W2533, dated February 20, 2025, seconded by Travis Wheeler, all in favor.

Review and approve Minutes of February 5, 2025

A motion was made by James Weber to accept the Minutes of February 5, 2025, as written, seconded by Travis Wheeler, all in favor.

Other business

Work on cheat sheet for Town Meeting the board reviewed the Warning and determined who would read most of the articles during Town Meeting.

Zoning Board of Adjustment a motion was made by James Weber to appoint Rick Gramlin to the Zoning Board of Adjustment, seconded by Travis Wheeler, all in favor.

Gig will be at assessors training in Rutland on Friday and taking Monday off.

Hiring Committee James Weber recused himself from the hiring committee for Treasurer.

Adjourn

A motion was made by James Weber to adjourn, seconded by Skip Tefft, all in favor.

James Weber adjourned the meeting at 7:40pm. Respectfully submitted, ~Gig Zboray