



**Town of Whitingham  
Office of the Selectboard**

**MINUTES OF MAY 17, 2023**

*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, May 17, 2023.

Selectboard members present: Scott M. Reed, Chair; James Weber, Vice Chair; Greg Brown, and Robin Kingsley.

Others present: Gig Zboray, Selectboard Office Administrator; Stanley Janovsky, Jr., Road Commissioner; Mike McConnell, WRC; Tristan Roberts, state representative.

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

Scott M. Reed called the meeting to order at 6:30pm. Changes to the agenda were noted on the meeting copy.

**Hearing of visitors (for concerns not on the agenda)**

Gig noted that the sewer project is now scheduled to kick off on Tuesday morning at 9am. Mike Smith, engineer, needs to inspect the RBC units that were delivered last month before the construction team starts piping.

This morning Gig sent photos of the highway crew repairing the culvert again to Vermont Emergency Management, she received a response that they have received approval from the Agency of Administration to “move forward” with our grant application.

Tristan Roberts, our state representative, is here to answer any questions the board might have. Mr. Brown questioned why the “affordable heat” act passed. Mr. Roberts indicated that he voted in favor of the bill and noted that the bill authorizes a 1.5 million dollar study.

**Mike McConnell of WRC to discuss Municipal Energy Resilience Program (MERP):**

Mr. McConnell explained the MERP program, no need to choose which buildings should be on the list now, the application is not available yet. Discussion ensued around the sewer buildings.

**Highway**

**Review and approve access permit** Mr. Janovsky presented an access permit for Eric Chast at 361 Poverty Row with a condition that access must pitch away from Poverty Row for a minimum of 12 feet before pitching up towards house site. After review, **a motion was made by Robin Kingsley to approve the access permit for 361 Poverty Row with conditions, seconded by Greg Brown, all in favor.**

Gig suggested we make a plan for repairing the retaining wall at the Eames Village Park. The board asked Gig to invite Seth Boyd to our next meeting. Mr. Brown suggests removing all the stones and pour a wall. Discussion ensued around the use of “waste blocks” like we

used at the Whitingham sewer plant wall. Mr, Janovsky will look into it more. Gig will call WRC for grant ideas.

**Personnel Policy: discuss potential updates**

Gig provided the board with a draft update to the Personnel Policy. This version makes clear that the town is an at-will employer; it removes mention of a probationary period and procedures for termination of employment that do not apply for at-will employment. This version also adds a sentence for winter call-out for highway crew and a section about pay increases. The board would like this version finalized and ready for adoption at the May 31<sup>st</sup> meeting.

**Hazard Mitigation: discuss proposals received, potentially award project**

We received six proposals to update our Hazard Mitigation Plan. The company, Threat Owl, received the most average points by the reviewers, so **a motion was made by Scott M. Reed to accept the proposal from Threat Owl (\$7,500), seconded by James Weber, all in favor.**

**Animal Control: review and sign annual contract for animal holding**

The current contract with the Windham Humane Society for animal holding expires on June 30<sup>th</sup>. This one-year renewal is \$385, same as last year. The contract payment is included in the payables warrant. **A motion was made by James Weber to appoint Scott M. Reed to sign the contract as written, seconded by Greg Brown, all in favor.**

**Reappoint Fire Warden**

Dennis Pike has been serving as Forest Fire Warden since April 2021, the state would like to reappoint him for a 5-year term ending June 30, 2028. Mr. Pike is happy to accept the reappointment, which needs Selectboard approval. **A motion was made by James Weber to reappoint Dennis Pike as Town Forest Fire Warden for a five-year term ending June 30, 2028 and to sign the reappointment form, seconded by Scott M. Reed, all in favor.**

**Liquor License approval**

JG Store, LLC is now applying for a third class restaurant/bar license to be able to serve liquor. They are already licensed to serve beer and wine. Spoonwood Cabin, LLC is renewing their first class restaurant/bar license and their second class license. **A motion was made by James Weber to approve the third class restaurant/bar license for JG Store, LLC and the first and second class licenses for Spoonwood Cabin, LLC, seconded by Scott M. Reed, three in favor, Mr. Kingsley abstained.**

**Emerald Ash Borer infestation reached Whitingham**

We were notified by the state that the Emerald Ash Borer has been found in Whitingham. There is nothing we can do to prevent an infestation. Ash trees will die and will need to be cut down. There is one adjacent to the Jacksonville Fire House that will need to be cut down, it is very large.

**Discuss fencing around generator at Town Hill**

The area is all ledge, Peter Bernard had suggested installing a dog kennel type fence around the generator, that style fence can sit on the ground and not need posts to go into the ground (ledge). Mr. Janovsky will look into it.

**Transfer Station: HHW will be June 3<sup>rd</sup>**

Wayne W. Wood has again generously agreed to run our Household Hazardous Waste event this spring; it is scheduled for Saturday, June 3<sup>rd</sup> from 9am to 1pm.

**Approval of Payables Warrant – May 18, 2023**

**A motion was made by James Weber to approve Payables Warrant #W2346 dated May 18, 2023, seconded by Greg Brown, all in favor.**

**Approval of Payroll Warrant – May 18, 2023**

**A motion was made by Robin Kingsley to approve Payroll Warrant #W2345 dated May 18, 2023, seconded by James Weber, all in favor.**

**Review and approve Minutes of May 3, 2023**

**A motion was made by Greg Brown to accept the Minutes of May 3, 2023, as written, seconded by Robin Kingsley, three in favor, Mr. Weber abstained.**

**Other business**

School strategic plan The School Board has completed a strategic plan, they are willing to present their plan to the Selectboard if interested. The board will take it under advisement.

Request to use Eames Funds for monument at Town Hill the new addition to the Veterans memorial monument at Town Hill was charged to the Parks budget so they don't have enough money to do some spring clean-up. Seth Boyd requested that a transfer be made from the Eames Fund to cover the cost of the monument of \$5,750, so that the Parks Committee can have brush cut, install new picnic tables, new grills, and order wood chips. The Selectboard suggested not ordering grills and tables until after July 1<sup>st</sup>. Wood chips are important. Mr. Janovsky will have the brush cut this week. No transfer out of Eames because the wall in the village park needs expensive repairs.

**Sewer: private session to discuss Chief Operator hours/pay/work assignments**

**A motion was made by James Weber to enter into private session to discuss the sewer plant Chief Operator's hours/pay/work assignments to include Gig Zboray in accordance with 1 V.S.A. § 312(g), seconded by Greg Brown, all in favor.**

A motion was made to exit private session at 8:13pm, all in favor.

The board asked Gig to write a memo to Mr. DiCantio to cover what was discussed in private session.

**Adjourn**

**A motion to adjourn was made by James Weber, seconded by Robin Kingsley, all in favor.**

Scott Reed adjourned the meeting at 8:13pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
~Gig Zboray