



**Town of Whitingham  
Office of the Selectboard**

**MINUTES OF JUNE 12, 2024**

*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, June 12, 2024.

Selectboard members present: Scott M. Reed, Chair; James Weber, Vice Chair; Craig Hammer and Travis Wheeler. Greg Brown attended remotely.

Others present: Gig Zboray, Selectboard Office Administrator. Stanley Janovsky, Jr., Road Commissioner, Doug Dix, ACO; Laurie Dix; Dallas Berard; Ashley, James and Georgia Boyce; Almira Aekus, Clerk/Treasurer.

**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**

Dallas Berard, of Jacksonville Community Church, would like to do a “back to school bash” at Town Hill, on August 18<sup>th</sup> 1-4pm. School supply give away, games, sandwiches donated by Readsboro Inn, live band or DJ, etc. The Selectboard supports this event.

**Animal Control: Boyd/O’Hearn protection order**

The Boyce family is very upset that the protection order has not been followed by Bradley Boyd and Brianna O’Hearn. Gig had contacted the town attorney; the next step is to get a warrant to take the dog to be put down.

**Cemetery: meet with Cemetery Commissioner(s)**

The board wants to meet with all boards and committees to learn more about what they are doing and if they have any needs. Mr. Lackey stated the Commission would like a railing installed along the steep bank at the Jacksonville Cemetery. There are a lot of trees and overhanging branches in a few of the cemeteries, the one by Laurel Lake in particular. They plan to brush hog a section of Green Cemetery near Lake Sadawga, where it has grown up, it is not being used now but it is out of control. Greg Brown questioned Blanchard Cemetery, the stones are in rough shape, could they be propped up and/or repaired with a border around the cemetery perimeter? The Cemetery Commission will add Blanchard to their agenda. They had been updating gravestones but not for the last 2 years. There is one brand-new cemetery commissioner and one fairly new one learning the position.

For many years Dana Dix ordered and placed military flags and markers at all the cemeteries, the expense is part of the cemetery budget. No written records have been found of which graves get which markers. Mr. Hammer said the Legion did it (Dana Dix was a member of the legion as well as the Cemetery Commission). Does the Board want the Cemetery Commission to oversee military markers and flags? Mr. Hammer said yes, because the Legion is down to 3 or 4 members. Dana Dix was good because he had the maps, but Mr. Lackey says he has nothing to know which graves need the markers. He questioned who knows where all the graves are that are supposed to be marked? Shawn Allen is the commander of the Whitingham Legion, he might know. Mr. Brown says Blanchard and Jewell Cemeteries only need one marker each. Teddy Hopkins messaged Mr. Lackey about Sherman Cemetery, the markers there were all stolen, the Cemetery Commission needs to replace them. There are different markers for different wars, but Readsboro has gone to one general marker, Mr. Hammer doesn't like that idea. Mr. Hammer suggested Mr. Lackey talk to Dave Farrington also. Ms. Aekus doesn't think the maps indicate who has served in the military. Mr. Lackey will get the Readsboro ones replaced for sure.

### **Sewer**

review and approve contract with BDCC – the BDCC has already helped with the EPA application for the Congressionally Directed Spending (Bernie) grant. This contract is for them to help with reimbursement requests since those will go directly to the EPA with no state review. The grant allows up to \$20,000 for grant administration, this contract will not exceed that amount. Attorney Fisher has reviewed the contract. **A motion was made by James Weber to approve the contract and appoint Gig Zboray to sign it, seconded by Scott M. Reed, all in favor.**

Philanthropic cause Kingsbury will donate work or funding of \$3,000-5,000 for a philanthropic cause of our choice. Resetting cemetery stones was suggested and is something Kingsbury could do. Gig questioned if painting the exterior of the sewer plants would qualify, Kingsbury said as long as the EPA isn't going to claim it is a "project extension" it could work, but they wouldn't want to jeopardize our grant or other funding sources. After speaking with the Chair of the Cemetery Commission the Selectboard feels that the installation of 30-40 feet of rail at Jacksonville Cemetery is a good project.

**Highway** nothing tonight

### **Flood hazard mitigation**

Vermont Emergency Management has an unprecedented amount of funding for flood hazard mitigation projects. The Windham Regional Commission spoke with VTrans about replacing their undersized culvert that crosses Routes 100 and 112. They say they have no evidence that their culvert is a hazard. If we could gather some evidence from property owners (especially photos of water overtopping the culvert), that information could be used for a benefit cost analysis (BCA). If the BCA proves the project is feasible, VTrans seems willing to apply for grant funding to get the project done.

WRC also suggested taking another stab at a FEMA buyout of the property next door to the Jacksonville fire house. Grant funding for that now would have no local match requirement.

Gig contacted Mr. Kingsley and he is willing to see what a new property appraisal would come in at and decide from there.

Greg Brown would like us to send a letter to the Governor about the culvert by the warehouse on Route 100. The blacktop is cracking on both sides now. Prior letters to VTrans (at least 3) have resulted in no improvement.

### **Vermont Land Trust/Corse Farm letter of support**

At the last meeting Donald Campbell of the Vermont Land Trust attended to ask if the board would be interested in supporting a development rights acquisition of a 10+ parcel that is in the village zoning district at the intersection of Maple Drive and Faulkner Road. Since that meeting, we clarified that the town will still tax the land the same, the assessment might go down but it will never get below the Current Use value. The Land Trust holds “permanent” conservation easements on properties, meaning that those parcels cannot be built on, ever. The Current Use program offers a year-by-year tax abatement program managed by the state. A property owner could buy their way out of a Current Use obligation, the same is not true of a conservation easement. The letter of support states that the Selectboard recognizes the real need for increased housing in our community, there are other places in town that would work for that; but there are very few places where we can promote agricultural production. After review of the letter James Weber noted his concern that the Selectboard might be sidestepping the Planning Commission on this topic. **A motion was made by Craig Hammer to put the issue before the Planning Commission, seconded by James Weber, all in favor.**

### **Review and approve liquor licenses**

An outside consumption permit for JG Store, LLC and a Class 2 license for beer and wine sales at Village Fuels and Convenience were reviewed and approved. **A motion was made by James Weber to approve Application 45066, Outside Consumption Permit for JG Store, LLC, and Application 45261, Second Class License (sale of beer and wine) for Village Fuel and Convenience, LLC, seconded by Scott M. Reed , all in favor.**

### **Approval of Payables Warrant – June 13 2024**

**A motion was made by Craig Hammer to approve Payables Warrant #W2450 dated June 13, 2024, seconded by James Weber, all in favor.**

### **Approval of Payroll Warrant – June 13, 2024**

**A motion was made by Craig Hammer to approve Payroll Warrant #W2449 dated June 13, 2024, seconded by James Weber, all in favor.**

### **Review and approve Minutes of May 29, 2024**

**A motion was made by James Weber to accept the Minutes of May 29, 2024, as written, seconded by Craig Hammer, all in favor.**

### **Other business**

Craig Hammer says that Larry Davis, Transfer Station Attendant, asked if we could send a letter to the Lions Club to clean out the bottle/can redemption shed on a regular basis, perhaps once or twice a month.

Gig will be on vacation (next week) the week of June 17<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. Aekus will be on vacation July 10 through 25. Due to a medical leave by the assistant clerk, the Town Clerk's office will have coverage on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday during those weeks and the office will be closed on three Wednesdays and Fridays (Almira will be back on the 26<sup>th</sup>, but not officially open the office, she will use that day to catch up).

We received \$2 from the Historical Society for rent of the building.

No work has been done on the pavilion since the foundation was poured about 2 weeks ago, Gig left a phone message and sent an email today to remind them the project needs to be done by June 30 (billed to us by June 25).

Mr. Brown received a text from Seth Boyd stating that he should have enough documentation now to prove that Freezing Hole Road is a town road and should be added back onto the road map. Mr. Boyd will prepare a letter for the board to sign.

**Adjourn**

**A motion to adjourn was made by Scott M. Reed, seconded by Travis Wheeler, all in favor.**

Scott Reed adjourned the meeting at 7:28pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
~Gig Zboray