



**Town of Whitingham
Office of the Selectboard**

MINUTES OF OCTOBER 4, 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, October 4, 2023.

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

Others present: Gig Zboray, Selectboard Office Administrator; Stanley Janovsky, Jr., Road Commissioner; Tim Jones, Green Mountain Power; Keith Thompson, resident/DV Fiber representative; Rod Bemis, Jacksonville Electric representative; 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)

Almira Aekus noted that the audit went very well, there were no adjustments. The head auditor looked at the 22/23 Town Report, he had no problem with the information as presented. The only modification Ms. Aekus will do in the future is to note why money came out of any special funds. Gig noted that the auditors reviewed the sewer funding documents and found them to be in order.

Mr. Hammer questioned the school budget and why they had no money. Ms. Aekus is now the fairly new school treasurer. She feels it will all work out now. She stated that when she was Whitingham School Treasurer the district regularly borrowed money to get through the beginning of the school year until tax revenues started coming in. There have been many staffing changes at the school district and they might not have been aware of the summer revenue needs.

Green Mountain Power – utility line rebuild project:

Tim Jones of Green Mountain Power, here to request permission to locate poles, guys and wires within the town's right-of-way on several roads in town. Maps provided are for traditional overhead rebuild. Now they are looking to underground wiring. Currently 1970s construction crisscrosses the area. They'd like to get started this fall. Mr. Brown noted he is fully in favor of underground wires. He questioned if we needed to worry about hitting the above ground splices with a plow. Mr. Jones answered that a termination cabinet is probably more ideal than other alternatives. Mr. Janovsky has no concerns right now until he knows more about the details, but he is all in favor of this project. GMP has an Act 250 exemption until January of 2026. **Craig Hammer made a motion to approve the project and sign the agreement, seconded by James Weber, all in favor.**

Highway:

Open winter sand bids

Zaluzney \$29.40 per cubic yard delivered

Derrig Excavating \$31.75 per cubic yard delivered

Mitchell Materials \$22.10 per ton delivered / \$28.73 per cubic yard delivered

A motion was made by Scott M. Reed to accept the bid from Mitchell Materials, LLC to purchase winter road sand at \$22.10 per ton, seconded by Greg Brown, all in favor.

review and sign grant extension agreement The state has extended the deadline for the Grants in Aid-FY23 grant program. It will now end September 30, 2024. Mr. Janovsky is listed as the grantee on the grant. **A motion was made by Scott M. Reed to appoint Stanley Janovsky, Jr. to sign the grant extension document, seconded by James Weber, all in favor.**

Sewer:

re-set the sewer rate

The bookkeeper asked that the sewer rate be changed to make it evenly divisible by 2 payments; she suggested we change it to \$1,351.36. After the rate was set, we approved a request to change the assigned EUs to a property. To change the rate to the new EU assignments that would be \$1,354.10. Due to the letter that was already mailed to sewer customers Mr. Weber suggested lowering the rate by 1 cent rather than raising it. **A motioned was made by James Weber to re-set the 23/24 sewer rate at \$1,351.34, seconded by Craig Hammer, all in favor.**

Prior sewer assistant unpaid benefits

Mr. Brown's wife asked him about unpaid time on her last pay stub. Mr. Brown questioned if employees are earning benefits, why aren't they getting paid their benefits when they leave town employment. Mrs. Brown was paid per the Personnel Policy.

CDS Grant – appoint Authorized Representative We are in the grant application process with the CDS (Bernie) money. An "authorized representative" should be appointed. **A motion was made by James Weber to appoint Gig Zboray as the authorized representative for the CDS grant, all in favor.**

Animal Control: review and sign letter to Judiciary

When the board met with a dog owner on September 6th it was agreed that the ten tickets issued for excessive barking would be voided after the two dogs were registered. Ten tickets will not be voided, they are for running at large, unregistered dogs and ACO witnessed barking. **A motion was made by Scott M. Reed to sign the letter, seconded by James Weber, all in favor.**

Mr. Janovsky asked if the town is required by the state to have a dog ordinance, Gig will look it up.

Approval of Payables Warrant – October 5, 2023

A motion was made by Greg Brown to approve Payables Warrant #W2414 dated October 5, 2023, seconded by James Weber, all in favor.

Approval of Payroll Warrant – October 5, 2023

A motion was made by James Weber to approve Payroll Warrant #W2413 dated October 5, 2023, seconded by Scott M. Reed, all in favor.

Review and approve Minutes of September 20, 2023

A motion was made by James Weber to accept the Minutes of September 20, 2023, as written, seconded by Scott M. Reed, three in favor, Mr. Brown abstained.

Other business

Mr. Bemis noted that Chris Willet is working to put together some hydro electric projects in town, might be coming down the pike soon. Broadband will be coming soon; some new poles might need to be installed for their loop.

Gig will be taking some time off next week. She will attend the monthly construction meeting on Thursday and check emails daily.

Pre-bid meeting for culvert project is tomorrow at 10am.

Mr. Weber mentioned that the sewer plant is looking great with the new PVC walls and the new lighting.

Adjourn

A motion was made by Scott M. Reed to adjourn, seconded by James Weber, all in favor.

Scott M. Reed adjourned the meeting at 7:16pm.

Respectfully submitted,
~Gig Zboray