



**Town of Whitingham
Office of the Selectboard**

MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 1, 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, November 1, 2023.

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

Others present: Gig Zboray, Selectboard Office Administrator; Rachel Shields Ebersole, BDCC Community Projects Specialist.

Call to Order. Additions or Changes to Agenda

Scott M. Reed called the meeting to order at 6:30pm. There were no changes to the agenda.

Hearing of visitors (for concerns not on the agenda)

None.

BDCC: Annual Presentation

Rachel Shields Ebersole came to the table and presented a rundown of the services offered to the town, residents and businesses.

Highway

Access Permit – easement vs. revocable license At the last meeting the board reviewed an access permit for Marshall Dix asking for access to the rear of his property through the Whitingham Fire House lot. There were some concerns as to the legality and the board requested that Gig contact the town attorney. The town attorney recommended that a revocable license be written up and agreed upon. By making it revocable if conditions aren't met access could be taken away. After discussion, **a motion was made by Scott M. Reed to deny the access permit completely for Marshall Dix, seconded by Greg Brown, all in favor.**

Access Permits – review and approve Two other access permits were reviewed. One for Calvin Goldsmith at 874 Aldrich Road, with no restrictions or conditions. The second for Wayne S. Magro at 901 Parsons Road, with a recommendation to install a bridge strong enough to handle a minimum of 80,000 pounds and wide enough for a fire truck. After review, **a motion was made by Craig Hammer to approve and sign the access permits for Goldsmith and Magro, seconded by Greg Brown, all in favor.**

CDL license discussion

At the last meeting Mr. Janovsky asked the board to consider changing the requirement for highway crew to hold an interstate CDL license (versus an intrastate). After some research it was found that we have no written requirement for what type of CDL license a driver uses,

it is up to them to self-certify. The board doesn't want to institute a policy now but recommend the drivers keep their interstate CDL.

Discuss salt bids (state bid) Mr. Janovsky questioned if he could purchase salt on the state's salt bid winner, Appalachian Salt with the same price as last year. **A motion was made by James Weber to allow Mr. Janovsky to use this year's state salt bid to meet Purchasing Policy requirements, seconded by Scott M. Reed, all in favor.**

Insurance: annual review of property schedule, discuss auto liability coverage:

The board reviewed the property schedule. The value of the sewer plants and equipment should be adjusted when the project is complete.

VLCT provides its members with Uninsured/Underinsured Motorist (UM/UIM) coverage. In most municipal applications, it provides additional coverage limits that an injured employee can access, in addition to workers' compensation. Because of that, the PACIF Board of Directors established a lower coverage limit of \$250,000 per occurrence many years ago. Since this reduced limit differs from VLCT's standard auto liability limit of \$10,000,000 per occurrence, the Vermont Department of Financial Regulation has requested that each member direct PACIF as to the specific coverage limit they desire. After some discussion **a motion was made by Greg Brown to keep coverage as it has been for many years and to appoint Scott M. Reed to complete the DocuSign agreement, seconded by James Weber, all in favor.**

Sewer

As of today, the contractors are expecting the new Jacksonville RBC to be ready for the switchover by early December, then they move on to the Whitingham plant. They are having some trouble getting a few specific parts that are AIS certified.

CDS grant a draft grant application was submitted to the EPA for review, they had a few minor comments, edits will be made, and the grant app should be submitted before the end of the week. This application is just a technicality, the funds are ours and Gig's understanding is that they will be paid to the state and run through SRF funding like the rest of the sewer project, which actually makes bookkeeping easier and cleaner.

Transfer Station:

We still don't have a contract with Casella. They recently responded asking if we want the 40yard condo box at \$545 per month. Would require building a platform so users could actually access it. Going to a 40 yard box from a 30 yard box with the new rental cost would not save any money overall. The board said no.

Dennis Pike completed the 24-hour Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response Training (aka HAZWOPER) and is now qualified to run our HHW collection events.

Animal Control – review and discuss potential changes to Ordinance

Recently there has been some discussion of doing away with the Animal Control Ordinance or amending it to do away with violations that are very difficult to police. Gig provided the board with a draft ordinance that adds some definitions and crosses off the sections on disturbances and defecation.

Approval of Payables Warrant – November 2, 2023

A motion was made by James Weber to approve Payables Warrant #W2418 dated November 2, 2023, seconded by Scott M. Reed, all in favor.

Approval of Payroll Warrant – November 2, 2023

A motion was made by James Weber to approve Payroll Warrant #W2417 dated November 2, 2023, seconded by Greg Brown, all in favor.

Review and approve Minutes of October 18, 2023

A motion was made by James Weber to accept the Minutes of October 18, 2023, as written, seconded by Craig Hammer, three in favor, Mr. Brown abstained.

Other business

Wings after-school funding increase our Social Service Appropriation Policy requires that agencies submit a petition if they change the amount of funding they are requesting. Wings after-school programming is asking for \$11,000 this year, \$1,000 over last year. Traditionally Wings after-school program has not been required to petition. Gig questioned if they need to now with the increase? Yes, Wings must follow town policy.

Budget for 24/25 traditionally the town treasurer has started the budget process and then the board reviews and adjusts the draft budget. The 2023 update of the Personnel Policy says that pay/cost of living increases are traditionally based on the Social Security COLA for that year. The 2024 SS COLA will be 3.2%; should Ms. Aekus start her draft budget based on that amount? **Craig Hammer made a motion to do a 3% cost of living increase for fiscal year 24/25, seconded by James Weber, all in favor.**

We received an email from VLCT that liability insurance is going up 2% and property insurance up 8.7% but worker's comp is decreasing 1.6%.

Micro Hydro Powered Turbines meeting is Friday at 2 if anyone interested.

Culvert Project bids for engineering are due today, bid review will happen by a committee and recommendation to award will be ready for next meeting.

FEMA Buyout grant application is still in FEMA review, final answer could come anytime (they've had it since January).

Town Hill Mr. Hammer is concerned that the pavilion improvement project has not been put out to bid yet and that there is a grill laying on its side since approximately June.

Selectboard Mr. Hammer made clear that he does not plan to run for reelection in March. Mr. Brown noted that he plans to resign early in the new year. Mr. Brown suggested that anyone interested in filling seats on the Selectboard start attending meetings to learn about the business of town and the potential to be appointed if someone resigns earlier than expected.

Adjourn

A motion was made by Greg Brown to adjourn, seconded by Craig Hammer, all in favor.

Scott M. Reed adjourned the meeting at 7:32pm. Respectfully submitted, ~Gig Zboray