



**Town of Whitingham  
Office of the Selectboard**

**MINUTES OF DECEMBER 11, 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, December 11, 2024.

Selectboard members present: Scott M. Reed, Chair; James Weber, Vice Chair; Lyman (Skip) Tefft, Jr.

Others present: Gig Zboray, Selectboard Administrator; Stanley Janovsky, Jr., Road Commissioner; Tanya Bernard, Library Trustee; Kristine Sweeter, Librarian; Howard Dix, Assessors Clerk.

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

Scott M. Reed called the meeting to order at 6:31pm. One change to the agenda was noted on the meeting copy. Casella cancelled tonight; item crossed off the agenda. Add: Tobacco License for Village Fuel. Due to memory lapse, there is no recording of this meeting.

**Hearing of Visitors for concerns not on the agenda** none

**Highway:** nothing

**Budget work session:**

Library: Has 3 employees, Kristine will have 20 years, Lois 15 years and Lisa. Kristine currently earns \$24.95; Lois \$17.95; Lisa \$15.70. The 4% cost of living adjustment (COLA) wouldn't boost them up that much. The library trustees would like to award a merit raise to each of them. In 2020 and 21 the library didn't provide COLAs. Final rates including COLA will be Kristine \$27.20 per hour, Lois \$20.00 per hour, Lisa \$16.70 per hour. The Selectboard fully supports these merit raises.

Moderator Stipend: The town moderator for many decades has been Leon Corse, 2025 will be his last Town Meeting in this position. He never wanted an increase to the annual stipend, but with someone new needed to run for the position, we should increase it from \$125. The board would like to set a budget for the position of \$500 for the 25/26 fiscal year and pay will be negotiated with the newly elected moderator.

Remove internet reimbursement for assessor's clerk: The assessor's clerk is reimbursed \$360 per year for internet use at home. The clerk has an office with a fiber internet connection here at the Municipal Center, there is no need for this expense. The board approved this change to the budget for 25/26.

Discuss changing payment of sewer penalties to the sewer treasurer: The 25/26 budget will reflect that Town Clerk fees and delinquent tax penalties are no longer paid to that position holder. It is time to make this change regarding the sewer penalties. The board discussed the topic and approved. The Town Treasurer is technically the sewer treasurer, Marylee is currently in that position by appointment of the Town Treasurer. Beginning March 5, 2025 all sewer penalties will stay in the sewer account and not paid out to the treasurer.

The bookkeeper is a Selectboard employee who prepares the payroll and payables warrants, does the account reconciliations, deals with insurance of all kinds, and is an intricate part of the audit process. This position provides the checks and balances to the Treasurer. The current bookkeeper also serves as the 911 Coordinator.

Change amount sewer pays town for bookkeeping: the sewer department has been paying the town \$432 for bookkeeping services for many years. **A motion was made by James Weber to adjust the budgets of the town and the sewer to reflect that the sewer will pay the town \$4,000 for all bookkeeping services and incidentals needed for billing (postage, envelopes, etc.), seconded by Skip Tefft, all in favor.**

Discuss fire warden salary: Gig suggested a change to this, it is currently \$224 per year. The board increased the salary for this position to \$500 plus the 4% COLA.

Discuss sewer plant roofs: Both sewer plants need new roofs, we couldn't get this work done with grant funding because no bidders were found (by Kingsbury) that could do certified payroll and AIS certifications necessary for grant reimbursements. The sewer buildings are owned by the Town, new roofs would have to come out of the municipal facilities fund. With the CDS grant funding we can try to find a subcontractor to meet grant funding requirements first, if no luck then the town will have to pay for them.

The board would like to increase the amount going into the Municipal Facilities Fund to \$20,000 for the 25/26 fiscal year.

### **Tobacco License**

**A motion was made by James Weber to approve the renewal of a tobacco license for Village Fuel, seconded by Scott, all in favor.**

### **Approval of Payables Warrant – December 12, 2024**

**A motion was made by Scott M. Reed to approve Payables Warrant #W2524, dated December 12, 2024, seconded by Skip Tefft, all in favor.**

### **Approval of Payroll Warrant – December 12, 2024**

**A motion was made by James Weber to approve Payroll Warrant #W2523, dated December 12, 2024, seconded by Scott M. Reed, all in favor.**

### **Review and approve Minutes of November 13, 2024**

**A motion was made by Scott M. Reed to accept the Minutes of November 13, 2024, as corrected, seconded by Skip Tefft, all in favor.** There was no meeting on November 27<sup>th</sup>.

### **Other business**

**Deerfield Wild & Scenic River Study Committee** In 2021 the Selectboard provided a letter of support to the Deerfield River Watershed Association, they are now securing funding from the National Park Service for a “reconnaissance study” of the river in Vermont and Massachusetts as a preliminary evaluation of the eligibility for “Wild and Scenic” designation. The association is looking for one representative from each community to serve on the study committee. Gig put out a request for interested participants on Facebook. Phil Edelstein responded that he was interested. **A motion was made by Scott M. Reed to appoint Phil Edelstein as Whitingham’s representative to the Deerfield River Watershed Association study committee, seconded by James Weber, all in favor.**

**Meeting schedule:** There will be no regular meeting on December 25<sup>th</sup>. The next regular meeting will be January 8<sup>th</sup>. We have a special town meeting here at the Municipal Center on December 18<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm.

**FEMA Buyout of 2984 VT Route 100** We just received paperwork to review that is the last step before FEMA awards the grant. Vermont Emergency Management is the recipient and will do all the contracting unless they specifically ask us to.

### **Adjourn**

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

Scott Reed adjourned the meeting at 7:10pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
~Gig Zboray