



**Town of Whitingham
Office of the Selectboard**

MINUTES OF DECEMBER 18, 2019

These Minutes shall be accepted into the public record (with any corrections noted) at a future meeting of the Whitingham Selectboard.

The Whitingham Selectboard held a regular meeting on Wednesday, December 18, 2019 at 6:30pm in the Selectboard Office of the Municipal Center, 2948 VT Route 100, Jacksonville, VT.

Selectboard members present: Wayne Wood, Vice Chair; Wayne Corse, Craig Hammer, and Scott Reed.

Others present: Gig Zboray, Selectboard Office Administrator; Stanley Janovsky, Jr., Road Commissioner; Howard Dix, Listers Clerk; Almira Aekus, Treasurer/Tax Collector; Richard Lemaire, and Phil Edelstein, residents.

Call to Order. Additions or Changes to Agenda.

Wayne Wood called the meeting to order at 6:30pm. There were no additions or changes to the agenda.

Hearing of visitors (for concerns not on the agenda)

Mr. Lemaire questioned if there were zoning regulations to regulate accessory dwellings for an in-law type apartment. Gig answered that current zoning regulation allows an accessory dwelling up to 30% of the size of the primary dwelling. The *draft* zoning regulation allows 50%.

Mr. Lemaire suggested that the town install a crosswalk from the Jacksonville Community Church to the parking area. Discussion ensued regarding a crosswalk at the intersection of Gates Pond Road and Route 100 as well. Mr. Janovsky will ask WRC about conducting a traffic study.

Assessor's Office

Review proposal from Green Mountain Appraisers

Mr. Dix met with Green Mountain Appraisers on Monday, December 16th. They have not submitted a proposal to Whitingham yet, it is anticipated to be in the next few weeks. Mr. Dix will get a price quote on the ProVal software. Mr. Dix will attend a meeting to see the new proposed state sponsored software in January.

Land

Mr. Ed Bergan called and offered to donate a 10-acre parcel of land on Merrifield Road (07-0556). The Selectboard suggested that Mr. Dix provide contact information for the neighbors so that Mr. Bergan can try to reach an agreement with one of them. It would not be a benefit to the town.

NEMRC

Mr. Dix feels that it has been working well, they are getting the job done. The workload has slowed down.

Review job description for Assessor's Clerk

Gig should get a copy of the Wilmington Assessor's Clerk job description. Overall the board feels the current draft is too long and would like a shorter more direct draft.

Review and sign Errors and Omissions Report

Mr. Dix presented the report of Errors and Omissions for 2019 for the Selectboard to review. **A motion was made by Wayne Corse to approve and sign the Errors and Omissions report for the tax year 2019, seconded by Craig Hammer, all in favor.**

Highway Department

Change traffic patterns for annual fishing derby/limited atv use

Stanley Janovsky requested that the Selectboard allow a change in traffic patterns on January 10 and 11, 2020 for the annual Fishing Derby. **A motion was made by Craig Hammer to allow the following:**

Beginning at 8am on Friday morning, January 10, 2020 to 8pm on Saturday, January 11, 2020 the following will be in force:

Sadawga Lake Road from Town Hill Road to Kentfield Road will be One Way Vehicular Traffic (north to south).

The second lane of Sadawga Lake Road will be reserved for parking.

Head of Pond Road will be open to include Recreational Vehicle travel.

It is anticipated that Recreational Vehicles will be in use on Maple Drive, Sadawga Lake Road, Kentfield Road to Head of Pond Road and on Head of Pond Road.

Seconded by Scott Reed, all in favor.

Review and sign Municipal Planning Grant agreement

The town won a Municipal Planning Grant to enable us to hire a manager to oversee the complicated Hazard Mitigation Project in Jacksonville. The manager will also seek out and apply for other grants to help lower the cost of the overall project. **A motion was made by Scott Reed to accept the grant and allow Wayne Wood to sign the grant documents, seconded by Wayne Corse, all in favor.**

Appoint WRC as agent for Municipal Planning Grant

Per Attachment D, Section 1C – the town would not have to follow the “methods of procurement” if we use the Regional Planning Commission as agent of the grant. This saves time and confusion over the RFP process which WRC would have to help us with anyway. **A motion was made by Craig Hammer to appoint the Windham Regional Commission as agent for the FY20 Municipal Planning Grant, seconded by Scott Reed, all in favor.**

Highway Department Budget

The proposed budget for fiscal year 20/21 is up because of the higher price of sand, this year's bid was quite a bit higher than last year. Mr. Janovsky would rather err on the side of caution. Also, the grader needs new tires. Mr. Corse noted that it seems to be up about 7% as proposed. Route 8A is on the schedule for paving in 2020, including culverts and guardrails. Mr. Corse mentioned that the Dam Road needs to be paved.

Town Garage

At a prior meeting Mr. Lemaire suggested that the Town Garage needs attention. Mr. Janovsky suggested that a committee should be formed to figure out what the best and most cost-effective options are. Topic will be discussed further on January 2.

Discuss change in title and authority of Town Hill Committee to Parks Committee

There has been a large turnover in the members of the Town Hill Committee and the new group is active. They would like to also take care of the Eames Village Park and oversee the Municipal Center lot (they are willing to work with the Lions Club to ensure that the basketball court is maintained). The Lions Club and Town Hill Committee are also willing to oversee the planting and maintenance of the flower barrels around town. **A motion was made by Wayne Corse to change the name of the Town Hill Committee to the Parks Committee and include oversight of the Eames Village Park and Municipal Center lot, seconded by Scott Reed, all in favor.**

Review and discuss proposal for Town Hill security

The cost of the special box to store the NVR recording device is \$8,000. The Selectboard decided to wait until the new VTel tower is live to see what the strength of the wi-fi signal is because that would be a more affordable option.

Appoint Phil Edelstein to the Zoning Board of Adjustment

Phil Edelstein is a current member of the Planning Commission and Economic Development Group; he has expressed interest in joining the Zoning Board of Adjustment. David Dumaine, chair of the ZBA, has recommended the appointment of Phil Edelstein. **A motion was made by Wayne Corse to appoint Phil Edelstein to the Zoning Board of Adjustment, seconded by Craig Hammer, all in favor.**

Appoint Carrie Northrup to the Economic Development Group

At the recommendation of the WEDG, **a motion was made by Wayne Corse to appoint Carrie Northrup to the Whitingham Economic Development Group, seconded by Scott Reed, all in favor.**

Discuss WEDG recommendation to create a separate Connectivity/Broadband Committee

The Whitingham Economic Development Group has been doing some work on increasing local connectivity (wi-fi, fiber, dsl). If a fiber project is to move forward in Whitingham it will require many meetings and members with more expertise in the topic. WEDG has recommended that the Selectboard create a separate Broadband Committee to oversee any local project that might come about. **A motion was made by Wayne Corse to form a Whitingham Broadband Committee, seconded Craig Hammer, all in favor.** Gig will put out notices that we are looking for interested, knowledgeable residents to join.

Transfer Station, review and sign E-cycling contract

Each year we are offered an extension to an original contract that was signed about 7 years ago to participate in electronics recycling. **A motion was made by Wayne Corse to appoint Wayne Wood to sign the e-cycling contract extension, seconded by Scott Reed, all in favor.**

Sewer Department, review and sign letter to Jacksonville Community Church

At the December 4, 2019 meeting the Selectboard approved a request to remove the Parsonage address from the sewer billing, the parsonage burned years ago, and the church has no plans to rebuild on the lot in the future. The board reviewed the letter and **a motion was made by Craig Hammer to sign the letter allowing disconnection of Account # J21 effective January 1, 2020, seconded by Scott Reed, all in favor.**

Sewer-other

Gig and Dave DiCantio participated in a conference call hosted by the engineers to explain the current situation with the state DEC to our state representatives and senators. Laura Sibilia, John Gannon and Becca Balint immediately sent an email to Jeff Fehr's to request a tele-conference to find out the status of Whitingham's financing, as an indirect way to question them on their redundancy requirements. It seems to have worked because the DEC is now doing some further inquiries with our engineers.

Phil Edelstein suggested that the town sell the sewer plants to a company that runs sewer plants professionally.

Budget Work Session

Ms. Aekus provided an updated draft budget for 20/21 and a worksheet showing employee positions and wages. She added more information for the sewer department, the board agreed that there should be an increase in the sewer assistant budgeted pay because training will increase the hours worked. Ms. Aekus calculated prior years hours worked for Lister/Listers Clerk and based the Lister Clerk wages at 15 hours per week and included the 1.6% cost of living increase.

Approval of Payables Warrant – December 19, 2019

A motion was made by Craig Hammer to approve Payables Warrant W2026 dated December 19, 2019, seconded by Scott Reed, all in favor.

Approval of Payroll Warrant – December 19, 2019

A motion was made by Scott Reed to approve Payroll Warrant W2025 dated December 19, 2019, seconded by Craig Hammer, all in favor.

Approval of Minutes of December 4, 2019

A motion was made by Wayne Corse to approve the Minutes of December 4, 2019 as written, seconded by Craig Hammer, all in favor.

Other business / Office Administrator – as needed

Appoint Selectboard member to sign warrants for January 2, 2020.

A motion was made by Craig Hammer to appoint Wayne Wood to review and sign the warrants for January 2, 2020, seconded by Wayne Corse, all in favor.

Review final draft of January newsletter

The final draft of the January 2020 newsletter was reviewed and approved pending the addition of an invitation to join the newly formed Broadband Committee. Gig will send out the newsletter at the end of December, so folks see the invitation to the Open Forum Potluck on January 4th.

Schedule time of special meeting on January 2, 2020

Due to the holiday, the regular meeting on January 1st has been cancelled. The Selectboard will hold a special meeting on January 2nd, the main topic of which will be budget work session. Jill Muhr of VLCT may be available to meet or call in to the meeting to provide information on employee relations. She would prefer if the meeting started at 5:30, the board agreed to a 5:30 start. Gig provided copies of job descriptions and of the Personnel Policy for board members to review before meeting with Jill Muhr.

Executive Session to discuss possible pending litigation

Almira Aekus, Tax Collector, requested an Executive Session to discuss threatened litigation. **A motion was made by Wayne Corse to find that premature general public knowledge regarding threatened litigation against the town would clearly place the town at a substantial disadvantage if its legal strategy was made public, seconded by Wayne Wood, all in favor.**

A motion was made by Wayne Corse to enter into executive session to discuss threatened litigation against the town under the provisions of Title 1, Section 313(a)(1)(A) of the Vermont Statutes to include Gig Zboray and Almira Aekus, seconded by Wayne Wood, all in favor.

With no decisions made executive session was exited at 9:21pm.

Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by Scott Reed, seconded by Craig Hammer, all in favor.

Mr. Wood adjourned the meeting at 9:21pm.

Respectfully submitted,
~Gig Zboray