



**Town of Whitingham
Office of the Selectboard**

MINUTES OF DECEMBER 28, 2022

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 28, 2022.

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

Others attending: Gig Zboray, Selectboard Office Administrator. Almira Aekus, Clerk/Treasurer. Tyler Lederer, DV News.

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 none

Highway:

A letter written to Phelps on Corse Road to remove cars parked along the road in the town's right-of-way. Mr. Hammer asked that a letter also be sent to the Lackeys on Butler Brook Road.

Transfer Station

Book collection box: A company called Discovery Books would like to put a collection bin (44x44x72) at our Transfer Station. Books collected are either sold, donated to various charities, or turned into pulp. Most importantly they do not end up in the landfill. The company will provide us with an insurance certificate. There are no fees to us, no contracts, we can stop the service whenever we want.

Rather than at the Transfer Station the board suggested the book box be placed at the Municipal Center.

HHW update: Gig found a new company to take away our HHW since the company we used last year is not moving it out fast enough. The new company is called US Ecology and they provided an estimate of \$2,631 which is less than the SWIP grant of \$3,000. They provided a time frame of mid to late January. Gig signed the contract and got state approval for the switch.

Sewer

Gig had applied for \$1M from Bernie Sander's Congressionally Directed Spending, the budget passed the Senate and was signed by President Biden. We should be learning more about the process to accept the money soon.

During the last rainstorm about 30,000 gallons of water came in to the Jacksonville plant. That clearly indicates we have some problems with manholes. We need to find out which manholes are the biggest problems and get them fixed. The roof at the Jacksonville plant is leaking. The sheetrock needs to be stripped out during the equipment switch.

The roof, manholes and sheetrock are not part of the big project, the Bernie money will likely be used to fix these issues.

Discuss Cell Tower income

The board approved a lease buyout providing the town with a lump sum payment of \$269,320.17 which was received June 24, 2022. Ms. Aekus asked the board how they want to use or designate those funds.

Mr. Brown remembered that it was discussed that the board would appropriate \$17,000 per year (equivalent to the rental payments) into the General Fund. An article to this effect will need to be written and voted on at Town Meeting.

Budget: second review of 23/24 budget

Transfer Station, good to keep the wages based at 21.5 hours to allow for trainings.

Vehicle repairs and maintenance on the highway budget was bumped up \$10,000. The current plan to refurbish one of the trucks will come out of the equipment fund. A new truck would be \$350,000; to refurbish the truck would be approximately \$65,000.

Policing to remain the same.

Appoint an employee as OSHA representative

Several years ago, the town owned buildings were inspected by OSHA. At that time, they suggested that we have a trained OSHA representative on staff. We do not currently have a representative on staff. Mr. Janovsky suggested that Dennis Pike might be interested in the position. He will need to take some trainings.

Approval of Payables Warrant – December 29, 2022

A motion was made by Craig Hammer to approve Payables Warrant #2326, dated December 29, 2022, seconded by James Weber all in favor.

Approval of Payroll Warrant – December 29, 2022

A motion was made by Robin Kingsley to approve Payroll Warrant #2325, dated December 29, 2022, seconded by James Weber, all in favor.

Review and approve Minutes of December 14, 2022

A motion was made by Greg Brown to accept the Minutes of December 14, 2022, as written, seconded by Robin Kingsley, four in favor, James Weber abstained.

Other business

TOPS we received a check for \$200 from TOPS for use of the Municipal Center for their weekly meetings.

Equalization Study The board received a copy of the 2022 Equalization Study Results showing a Common Level of Appraisal (CLA) of 85.93% and a Coefficient of Dispersion (COD) of 23.71%. A CLA below 85% or over 115% necessitates a reappraisal per state statute. Our CLA is good. A COD over 20% necessitates a reappraisal per state statute. Our COD is bad. Our study results last year already required the reappraisal, it should start in 2023.

Parks Seth Boyd questioned if the board wanted to place an article on the warning for Town Meeting to raise and appropriate a certain amount of funds to enlarge and improve the picnic shelter at Town Hill Common. Yes, the board would like the taxpayers to vote on it.

Executive Session **A motion was made by Greg Brown to enter into Executive Session to discuss employee work assignments/wages, to include Selectboard members only, seconded by Robin Kingsley, all in favor.**

Executive Session was exited at 8:27pm.

A motion was made by Robin Kingsley to keep all salaries as they currently are, seconded by Craig Hammer, all in favor.

Adjourn

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

Scott M. Reed adjourned the meeting at 8:34pm.

Respectfully submitted,

~Gig Zboray