

SELECTBOARD MEETING
July 23, 2015

Present: Alex Weinhagen Brent Meacham
 Dave Adams Nanette Rogers
 Casey Mathieu

Guests: See attached list

The meeting was called to order at 7:10 p.m.

CHANGES TO AGENDA

The following change was made to the agenda: Add Westford Milton Road culvert replacement under Road Foreman and Use of \$3,000 CSWD allocation after Act 148 under Discussion.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Dick Lavallee asked for the status on delivery of the wood that is serving as compensation for the trees cut on his property. Brent advised it's 2/3 processed and will be forthcoming.

MINUTES

Casey Mathieu made a motion to approve the July 9, 2015 minutes as amended, seconded by Dave Adams. Motion passed: 3-0.

ROAD SCHEDULE

Dave Adams made a motion to approve the Road Schedule for July 23, 2015 – August 13, 2015, seconded by Casey Mathieu. Motion passed 3-0.

WESTFORD MILTON ROAD REPAVING PROJECT

There are four culverts crossing the Westford Milton Road that are deficient. They need to be replaced before the paving project is done. Brent had one estimate (\$27,140) for three of the culverts and is expecting an estimate for the remaining culvert, which will be bored. These culverts have not been budgeted for. A discussion ensued whether they had to be done prior to the paving. The culvert that will be bored may be able to wait however the other three cannot. The Board also discussed pushing the project off a year to do the culverts in the current budget and pave in the next fiscal year, which is similar to what the State did when they repaved Route 128. The terms of the grant will be confirmed. Nanette thinks the grant may provide up to 18 months to complete. The Board also discussed possibly not doing one or more of other projects scheduled for this year and use those funds to pay for the culverts.

The Board asked Brent to get more quotes. They would also like to know if ECI can push the project off until the next FY year if the grant allows. This will be discussed at the next meeting.

RENEWAL OF DESIGNATED VILLAGE CENTER

In 2010 the area immediately surrounding the Town Common received Village Center Designation. The designation allows for several benefits, such as tax credits, and grant priority points for property within the center. The designation expires in September. Melissa is requesting permission to submit a renewal application.

Dave Adams made a motion to authorize Melissa Manka to submit a renewal application on behalf of the Town for the Village Center Designation, seconded by Casey Mathieu. Motion passed: 3-0.

FIREARM ORDINANCE ON PUBLIC PROPERTY

Several residents were present for this discussion. Joan Farmer explained that she requested this item to be discussed due to a recent incident occurring in the vicinity of her home. Two weeks ago she and a neighbor who was visiting heard gun shots. When the neighbor went to investigate, she came upon two men who said they were target shooting. The neighbor advised that they couldn't do that and took their license plate number. Joan contacted the State Police. A trooper responded however could not find any evidence of the shooting. If the men had been on Joan's property and evidence had been found, the Trooper could have charged them with trespassing. However if they were on the trail, it was questionable if the Trooper could have done anything given it is a public right of way. He strongly suggested that Joan contact the Selectboard to inquire about adopting a Firearms Ordinance with regard to discharging a gun on public property.

Joan noted a few towns that have ordinances – Essex, Williston and Hinesburg. She does not want to take people's rights to have guns but does want her and her family to feel safe on her property and on the Town trail, which they frequently use.

The Selectboard wants to do more research before deciding whether or not to pursue an ordinance. If an ordinance is pursued, the Board would like to be proactive with the approach by holding meetings prior to adoption to get feedback from citizens. The normal process is to hold a hearing if a petition is filed in response to an ordinance that is already adopted. The Board felt getting input from residents beforehand would help them to craft an ordinance that would encompass different perspectives of the discharging of firearms. The discussion included possible other solutions such as posting safety zone signs in designated areas, however more research needs to be done.

Barb Peck and Joan Farmer volunteered to research existing ordinances and state law pertaining to safety zones and hunting regulations and present the information for discussion at the next meeting.

ACT 148 & TRASH/RECYCLING DATA

The Board received an email from an enforcement officer with CSWD advising that Westford is out of compliance and expects to hear from the Selectboard by 4pm on July 24th what the Town has decided.

The Board decided that 64 gallons per week, per household to be the level of service covered under the Town's contract and paid for by property taxes. The Board agreed Gauthier Trucking would direct bill any resident who exceeds the 64 gallons.

A lengthy discussion ensued with regard to the roads that serve multiple houses where the trash is brought to a central location. There are approximately 70 roads, most of which are private and only have 2-4 homes on them that and bring their trash to a central location. Gauthier Trucking believes that number can be reduced to approximately 63 by travelling on the road, such as Seymour Road, and picking up the trash at the homes. For the roads with a central location, the Selectboard decided on a colored sticker system for those households exceeding the 64 gallons. The stickers would include the house number on them and be sent to the residents. Gauthier would direct bill residents if the amount of trash exceeds the 64

gallons based on the sticker. Residents on these roads may use a container however it must be identified with their house number and they will need to use stickers for bags that do not fit in their container. The Board briefly discussed purchasing containers for these households however the cost was prohibitive and residents may not want to use them or they may get stolen.

The Board decided on charging \$1.50 - \$5.00 per bag for those exceeding the 64 gallons. This number will be negotiated with Gauthier.

The Selectboard decided that a realistic implementation date to be September 2nd. This will allow the Town sufficient time to order and distribute stickers, negotiate the overage fee and educate the residents, particularly those who have a central drop off location.

Alex will contact the enforcement officer at CSWD July 24th to advise of the Board's decisions. Dave will write a piece for the August Newsletter and Front Porch Forum as well as contact Gauthier to advise them of what the Board decided and to negotiate the additional charges.

The Board expressed their frustration with this law and the Ordinance adopted by CSWD. The Town of Westford is the customer. Based on the data collected by Gauthier, on an average the Town is under the per capita stipulated in the Ordinance. On many occasions households are well under the 64 gallons per week and it seems unfair to penalize them for a week when company may be in town or other special events, particularly if the town wide collection for that week is under the per capita.

USE OF \$3,000 CSWD ALLOCATION

The Town received an email from Michelle DaVia explaining that there is \$3,000 available to the Town to use however if a use is not identified the Town will lose the funds. The Selectboard decided to use these funds to purchase the stickers discussed in the Act 148 discussion. Alex will notify Michelle.

ATV TRAVEL ON TOWN ROADS

The Town Office received a complaint with ATVs being driven on Huntley Road. The operators are travelling at excessive speeds. The Sheriff's Office was contacted however they do not want to address the complaint because of permits the Town issued in four permits in 2002, 2003 and 2005 authorizing travel on the town road for these residents to access their properties and/or agricultural purposes.

Vermont state law prohibits ATVs from travelling on town roads unless the Selectboard has opened them for ATV travel. Agricultural purposes are exempt however the operator has to be at least 3 feet away from the travelled portion of the road.

It has been determined that these permits do not comply with the law therefore the Board feels they should be revoked. A letter will be sent to the people issued permits advising that the Board has been notified that unless the Town opens roads to ATV travel it is prohibited. A copy of the law will be provided which covers the agricultural exemption. The Sheriff's Office will be notified with regard to the permits being revoked.

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE & PAYROLL WARRANTS

The Board approved the accounts payable and payroll warrants.

CORRESPONDENCE

The Board received an email from Kim and Laurie Boomhower Kim expressing their concerns with the end of their driveway with another repaving to the Westford Milton Road. Over the years, the paving has caused a gap between the road and the driveway. They have put fill in to avoid the bump up to the road, but it washes out. They are requesting that instead of a blunt edge, the pavement go up the first part of their driveway. Brent has discussed this with the Boomhowers and feels that an apron will easily fix this problem and is already included in the cost estimate from ECI.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 9:12 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Alexander Weinhagen, Chair
Selectboard

Nanette Rogers
Town Administrator

TOWN OF WESTFORD
SELECTBOARD MEETING
GUEST LIST

Date: July 23, 2015

Name (please print)

Address

JOAN FARMER

297 COVEY ROAD

Dick Lavalley

39 Old # Road

Barb Peck

1088 Rte 128

Ann Pigen

344 Old # 11 Rd

JOHN HORAN

GUEST OF JOAN FARMER

May Farmer

297 Covey

Catherine Farmer

297 Covey

Connie J. Demay

191 Old # 11 Rd.