

**SELECTBOARD MEETING**  
**December 22, 2015**

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

Guests:        See List

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m.

**CHANGES TO AGENDA**

The following changes were made to the agenda: Added Executive Session to the beginning of the meeting.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Alex Weinhagen made a motion to enter Executive Session to discuss negotiating real estate transaction, seconded by Dave Adams. Motion passed: 3-0. People in attendance were Alex Weinhagen, Dave Adams and Casey Mathieu. The Board exited Executive Session at 7:17 p.m. No action taken.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

**MINUTES**

Dave Adams made a motion to approve the December 10, 2015 minutes as amended, seconded by Casey Mathieu. Motion passed: 3-0.

Alex advised that the Board received an email from Becky Roy stating she felt it was inappropriate that a name be included in the minutes with regard to comments made by Brent at the December 10<sup>th</sup> meeting and asked that her name be redacted. The Board acknowledged her email however felt the minutes accurately reflected Brent's comments and therefore made no changes.

**JACKSON FARM & FOREST PROJECT**

Steve Knight provided handouts and gave an overview of the project. A group of Westford residents (Coordinating Committee) have been working with Dave and Lynn Gauthier and the Vermont Land Trust (VLT) to explore options to protect the Jackson Farm land and its attributes. The current plan consists of conserving a 133 acre parcel which will consist of a town forest and potentially a community wastewater system and 42 acres of pasture with a perpetual conservation easement to be purchased by a farmer. Excluded from the plan is a 1 acre lot on the west side of Brookside Road, 19 acres on the east side of Brookside Road, and the existing family homestead and 4 acres to be purchased by private sale.

Funding for this conservation project would come primarily from VLT and the Town of Westford. The portion of the funding by the Town would be approximately \$145,000 if VLT approves a \$290,000 grant for the farmland and forest, the pasture land is purchased for \$65,000, and \$50,000 in private donations are received. Currently the project is still in negotiations therefore the Town will not be voting on this at Town Meeting. If an agreement is reached, the vote could take place at the Primary or General Elections in 2016 or by special vote.

Several attendees asked about the wastewater system; what it would look like, infrastructure and maintenance of said system, other options. It was noted that this project is not specifically about the

wastewater system it is about preserving and utilizing the land for years to come. With that said, if a wastewater system is installed, it would look very much like a conventional system for a single family home. The system would be underground and not visible. The infrastructure would require maintenance and monitoring, which would be an expense to the Town. However the cost could be offset by user fees and possibly having pump systems built into the individual systems to pump to the community system. There is the potential for a community wastewater system behind the White Church, however there is only enough capacity to serve the town office, library, church and a couple of homes. The system on the Jackson Farm could serve approximately 70 homes.

Attendees also had questions about the appraisal and funding. The appraisal was done on the agriculture and forest land and is available for review. The appraisal excludes the homestead with 4 acres, as well as the 19 and 1 acre lots. Bob Heiser from VLT advised that the grants would need to go out to competitive bid however feels very comfortable with the amounts stated.

### **FY'15 AUDIT REPORT – AUDITORS REPRESENTATION LETTER & MANAGEMENT'S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS**

Per the discussion at the last meeting, part of the package submitted to the Town from the auditors includes a letter from Management, the Town, as well as potentially a response to issues identified by the auditors. Linda provided minor changes to the letter. The Board needs to finalize the letter. They added the following under Economic Factors: Seymour Road Bridge completion, \$600,000+ project. All expenditures completed in FY'16. Unsure if all FEMA reimbursements will be received in FY'16.

The Board would like the following responses to findings on pages 34-35 in the auditors' report. Financial Statements. The Board agrees with the findings and recommendations and want Linda to respond.

### **FY'17 PROPOSED BUDGET**

The Board reviewed the draft expense and revenue budgets. The draft budget as presented reflects an 11% increase in the tax rate. The Board made several changes to both budgets. The end result reflected a .08% increase in the tax rate. If the Board chooses to use some of the surplus funds from FY'15 the tax rate will be further reduced. The Board asked that Linda confirm how much surplus there is so they can decide how much, if any to be used.

### **CAPITAL BUDGET**

Alex reviewed the Capital Budget. A column for anticipated costs to replace items was added. A column to reflect how much money is in a reserve fund will be added. The new format is not compatible to the Town Report therefore a statement will be included to refer people to the Town's website or town office. Adoption of a Capital Budget requires a public hearing. The hearing will be scheduled for January or February.

### **PREPARATION FOR JANUARY 6<sup>TH</sup> FY'17 BUDGET PRESENTATION**

Alex will draft a presentation and circulate for review.

### **ROAD SCHEDULE**

Dave Adams made a motion to approve the Road Schedule for December 22, 2015 through January 14, 2016, seconded by Casey Mathieu. Motion passed: 3-0.

### **ROGERS ROAD PERMIT (CLASS IV SECTION)**

Alex Weinhagen made a motion to approve the permit for Glenn Rogers as drafted, seconded by Dave Adams. Motion passed: 3-0.

**BORNSTEIN TRAIL PERMIT REQUEST**

Alex amended the draft permit as presented. He will forward a revised copy to Nanette for processing.

**ACCOUNTS PAYABLE & PAYROLL WARRANTS**

The Board approved the accounts payable and payroll warrants.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

Casey Mathieu received a phone call from Dick Lavallee stating that he did bring his concern about the incident to the bus company. It was pointed out that the Board received an email from the chair of the School Board with an attachment, which was a letter from CCR Transport with regard to the incident.

David Burke finished the plan for the library parking lot. This will be discussed at a meeting in January.

An email with regard to the Rutland Resolution, a resolution to increase the input of Vermont municipalities with regard to renewable energy projects going before the Public Service Board, was received by email. The Board is not interested in signing the petition.

**ADJOURN**

The meeting adjourned at 10:08 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Alexander Weinhagen, Chair  
Selectboard

Nanette Rogers  
Town Administrator

TOWN OF WESTFORD  
 SELECTBOARD MEETING  
 GUEST LIST

Date: December 22, 2015

Name (please print)

Address

Richard F. Hamilton, P.E.	P.O. Box 9, Essex Junction, VT. 05452
Lynn Gauthier	180 Huntley Rd Westford VT
David Gauthier	160 Huntley Rd Westford VT
Bob Heiser, VLT	P.O. Box 850, Richmond, VT 05477
Barb Peck	1088 Rte 128 Westford VT 05494
Stiene Knight	23 North Rd, Westford VT 05494
Marcus Pante	201 Brookside Rd, Westford VT
Tatiana Friesen	51 Brookside Rd Westford VT
PAT HALLER	62 Brookside Rd. Westford
Louise Jensen	274 Cambridge Rd
SEVE JENSEN	254 CAMBRIDGE RD. WESTFORD, VT
DAVE TILTZ	1542 OLD STATE RD. WESTFORD VT
Joe Fay	1725 Rte 128
GREG BAKER	45 Muddy Dr Run WESTFORD
Ton O'Leary	1738 RTE 128 WESTFORD
JOHN DOANE	5 MANLEY RD WESTFORD
Wendy Doan &	5 Manley Rd Westford
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Sharon Von Bronk	380 Cambridge Rd Westford
Don Poullet	24 White Ct Westford
Pat Blechman	34 Maple Tree Lane Westford