

SELECTBOARD MEETING
September 8, 2016

Present: Dave Adams Brent Meacham
 Casey Mathieu Nanette Rogers
 Dave Tilton

Guests: See List

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

SITE VISIT AT SPILLER LOT (26 COMMON ROAD)

Members of the Selectboard, Heather Armata and Bernard Fleury were present for a site visit at the Spiller lot.

CHANGES TO AGENDA

The following changes were made to the agenda: added fire alarm system at Town Office, school reimbursement of town provided services for FY'18 budget and update on the Fire Department and town garage fire security alarm system to the discussion section, and request to bury utility line under Seymour Road to the Road Foreman section.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

MINUTES

Dave Tilton made a motion to approve the August 18, 2016 minutes as amended, seconded by Casey Mathieu. Motion passed: 3-0.

SITE VISIT AT SPILLER LOT (26 COMMON ROAD)

The purpose of the site visit was to get an idea of where the boundary line is for the two lots and to assess the condition of the house. The building is not salvageable. As best can be determined, the quarter acre lot is located on the hill along Brookside Road. The lot is on top of bedrock and would not be useful if sold as a separate lot. It is also not ideal for a recreation easement. The Board briefly discussed the possibility of doing a boundary line adjustment to split the lots differently.

Dave Adams advised that Bernie Fleury, an abutter, was at the site visit and expressed interest in purchasing the lot. The Board pointed out that the recreation easement could be part of the negotiations if the purchase moves forward.

Heather Armata provided comparables for the property. Due to the condition of the house, foreclosures were used. Based on findings in 2012, the septic appears to be fine. With that said, Heather does not feel the property can support two houses due to existing septic and water supply. She recommends listing the property around \$115,000 but feels it may sell closer to \$100,000 due to the need to abate the asbestos. She feels the property offers many options – residential and commercial - due to its location in the village.

Seth Jensen summarized an email he sent to the Board. He served on the committee that researched and recommended the Town purchase the property from the Historical Society to secure septic alternatives for the town office and library. Since the purchase of the property the Town has identified two options for future septic – behind the White Church and on the Jackson Farm. He feels the Town should consider keeping the Spiller lot for an alternative drinking water source for the town office and library. The water at these locations is not good and he feels it's just a matter of

time before the State requires a new source. Seth is suggesting that the Selectboard wait to list the property until after November when the voters will decide whether or not to purchase and conserve the Jackson Farm.

Dave A. stated that the Town has found a solution for a replacement septic system for the town office and library and is not convinced that the water supply is enough to hold onto the property. He feels the Town should sell the property and put it back on the Grand List. Casey agreed adding that there are other potential areas to drill for a well, such as the town common.

Dave A. will approach Mr. Fleury to give him the opportunity to purchase the property before listing it. Mr. Fleury will have until the end of September to decide and enter into a purchase and sales agreement. If the Spiller lot is put on the market, it will be listed as is and as a building package. Pat Haller suggested that Habitat for Humanity be approached to see if they are interested in the property.

UPDATE ON REAL ESTATE LISTING OF WESTFORD/MILTON ROAD PROPERTY OWNED BY TOWN AND SCHOOL

Heather is suggesting that the list price for the Westford Milton Road property be reduced. Most of the land that has sold have been lots that are ready to go (e.g. septic, well, etc.). The property can be subdivided into two lots, with one of the lots being suitable for commercial uses. She feels the list price should be brought down to \$99,900. Heather feels that clearing some trails would be beneficial for potential buyers to walk the property, especially during the winter months. It was recommended that the Town approach the School Board to discuss Quit Claiming the school's ownership of the property prior to July 1, 2017 when the Union District becomes effective.

The Board approved reducing the listing price to \$99,900. Heather will contact the School Board for their approval.

UPDATE ON TRANSFER OF SCHOOL PARCELS TO TOWN

The School Board is meeting this week to approve the warning to transfer parcel #2 (15 acres) and parcel #3 (50 acres) to the Town. Parcel #1 (14 acres with school building) will remain in the school district, as well as use agreements and easement if approved by the voters. The vote will take place October 11th and will be a floor vote.

HEALTH OFFICER APPOINTMENT

The Selectboard received applications from two candidates for Town Health Officer – Dennis Angiono and Marcus Pante. Dennis is retired and currently serves as Fire Warden, Justice of the Peace and a member of the Board of Civil Authority, and previously served as a member of the Zoning Board of Adjustment. Marcus Pante served on a committee approximately 6 years ago and is currently employed as an environmental health and safety specialist.

The Board feels both applicants are good candidates. Since Dennis is already serving the community, the Board felt it would be good to appoint someone who is not currently serving (i.e. spread the "wealth"). They also felt that Marcus' skillset will be helpful when responding to health issues.

Dave Tilton made a motion to appoint Marcus Pante as Town Health Officer, seconded by Casey Mathieu. Motion passed: 3-0.

JACKSON FARM & FOREST PROJECT

The Selectboard received a spreadsheet estimating the tax implication if the Jackson Farm & Forest Project is approved. The numbers were based on the current assessment of the property and how the property would be assessed using the current year tax rates. The Listers provided an estimate of the assessments for the Haller acreage, Gauthier and the Pouliot lots as proposed. The Vermont Tax Department provided estimated revenue reimbursement for the land enrolled in Current Use. The net difference as presented is an additional \$170 in revenue.

Pat Haller stated that basically the changes are a wash. The 130-acre forest will not be taxable however the revenue on the Haller, Gauthier and Pouliot lots offset the loss.

The Committee has created a 5' by 4' sign for the project and are requesting permission to place it in the right of way across from the school entrance.

Dave Tilton made a motion to approve placement of the sign for the Jackson Farm & Forest Project in the Town's right of way, seconded by Casey Mathieu. Motion passed: 3-0.

UPDATE ON LIBRARY SEPTIC TANK

Request for proposals have been uploaded to the town's website and published on Works in Progress. The requests were also mailed directly to Westford contractors as well as one contractor in Fairfax. The quotes are due September 15th and will be reviewed at the September 22nd Selectboard meeting.

TOWN OFFICE FIRE ALARM SYSTEM

Nanette would like to look into a new company for the fire alarm system at the town office. The system was installed in 2009. The system was inspected annually, the last time being March of 2013. In February 2016, it was discovered that the system had not been inspected in three years. Northeastern Security (NES) advised that for reasons unknown, the system was removed from the automated inspection program. The system has still not been inspected. When recently confronted about this, NES said they could schedule an inspection however it was going to cost over \$300. This service had not been charged for in the past nor did the Town receive notification that there was a change. Due to the poor customer service, Nanette would like to seek a new company. The Board gave their approval.

TOWN GARAGE/FIRE DEPT SECURITY & FIRE ALARM SYSTEM

Casey provided an update on the security and fire alarm system for the town garage and fire department. A second panel has been added to the quote, bringing the total to \$1,544. Annual monitoring of the system will cost \$240/year.

Casey, Nanette and John Quinn will work out how much the Town will pay for and how much the fire department will pay for. Nanette advised that when the previous system was installed, the cost was based on how much of the building each entity occupied. There will need to be some adjustments made because of the low temp alarm servicing the fire department and the security cameras servicing the town garage.

SCHOOL REIMBURSEMENT OF TOWN PROVIDED SERVICES FOR FY'18 BUDGET

Nanette advised that she contacted Martha Heath with questions pertaining to how the new school district will handle services provided by the Town, such as plowing, sanding and trash and recycling. Currently the Westford School District reimburses the Town for half the expenses of the emergency generator, their portion of the trash and recycling services (amount obtained from vendor), plowing and sanding of the school driveway and parking lot and elections when applicable. Martha is not

sure how these services will be handled under the new school district and asked for the Town to submit quotes. Nanette suggested the Selectboard not include any anticipated revenue in the FY'18 budget from the new school district with the exception of the generator in the event the Town's quotes are not selected. She mentioned the Board may want to consider not providing these services to the new school district given the different dynamics of the new district with the old because there are challenges to providing the necessary documentation to the school district for auditing purposes. The trash and recycling services was provided as an example.

CSWD LETTER SEEKING COMMUNITIES TO HOST DROP OFF CENTERS

Chittenden Solid Waste District sent a letter asking towns if they are interested in hosting a Drop Off Center. After reviewing the requirements, it was determined that Westford cannot meet them and will decline the offer.

UPDATE ON TREASURER NOMINATION COMMITTEE

The two Justices of the Peace and the Selectboard member appointed to the Nomination Committee met to select the two members at large to serve on the Nomination Committee. They selected Kaye Alexander and Alice Astarita. The Committee is in the process of scheduling a meeting to begin the search for candidates.

ROAD SCHEDULE

Casey Mathieu made a motion to approve the September 8, 2016 through September 21, 2016 Road Schedule, seconded by Dave Tilton. Motion passed: 3-0.

LOADER ACCIDENT

Brent provided a summary of the accident that occurred on August 23, 2016. The operator was backing up to allow cars to pass. The loader began to slowly tip on its side to the shoulder being soft and landed on a pile of rocks. The driver is fine. The cab received damage. Based on quotes it will cost approximately \$40,000 to repair. The Town has filed a claim with its insurance carrier. The out of pocket cost to the Town will be \$1,000 for the insurance deductible. The loader will be out of commission for three to four weeks while it is being repaired. Dave Tilton asked if there is training available. Brent advised there is however, since the State took over, the trainings are not held as frequently.

PUBLIC RECORDS REQUEST

Dick Lavalley submitted a public records request with regard to how much overtime the road crew worked for the week ending August 19th through August 29th. The time sheets for the period requested were sent to Mr. Lavalley on August 31st. Brent worked a total of 6.5 hours of overtime during this time frame. It was noted that some of the hours were for Selectboard and Road Committee meetings. The Board does not feel the overtime hours are excessive.

CORRESPONDENCE RELATED TO ROAD FOREMAN

Dave A. shared comments received several comments via Front Porch Forum, email and one phone call related to the Road Foreman. Dave summarized the comments, which all expressed praise and support for Brent. One of the posts asked why the road was being graded on a weekend. Brent explained that due to the large reconstruction project on Allen Irish Road, the road crew had not been able to perform routine maintenance to the roads. Brent feels it is his responsibility to keep the roads up. Since the roads were deteriorating, Brent went out on a weekend to perform some maintenance on his own time.

Dave A. read verbatim an email from Dick Lavalley to the Selectboard dated August 24, 2016. The email was submitted after the loader accident and criticizes Brent's actions leading up to the

accident and after, as well as his overall performance. Dave A. then read verbatim an email from Bob White dated September 6, 2016 expressing support of Brent and his overall performance. Mr. White was at the scene the day of the accident and recounted his observations. He feels Brent handled the situation well. After hearing both emails several guests attending the meeting expressed their support for Brent saying how much they appreciate all of his and the Road Crew's efforts.

ACCESS PERMIT OLD STAGE ROAD

The Board approved an access permit submitted by Janis Campbell to serve a single family dwelling on Old Stage Road.

REQUEST TO BURY UTILITY LINE UNDER SEYMOUR ROAD

Matt Rocheleau submitted a request to bury a utility line under Seymour Road. Additional power is needed for his sugaring operation. The utility line will go next to the one that was buried a few years ago. The Board approved the request.

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE & PAYROLL WARRANTS

The Board approved the accounts payable and payroll warrants.

CORRESPONDENCE

There was no additional correspondence to be reviewed.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

David E. Adams, Chair
Selectboard

Nanette Rogers
Town Administrator

TOWN OF WESTFORD
SELECTBOARD MEETING
GUEST LIST

Date: September 8, 2016

Name (please print)

Address

Juliette Horton

42 BROOKSIDE RD

Edward Horton

42 Brookside Rd.

D Gauthier

1480 Huntley Rd

PAT HALLER

62 Brookside Road

Eva Paquin

226 Huntley Rd

Heather Amadeo

97 Deer Run Lane

Marcus Pante

201 Brookside Rd. 6