

SELECTBOARD MEETING
November 9, 2017

Present: Dave Tilton
Allison Hope
Greg Barrows

John Roberts
Nanette Rogers

Guests: See attached list

The meeting was called to order at 7:09 p.m.

CHANGES TO AGENDA

The following changes were made to the agenda: the October 26, 2017 minutes were removed, four action items were added regarding the Jackson Forest acquisition.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

PLEASANT VIEW CEMTERY FY'19 BUDGET REQUEST

Lynn Gauthier, Ron Perry and Glenn Rogers were present. The Pleasant View Cemetery Association is requesting \$1,500, which is level funded. The funds will be used for general expenses.

CEMETERY COMMISSION FY'19 BUDGET REQUEST

Lynn Gauthier and Glenn Rogers were present. The Westford Cemetery Commission is requesting \$9,000, which is a \$500 increase. The funds will be used for general expenses and the removal of some trees.

Lynn and Glenn discussed the damage done to the Brookside Cemetery from a recent wind storm. The estimated cost to remove the trees is approximately \$6,600. These trees must be removed. Once removed, the Commissioners will be able to determine how much damage was done to gravestones. In addition to the removal of these trees, there are additional trees in the Brookside Cemetery and some in the Plains Road Cemetery that need to come down before they cause damage. If the Commission does all the tree removal, it will drain their account. They are looking into insurance and FEMA to see if any funds are available. The Board discussed increasing the budget request by the \$6,600 to make the Commission whole. This will be discussed in more detail during the budget workshops.

As chair of the Cemetery Commission, Lynn requested a \$350 stipend, which is level funded from the current fiscal year.

LIBRARY FY'19 BUDGET REQUEST

Peggy Rodgers was present. The Library is requesting \$72,068, which is a 2% increase from the current year. Some items were reduced such as building maintenance and electricity. Increases include benefits, materials, programs and supplies.

WESTFORD FIRE DEPT FY'19 BUDGET REQUEST

Steve Willard and John Quinn were present. The Fire Dept. is requesting a level funded budget of \$50,100.

HIGHWAY DEPT FY'19 BUDGET REQUEST

The Selectboard reviewed the budget being proposed by the Road Foreman. John worked with Greg and Nanette to come up with the figures however the budget still needs some tweaking before it is final. Based on the draft budget presented at this meeting, the highway budget will increase by approximately 6%. John plans to do more ditching projects to come into compliance with the Clean Water Act and replace windows in the garage.

POSTING TOWN PROPERTY ABUTTING SCHOOL PROPERTY PROHIBITING HUNTING AND TRAPPING

This item was tabled until the next meeting.

EMPLOYEE HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR 2018

Nanette provided comparisons of the BCBS policies for 2017 and 2018. The coverage was close with some changes to deductibles. The Selectboard decided to offer eligible employees a yearly benefit of \$9,795. This amount will pay the annual premium for the Platinum plan and contribute \$320 to an HRA or pay the annual premium for the Silver high deductible plan and contribute \$2,595 to an HSA.

EMPLOYEE COMPENSATION DURING POWER OUTAGE

Due to a recent power outage caused by a storm, the Town Office was without power for four days. The Town Office was without heat, water and electricity during this time frame. The Personnel Policy is silent on how the Town compensates employees during circumstances such as these that are out of the employee's control. The Board decided to compensate the employees and update the Personnel Policy to cover these types of circumstances.

Allison Hope made a motion to compensate employees what they would have been paid for their normal work week as if the employee had worked, minus any prescheduled vacation time, seconded by Dave Tilton. Motion passed: 2-0.

JACKSON FOREST ACQUISITION

The closing for the acquisition of the Jackson Forest is scheduled for December 15th. In preparation of the closing, the Selectboard needs to approve and authorize execution of documents in connection with the closing.

Dave Tilton made a motion to authorize Allison Hope to attend the closing on the Jackson Forest acquisition and related conveyances and to sign related documents on the Town's behalf, seconded by Allison Hope. Motion passed: 2-0.

Allison Hope made a motion to accept the Warranty Deed conveying the 130-acre, more or less, Maple Shade (a/k/a Jackson) Town Forest property with related recreation path, wastewater and access easements from David and Lynn Gauthier and to authorize Allison Hope to sign the settlement statement, tax returns and any other related closing documents seconded by Dave Tilton. Motion passed: 2-0.

Allison Hope made a motion to convey the development rights, a perpetual conservation easement and restrictions, and a public access easement in and to the 130-acre, more or less, Maple Shade (a/k/a Jackson) Town Forest property to the Vermont Land Trust and Vermont Housing and Conservation Board and to authorize Allison Hope to sign the Grant of Development Rights, Conservation Restrictions and Public Access Easement, settlement

statement, tax returns and any other related closing documents, seconded by Dave Tilton.
Motion passed: 2-0.

Dave Tilton made a motion to accept two Easement Deeds from Patrick and Amber Haller for a recreational pathway easement and a community wastewater disposal system easement over the Hallers' property easterly of Brookside Road and to authorize Allison Hope to sign the settlement statement, tax returns and any other related closing documents, seconded by Allison Hope. Motion passed: 2-0.

ROAD SCHEDULE

Allison Hope made a motion to approve the November 10, 2017 through December 14, 2017 Road Schedule, seconded by Dave Tilton. Motion passed: 2-0.

The Road Crew has been busy cleaning up after the recent storm. Cowie Road suffered a lot of damage when a beaver dam broke.

STATUS OF CLOSING GRANTS FOR DITCHING PROJECTS

No progress has been made because the Road Crew has been busy cleaning up from the storm.

CULVERT ON OLD STAGE ROAD

John Roberts and Dave Tilton met with a wetland specialist on October 27th to evaluate the area of the culvert Karen Munson has requested the Town to lower. The specialist recommended that the culvert not be adjusted, that no dredging occur within the channel, and to contact the State's Rivers Program to determine if any permits are needed to "clean out" the brook. The Town will send a letter to Karen relaying this information.

ACCESS PERMITS

The Board approved an access permit submitted by the Town of Westford for a pedestrian path access on Brookside Road conditional upon obtaining ownership of the property currently owned by David and Lynn Gauthier.

The Board approved an access permit submitted by Donald and Dale Pouliot for an agricultural access on Brookside Road conditional upon obtaining ownership of the property currently owned by David and Lynn Gauthier.

FY'18 HIGHWAY BUDGET

Greg provided a brief over view of the current highway budget. With the exception of routine expenses such as salaries and utilities, not many items had changed. Moving forward, the budget will be reviewed monthly unless something unexpected comes up.

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE & PAYROLL WARRANTS

The Board approved the accounts payable and payroll warrants.

AUTHORIZATION TO APPROVE ACCOUNTS PAYABLE & PAYROLL WARRANTS

The next regular Selectboard Meeting is not until December 14th. There will be bills that need to be paid prior to that date. Nanette requested that a Selectboard member be authorized to review and approve warrants for expenses to be paid at the end of the month.

Dave Tilton made a motion to authorize Allison Hope to review and approve warrants at the end of the month, seconded by Allison Hope. Motion passed: 2-0.

Greg requested permission from the Selectboard to obtain a credit card for the Road Foreman. It was noted that the People's United Bank has a cap on the total amount of credit the Town can have, therefore limits on existing cards may need to be adjusted in order to have a card issued for the Highway Department.

Allison Hope made a motion to authorize Greg to contact People's United Bank to obtain a credit card for the Road Foreman, seconded by Dave Tilton. Motion passed: 2-0.

CORRESPONDENCE

A resident suggested that the Town open the emergency shelter at the school when there is an event, such as the recent storm that caused a power outage for several days. The Town was in the process of opening the shelter at the school however a shelter in Milton offered meals and other amenities that Westford could not, therefore the Town chose to refer people to the Milton Shelter. Allison will respond.

A resident requested information regarding the severance package the prior Road Foreman received, as well as the salary for the new Road Foreman. With regard to the severance, the Board needs to ascertain if the information is considered a public record. A response will be sent to the resident with the salary of the new Road Foreman and information regarding the severance package if it is public record.

A property owner contacted Allison to express concern regarding the Pelkey appeal. Allison needs to speak with Melissa and/or Kate to get more information.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 8:41 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dave Tilton, Vice Chair
Selectboard

Nanette Rogers
Town Administrator

TOWN OF WESTFORD
SELECTBOARD MEETING
GUEST LIST

Date: November 9, 2017

Name (please print)

Address

Dave Lavelle

138 Old #11 Rd

Lynn Gauthier

180 Huntley Rd Westford VT

Alan Rogers

17 FARR VIEW ESSEX JCT VT

RONALD PERRY

1292 VT. RTE 128, WESTFORD

Steve Willard

191 Old Number 11 Rd

John Quinn

401 Old #11 Rd

Peggy Rodgers

Huntley Rd Westford