

Grant Thomas made a motion to approve the October 17, 2018 minutes as drafted, seconded by Julia Andrews. Motion passed: 3-0.

ESSEX RESCUE FY'20 BUDGET REQUEST

Essex Rescue is proposing a level funded appropriation of \$2,610. The amount is based on a per capita rate of \$3.87.

FAIRFAX RESCUE FY'20 BUDGET REQUEST

Tim Wasilewski and Brett Philips were present. Fairfax Rescue is requesting an appropriation of \$11,713, which is a 3% increase. The purchase of new equipment and a decline in reimbursement rates are contributing factors.

Tim and Brett advised that the Board of Fairfax Rescue has been meeting weekly to work on implementing some of the recommendations made based on a recent internal review. There is no plan for a formal audit. The Selectboard pointed out that Westford found out about the problems from the Town of Fairfax. Moving forward, the Selectboard asked that Fairfax Rescue notify all three towns - Westford, Fairfax and Fletcher - when they have information.

PLANNING COMMISSION FY'20 BUDGET REQUEST

Gordon Gebauer was present. The Planning Commission is requesting \$12,050, which is level funded from FY'19. The Commission is recommending the Town continue to budget funds for Special Projects. Although voters approved a reserve fund for funds not expensed during a fiscal year for special projects, at the moment there are more projects than there are funds.

DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD FY'20 BUDGET REQUEST

The Development Review Board is requesting \$10,100 which is a \$1,750 increase. The increase is due to reestablishing the funding level for legal and professional fees and to restore their education budget.

MAPLE SHADE TOWN FOREST – PROPOSAL FOR NO FIREARM HUNTING

The Westford Town Lands Long Term Management Plan Committee recommended that the Westford Selectboard prohibit firearm hunting in the Maple Shade Town Forest for the 2018 season. One of the reasons behind the request is that the access for the Forest is located on school property, therefore firearm hunters would not be able to park at the school. The Committee wants time to address the access issue for hunters. At the October 16th meeting, it was pointed out that the school has a weapons policy, which would include bows. The Committee has not submitted a revised request to include bows.

Julia is inclined to side with the committee since they have been working with the public and this is their recommendation. What she heard at the meeting was that hunters are fearful that something is going to be taken away. However, she pointed out that the land has been posted until now therefore she feels nothing is being taken away. Julia pointed out that hunting was a suggested use of the land at the beginning of the process, has been a suggested use in the middle of the process and it is imperative that it is a use at the end of the process. The Committee is merely asking for a stop gap measure for this season.

Grant pointed out that the nuances of this plan are very involved. There are groups and communities that have already been through this therefore there is some good information that

can be used. He views this is a pause for the 2018 season so the Committee can work on the plan. He wants to see this done right.

Greg Barrows asked if the Town limits hunting on other parcels it owns. The answer was no and it was noted that there are two parcels owned by the Town located on the Westford Milton Road and hunting is allowed on those parcels. Grant stated that hunting is allowed in the Milton Town Forest year-round. However, that forest is not near a school.

Nick Rogers feels that school safety is the issue for most people. He pointed out that the forest is 250 -300 yds away from the road. The tree line can't be seen from the road because of the hill. The property in between the Forest and road is not posted therefore that landowner could allow hunting. Until the last couple of years, the land was not posted and there wasn't an issue with hunting on that land for decades. Nick sympathizes with the abutters who could walk from their property to the Forest but will not be able to hunt this year.

Grant stated that the Committee will be seeking input from the adjoining land owners. He does not know if any of them are hunters. Those that are would have had to get permission from the previous owner when the land was posted. He stated that the Town does not have the same luxury as a private property owner in vetting hunters.

Nick stated that he hasn't seen any supporting evidence of why firearm hunting shouldn't be allowed this season. He feels that people are worried about getting shot when walking through the woods and that fear mongering tactics are being used. Julia disagreed pointing out that at the meeting on the 16th she saw a very respectful crowd that communicated back and forth. Allison agreed that safety is an issue, explaining that the Committee is asking for time to understand how people want to use the Forest and time to set up safety protocols before moving forward. In fact, one Committee member stated that he wished they could have figured things out before hunting season; he wants the Town to be comfortable with people hunting on the land. Nick expressed concerned with the direction things are going because it can be hard to turn it back around.

Wendy Doane feels there is a good process in place and that the Committee is trying to make the Forest safe. What she's hearing is that hunting will be allowed but they are trying to make it work for everyone.

Bob Bancroft spoke to the issue of the fear mongering comment. He was quite upset with the chair of the Committee's post on Front Porch Forum where she brought up the shooting at the Essex school, and, now that Westford is part of Essex, we have to follow their rules. He felt this was Inappropriate and can see where fear mongering could be interpreted. Although Allison understands where Bob is coming from, she pointed out that people are entitled to their opinions, noting that it can be hard for people serving on a committee to take off one hat and put on another.

Nanette supports hunting in the Forest. She hopes that the Committee and Selectboard are very thoughtful when it comes to different types of hunters. She would like to see all hunters be able to use the land without too many restrictions, such as limiting hunting to deer season. Nanette pointed out that the land across the road surrounding the school has restrictions. She appreciates that the Committee and Selectboard want to put safety measures in place but encouraged them to not be too restrictive.

Julia stated for the record that she supports hunting in the Forest. Grant does too but wants it to be safe and see it go on for years and years which is why he wants to get it right the first time.

Dave Lavalley referred to Tom Schmidt's comment at the meeting on the 16th concerning access. Tom stated that he would have changed his mind that night if an access could have been identified. Dave pointed out that there is a whole road that the Forest can be accessed from. Allison stated that Tom is only one member on the Committee. Grant added the Committee will take the comments from the 16th and the information that will be gathered on Nov 9 to work on the plan. The goal is to make it safe and right and inclusive. He feels people do not want to limit things except from a safety stand point.

Julia Andrews made a motion to restrict firearm hunting on the Maple Shade Town Forest until such time the Town has an approved land management plan for that parcel, seconded by Grant Thomas. Motion passed: 3-0.

VCRD COMMUNITY VISIT PROGRAM

Wendy Doane was present to support the program on behalf of the Planning Commission. The VCRD has advised that they have some high priority community projects for 2019. With that said, they would still like to do Westford in 2019 but as an abridged version of what was originally discussed. A town group, most likely the Planning Commission, would do all the reach out pieces instead of VCRD but VCRD would still run the meeting. The abridged version will not affect the Town having access to outside agencies and grants.

VCRD's focus will be on the town common and assets around the common. This will include the Brick Meeting House and White Church which are under-utilized.

Julia Andrews made a motion to invite the VCRD to do an abridged Community Visit Program with Westford, seconded by Grant Thomas. Motion passed: 3-0.

HEALTH INSURANCE OPTIONS

The Board received information on health insurance options for employees. Currently, the Town pays 100% of the premium for a single person; coverage is not offered to family members. The Town also contributes to a Health Reimbursement Account or Health Savings Account depending on which plan an employee chooses. The Board will review the information and make a decision at their next meeting.

STONE ENVIRONMENTAL CONTRACT FOR SERVICES

The Planning Commission is requesting approval of a contract between the Town and Stone Environmental for preliminary aquatic permitting criteria compliance research. This work is necessary for the various Agency of Natural Resources programs. The programs will encourage and incentivize development in the town center area and further the Town's goal of one day providing wastewater solutions/opportunities in the center. The cost the work will be covered by the Planning Commission's special projects account.

Julia Andrews made a motion to approve the Stone Environmental Contract for services, seconded by Grant Thomas. Motion passed: 3-0.

REQUEST TO USE COVERED BRIDGE

A request was received seeking approval to use the covered bridge for a wedding ceremony. Following suit with prior requests of this nature, the Board denied the request.

INTERIM ZONING REGULATIONS

The Planning Commission is requesting the Selectboard to hold a public hearing for the Interim Zoning Regulations for the Common District. The Selectboard scheduled the public hearing for December 6th.

ENGAGEMENT LETTER FOR AUDIT SERVICES

Julia Andrews made a motion to accept the engagement letter from Fothergill, Segale and Valley for audit services for FY'18 at a cost of \$9,500, seconded by Grant Thomas. Motion passed: 3-0.

CORRESPONDENCE

Nanette received a phone call from Calef at Rovers North. The dumpsters they have are not sufficient for the amount of trash and recycling generated. Calef contacted Myers but was referred to the Town. The Selectboard needs to know what Calef recommends to move forward with the request.

A request was submitted by a resident to place "Your Vote is Your Voice" signs on the common in advance of the General Election. The Board denied the request citing that signs on the common should be limited to a town event and/or organization, such as the Rec Dept. and library. It was suggested that the person contact the Brick Meeting House to see if they would allow the signs.

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE & PAYROLL WARRANTS

The Board approved the accounts payable and payroll warrants.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 9:06 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Allison Hope, Chair
Selectboard

Nanette Rogers
Town Administrator

TOWN OF WESTFORD HIGHWAY DEPT.
ROAD SCHEDULE
Oct. 12, 2018 – Oct. 25, 2018

Work to be done

- Grade Old Stage Rd., Huntley Rd., The rest of Osgood Hill Rd., Brookside Rd.
- Finish getting Plowing and Sanding equipment ready.
- Putting winter tires on the trucks.
- Continue hauling in winter sand.
- Haul in Gravel for the roads.
- Continue to check beaver dams on Old Stage Rd., Old #11 Rd., Woods Hollow Rd.
- Install steel plate on Rogers Rd.
- Do some minor work on plow turn around areas.

Work completed

- Graded 1 section of Osgood Hill, Seymore Rd., sections of Cowie Rd., Section of # 11 Rd., Rollin Irish Rd., Most of Woods Hollow Rd., Section of Cambridge Rd.,
- Filled potholes on Huntley Rd.
- Removed beaver dams from culverts on Old Stage Rd., Old #11 Rd., Woods Hollow Rd.
- Hauled in winter sand.
- Cleaned Seymore Rd. bridge.
- Repairs to 14' Western star.

Approved at the 10/25/18 Selectboard Meeting.

TOWN OF WESTFORD
SELECTBOARD MEETING
GUEST LIST

Date: October 25, 2018

Name (please print)

Address

Dave Lavallee

#11 Rd

Dick Lavallee

#11 Rd

Tim Wasilewski

Fairfax Rescue

Brett Phillips

Fairfax Rescue

Bob Bancroft

Brookside Rd.

GORDON GEBAUER

OLD #11 RD.

Klenny Doune

5 Manley Rd.