

**SPECIAL SELECTBOARD MEETING
January 17, 2019**

Present: Allison Hope
 Julia Andrews
 Grant Thomas
 John Roberts
 Nanette Rogers
 Greg Barrows

Guests: See attached list

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

CHANGES TO AGENDA

The following changes were made to the agenda: Removed the Draft Taxpayer Waste Reimbursement Policy and Draft Fire Ordinance from the Discussion section and added an Executive Session for personnel to the end of the meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Andre Roy asked that draft policies be placed on the Town website so residents can review them before they are adopted.

ROAD SCHEDULE

John reviewed the Road Schedule (see attached) with the Board.

Julia Andrews made a motion to approve the December 12, 2018 through January 17, 2019 Road Schedule, seconded Grant Thomas. Motion passed: 3-0.

The Board expressed their gratitude to John and Sean for keeping the highway department going while being short staffed

UPDATE ON HIRING A ROAD CREW MEMBER

John met informally with a recent applicant. The applicant has experience working for municipalities. He would like to have a formal interview arranged.

CERTIFICATE OF HIGHWAY MILEAGE

This was tabled to the next meeting.

EXCESS WEIGHT PERMIT

The Chair signed an excess weight permit for Newport Sand & Gravel and Carl Simino.

ACCESS PERMIT

The Chair signed an access permit application submitted by Karen Munson. The access will serve a single family dwelling on a lot being created by subdividing the parcel currently owned by Karen on Old Stage Road.

MINUTES

Grant Thomas made a motion to approve the December 13, 2018 minutes as written, seconded by Julia Andrews. Motion passed: 3-0.

TRASH/RECYCLING COLLECTION ISSUES

Jeff Myers was present from Myers Container Services to discuss collection issues, particularly on the private roads in the Kings Hill Development. During the months of November and December there were several weeks that trash and recycling were not picked up. Grant has had discussions with Myers suggesting that chains or other proper equipment be used during inclement weather.

Jeff advised that the truck they use has a split body, trash on one side, recycling on the other. The weight on each side of the truck becomes uneven as collections progress. Due to the uneven weight distribution, the drivers are cautious, driving in the center of smaller roads to in an attempt to prevent accidents.

Jeff advised that chains are not used on any of the trucks in their fleet. Chains need to be taken on/off, on/off during the course of a day because the need is dependent on the road surface. This will increase the time it takes to complete a route. Jeff and the maintenance managers are trying to find a better option. The last couple of weeks, smaller trucks have accompanied the larger trucks to assist with collection. Also, communication with the person who plows and sands the Kings Hill Development roads was taken up a notch. This appeared to work well because the Town did not receive any calls of non-pickup. It was noted that the Road Foreman is contacted when a driver is having difficulty on a Town road. A road crew member will go to the location to plow and/or sand the area so the truck can proceed.

Jeff advised that he does not want to lose Westford as an account. He is working diligently at trying to find solutions to fulfill Myers' end of the contract.

Grant appreciates Jeff's personal involvement in working through the collection issues. However, he feels the Town should be credited for the lack of service. Julia agreed, noting that Kings Hill represents approximately 10-15% of the stops in town. Jeff agreed that that was reasonable. Grant also pointed out that it is unsustainable for the Road Crew to cater to the Myers' trucks. It takes the Town employee from his route and increases the cost of sanding, plowing, etc. Although the Town fully supports Myers drivers being safe, Grant feels that the vehicles should be retrofitted for the roads in Westford.

Julia stated that it appears that Myers is trying to improve the service they provide to Westford. However, she's observed a significant lag time in responding to the Selectboard and Town staff and therefore encouraged Myers to be more timely with responses.

It was noted that the plowing and/or sanding the roads for school busses takes priority over the Myers trucks.

FY'20 BUDGET WORKSHOP

Allison Hope presented the proposed FY'20 budget. The total budget is \$2,024,198 compared to the current year's budget of \$1,920,105. After factoring in anticipated revenue and using \$35,000 from the Contingency Fund, the amount to be raised by taxes is \$1,709,998. Based on the amount to be raised by taxes and the estimated Grand List, the tax rate will increase by approximately 3.723% or \$50.60 for property valued at \$200,000 or \$101.20 for property valued at \$400,000.

The highway budget is increasing by approximately 6%. It was pointed out that the Highway Department has a \$271,774 deficit which has accumulated over a few years. Delayed receipt

of FEMA and other grant funds, the switch from modified accrual to a cash method of accounting and overspending/unanticipated expenses contributed to the deficit. The FY'20 budget includes \$55,000 toward reducing the deficit. Other major increases include building improvements and funds for the Equipment Reserve Fund. Revenue is increasing by approximately 20%, mainly due to funds being moved from the Equipment Reserve Fund to be used as a down payment for a new truck and excavator.

Dick Lavalley asked about the highway deficit. Treasurer Greg Barrows provided an in-depth explanation. A spreadsheet was made available to the Selectboard and attendees (see attached). The Highway Department ended FY15 with a deficit of \$102,136. FY16 had a surplus of \$29,600 which reduced the deficit to \$72,536. This number was later changed due to a change from a modified accrual to cash accounting method and restated as a deficit of \$285,379. Most of the deficit relates to the Seymour Road bridge project that was funded by FEMA however the funds were not received until 2017 and 2018. The Highway Department had a surplus of \$4,417 in FY17 which reduced the deficit to \$280,962. In FY18, the Highway Department ended with a \$9,188 surplus which further reduced the deficit to \$271,774. Greg added that although the Highway Department is running a deficit the Town is not insolvent.

Based on the increase in the building improvements for the town garage, Becky Roy asked if the improvements that were done under the prior Road Foreman were just cosmetic. It was noted that the contractor doing the work was paid by the hour, not the job which resulted in a larger expense. The roof and siding were done. The windows and insulation are planned for FY20.

Andre Roy asked if the Town will have an audit done on a regular basis. It was noted that the Town has an audit done annually and has since the Charter went into effect.

A discussion ensued regarding FEMA and state grant funds and how the Town handles them. When the Town applies for and is awarded a grant, it is unknown at that point when and how much funds the Town will receive, if any. Therefore, the Town does not include the funds in projected revenue in the event the funds are not received in the year projected. This is to minimize the possibility of, or enlarging an existing deficit.

It was noted that highway funds are restricted and cannot be used for expenses that are not highway related. However, funds from the Administration Fund can be transferred to the Highway Department.

The administrative budget is increasing approximately 5%. Major increases include funds for the Admin. Capital Budget Reserve, building improvements, the pumper truck loan payment and trash and recycling collection services. Revenue is increasing by approximately 7%.

WAIVER OF REC FEES FOR COACHES

Chuck Medick was present to discuss the waiver of fees for coaches who coach their child's team. Allison does not feel the Selectboard needs to approve the waiver. She feels the Committee has the authority to make this decision based on the department's financial status, as well as balancing the need for finding coaches. Chuck explained that the Rec Committee sent this decision to the Selectboard because some of the members of the Rec Committee coach the teams their kids are on and therefore could be considered a conflict of interest. The Selectboard appreciates the transparency the Committee is striving for however, if waiving

fees for coaches encourages people to coach, the Committee has the blessing of the Selectboard.

LOADING/UNLOADING HEAVY EQUIPMENT IN TOWN RIGHT OF WAY

Chris Palmer was present to discuss the need for him to load and unload heavy equipment in the Town right of way. He has applied for a permit from the Development Review Board (DRB). The DRB sent him to the Selectboard because the Selectboard has authority over the right of way. Christ advised that the loading and unloading would only be necessary when he has a gap of time between jobs, which is anticipates may happen a few times per year.

Chris' driveway is at the bottom of a long hill with a curve. The curve limits sight distance. The concern is that motorists coming down the hill will not see the activity in time to stop, particularly during evening hours and/or inclement weather. Based on Chris' statements, the Board is willing to approve the loading and unloading of equipment within the right of way, with conditions such as the time of day, having a flagger and/or signage present, etc. Nanette and Allison will draft the letter.

TOWN MEETING WARNING

Julia Andrews made a motion to approve the Town Meeting Warning as drafted with a budget amount of \$2,024,198, seconded by Grant Thomas. Motion passed: 3-0.

2018 GRAND LIST ERRORS & OMISSIONS

Nanette explained that this is an annual item. This year there is only one error on the list. Due to new formatting for notification and the Listers not receiving an email from the State, an error was made in the assessment for Comcast. The error was not caught until after the tax rate was set. After the error was discovered, the assessment for Comcast was reduced and a new tax bill was issued.

Julia Andrews made a motion to accept the list of errors and omissions submitted by the Listers for the 2018 Grand List, seconded by Grant Thomas. Motion passed: 3-0.

CORRECTIVE DEED

During a title search for the sale of a 14.9 acre lot owned by the Town (known as the Martel lot), an error was discovered in a deed conveying town owned property to the Torres in 2013. To resolve title issues, a Corrective Deed needs to be filed in the Land Records.

Julia Andrews made a motion to approve the Corrective Deed as drafted by the Town attorney and authorize Allison Hope to sign the deed, seconded by Grant Thomas. Motion passed: 3-0.

REQUEST FOR OPT OUT BENEFIT (HEALTH INSURANCE)

An employee has asked the Selectboard to review her hours to determine if she is eligible to receive an opt out benefit for health insurance. The Board tabled this discussion until they are able to gather more information.

HUMANE SOCIETY ANNUAL AGREEMENT

Julia Andrews made a motion to accept the annual agreement with the Humane Society, seconded by Grant Thomas. Motion passed: 3-0.

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE & PAYROLL WARRANTS

The Board approved the accounts payable and payroll warrants.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Allison Hope made a motion to enter Executive Session at 9:38 p.m. to discuss a personnel matter, seconded by Grant Thomas. Motion passed: 3-0. People in attendance were Allison Hope, Julia Andrews, Grant Thomas, John Roberts and Nanette Rogers (John and Nanette attended the beginning of the session). The Board exited Executive Session at 10:05 p.m. No action taken.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 10:05 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Allison Hope, Chair
Selectboard

Nanette Rogers
Town Administrator

TOWN OF WESTFORD HIGHWAY DEPT.
ROAD SCHEDULE
Dec. 12, 2018 – Jan. 17, 2019

Work to be done

- Pothole repair when we can.
- Plow, sand and salt.
- Service work on the remaining trucks and equipment.
- Clean out the Spiller Garage.
- Tree and brush cutting.

Work completed

- Filled Potholes on Cambridge Rd.
- Plow, Sand and salt.
- Picked up the 18' Western star from J & B International.
- Brought the 17' Western star to Charlebois for brake work. Picked it up 3 days later.
- Replaced several tire chains.
- Storage unit was delivered.
- Replaced the wing plow blades and shoes on the 14' Western Star.
- Replaced an air brake cannister.
- Replaced an air line fitting on the 14' Western star.
- Rewired the rear strobe lights on the 14' Western star.
- Ordered and received salt.
- Had a trucking contractor haul in more winter sand.

Approved at the 11/17/19 Selectboard Meeting.

Town of Westford

Review of Fund Balances
Highway & General Funds
Roll forward - FY15 - FY18

DRAFT

General Fund	6/30/2015	182,743	Highway Fund	6/30/2015	-102,136	Non Major Funds	6/30/2015	381,391	Total Funds	461,998
FY16 Activity		105,488	FY16 Activity		29,600	FY16 Activity		99,352	234,440	
FY16 Balance		288,231	FY16 Balance		-72,536	FY16 Balance		480,743	696,438	
Adjustment to Cash Basis		-288	Adjustment to Cash Basis-FY15		-212,843	Adjustment to Cash Basis		208	-212,923	
FY16 Balance (Restated)		287,943	FY16 Balance (Restated)		-285,379	FY16 Balance (Restated)		480,951	483,515	
FY 2017 Activity			FY 2017 Activity			FY 2017 Activity				
Operating		168,986	Operating		-205,673	Operating		-90,780	-127,467	
New Truck+GF Xfer-Equip Fund		-159,722	New Truck+GF Xfer-Equip Fund		155,054	Transfers from Other Funds		182,335	177,667	
Extraordinary Items		0	Extraordinary Items-Seymour		55,036	Extraordinary Items		0	55,036	
		9,264			4,417			91,555	105,236	
FY17 Fund Balance		297,207	FY17 Fund Balance		-280,962	FY17 Fund Balance		572,506	588,751	
FY 2018 Activity			FY 2018 Activity			FY 2018 Activity				
Operating		239,020	Operating		-137,044	Operating		-70,006	31,970	
Loan Proceeds & Transfer In		488,508	Loan Proceeds		164,500	Transfers In		192,615	845,623	
Transfers to other funds		-155,265	Net Transfers In/Out		-26,607	Transfers Out		-108,505	-290,377	
JFFP		-300,000	2018 W/S & Garage Work		-208,045				-508,045	
Fire truck		-308,621	Seymour Bridge (FEMA)		216,384				-92,237	
		-36,358	Net Activity		9,188	Net Activity		14,104	-13,066	
FY18 Fund Balance		260,849	FY18 Fund Balance		-271,774	FY18 Fund Balance		586,610	575,685	
FY19 YTD Activity			FY19 YTD Activity			FY19 YTD Activity				
Activity as of 01/17/18		20,045	Activity as of 01/17/18		139,812	Activity as of 01/17/18		34,677	194,534	
Balance as of 01/31/19		280,894	Balance as of 01/31/19		-131,962	Balance as of 01/31/19		621,287	770,219	

TOWN OF WESTFORD
SPECIAL SELECTBOARD MEETING
GUEST LIST

Date: January 17, 2019

Name (please print)

Address

Lynn Gauthier

180 Huntley Rd Westford VT

David Gauthier

" " " " "

Becky

Old #11 Rd, Westford

Chris Palmer

Westford, VT

CHRIS PALMER

OLD #11 RD

Bill Cleary

Beaver Pd. Rd.

Andy DiMarco

BIRCH RIDGE Rd

Linda Johnson

Mountain Rd.

Callie Hamby

876 Osgood Hill Rd

Dick Lavallee

39 #11