

**SELECTBOARD MEETING**  
**June 13, 2019**

Present: Allison Hope  
          Julia Andrews  
          Bill Cleary  
          Callie Hamdy

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: Moved Review of FY'19 Budget Status to earlier in meeting, added request to use common on August 24<sup>th</sup>, moved Highway Department items later in meeting, added trading of 2018 Western Star for tandem and quotes of engineering services of Rogers Road Culvert. Added executive session at end of agenda.

**MINUTES**

Changes to the minutes were a change in language from Public to Private on page 4 in reference to Fire Pits. Bill Cleary made a motion to approve the May 23, 2019 minutes as amended, Julia Andrews 2<sup>nd</sup>, moved 3-0.

**FY'19 BUDGET STATUS**

Greg Barrows, Treasurer, reviewed the status of the budget for the board. Greg mentions that at this point in the year the General Fund should be at around 95% spending or more, currently we are at 97.3% of our budget which is good. The Auditors are very pleased and impressed to see that the town's delinquent taxes are very low. Greg reminds the board that since we don't know future growth the instinct is always to budget revenue conservatively. It was a good year for permits, our revenue from that is up. Our Current Use revenue is also up.

In Administrative Funds we are over on office supplies as well as legal notices, we are under on postage. Greg says that a large percentage of these fees that make up the overages are Legal & Professional Fees. With the Clerk salaries we are right where we should be since things that were over in this area were offset in Town Administrator salary.

Julia Andrews brings up that the Lister salaries are significantly under where they should be. Nanette Rogers, Town Clerk/Town Administrator, says this is because the listers don't put in their timesheets in on a regular basis. Once they have them in that number should go up. Allison Hope wonders if a policy could be created so that the listers have to put in their timesheets monthly. Greg suggests that even quarterly would be helpful.

Allison mentions that some funds budgeted for the Planning Commission will roll over. Greg confirms this and reminds the board that we need to keep in mind how much is budgeted and if they are significantly under, we can consider adjusting the budget in the future.

Greg continues, saying that everything is on track with the town office property, but that we are up on fuel and telephone. Allison thinks there could be some opportunity to decrease the phone bill if we look into our plan and get rid of items we do not need. There was also the unexpected expense of a realtor for the Martell Lot which the town was not expecting to sell this year.

Other items mentioned include the Dog Warden which is under, law enforcement which is right on track and emergency services which has not yet been paid but will be next warrant. Greg mentions that overall, he thinks the budget is doing well. The board thanked Greg.

Greg moved on to talking about the Highway Budget. He maintains that the same applies to this budget as does the town budget: we budget revenue conservatively. Greg mentions that salary fees are lower than they should be, but it would have been right where it should be if we had a full road crew for the entire year. Many expenses are down because of personnel changes.

Overall approximately \$3,300 was spent on grading, ditches etc. and we are \$30,000 over on sand. Greg asked John Roberts, Road Foreman, to clarify this. John reminds the board that every time it rained this winter the sand pile would become frozen so more had to be bought, despite the, now frozen, stock of sand we already had. John thinks it is 80-100 loads of sand at least that was frozen. Allison asks what a cost in the miscellaneous category of the budget was for, John replies that this was for the service of trucking the sand to the town garage. John mentions that over the winter they also only lost one chain. Greg mentions there was a fee for buying a culvert plate, John says the plate is reusable so they will be able to use it for a long time on many projects.

Allison asks if they are a little over budget on highway. John explains that a large part of this is an insurance check for the single axle truck. Greg also mentions that Highway Department Permits, which are new via the state, were not accounted for in this budget, so they will be added in FY'21. Other expenses included the salt shed, bought a new Jersey Barrier, neither which were in the budget. John brings up that they are also getting new shop windows for the town garage.

Bill Cleary asks for clarification on the phone expenses. He asks if this is just landline costs. Nanette replies that it is landline costs as well as cell phone costs for the road crew. Greg thinks that the budget outcome really speaks a lot to John's stewardship of our town assets. Julia Andrews thought this information was very valuable and thanked Greg.

#### **FIRE ORDINANCE SPECIAL TOWN MEETING**

Allison asked for the rest of the board's take away of the July 3<sup>rd</sup> special meeting regarding the Fire Ordinance. Julia Andrews said in her opinion it is time to move on. Nanette Rogers brought up that the reason behind the new ordinance was to make it enforceable. Allison says that they have had a problem with this in the past and Greg brings up that over the years Dennis, Fire Warden, has only written up 1 notice.

Allison says that the board's other questions for Dennis was what problem are we trying to solve with the new ordinance since most of his new information was educational and did not need to be in the written ordinance. Bill thinks that if we put any more fire ordinance discussion on the Agenda the public would show up with pitchforks. Allison does not think there is a problem that needs to be solved here, especially since it seems our current permit system is working well. Bill agreed and said to let the discussion die out.

#### **WESTFORD TOWN LANDS UPDATE**

Julia Andrews met with Koi Boynton to go over the Westford Town Lands plan. They went through meeting minutes for the public's comments and went through Marge McIntosh's document on recreation. Julia and Koi both made changes to the Westford Town Lands Document and Julia wanted to read the changes out loud to the meeting, especially since Marge was in attendance.

Julia mentioned that an overarching desire of Marge's was to have mountain biking included as a recreational use in the document. After speaking with Koi, Julia and Koi opted not to do that. They

had met with an ecologist who brought up the fact that the Maple Shade Forest property is wet and fragile, there is also no plan to expand the trail system on that property. Misty Meadows is a more physically robust property for biking to occur on.

Julia mentioned that Marge had commented on when language between the different Lands parcels was vague and it was super helpful to have that information. Julia says that it was very valuable to both her and Koi to have Marge's well thought out information. Julia would like to hear from Marge regarding what has been said.

Marge commented that biking was not her only concern. Her overarching concerns were recreation in general and looking at recreational activities in a broader sense.

Regarding existing biking areas, Marge mentions that the existing document does not mention biking as an existing use, even in Misty Meadows. In page 13 of the Westford Town Lands document it lists permitted uses and biking is not listed as a use. If biking is to be allowed in the Misty Meadows parcel it needs to be in this part of the document.

Marge brings up that the language on non-restricted/restricted activities is vague. She states that if a use is allowed on Misty Meadows, but not on Maple Shade, that use still needs to be in the document. Marge also mentions that regarding the development of new trails in Misty Meadows that on page 6 of the document it mentions that trees can only be cut for the management of trees, that a new trail cannot be put in. Her primary reaction is that we should be able to put new trails on Misty Meadows in the future. Marge suggests adding the right to build new trails to the bullet points on page 17.

Marge continues saying that her biggest concerns lays in Goal #2. This is in regards to the potential trail from the town common to the school trails. Marge is a proponent of using broad language regarding multi-use trails, but currently, the language in the document state only walking. Marge says that if one of the goals of this path is to increase the number of children biking safely to school and not on Brookside Road that the language needs to be changed. The word "multi-use" is important in the recreation industry.

Bill Cleary mentions that according to Ethan Tapper, who worked on the original Town Lands document, that there was a year from closing on the property to get the plan done, this means we have until 2020. Julia Andrews clarifies that it actually refers to January of 2019, meaning we are 6 months past the due date of approving the plan.

Allison Hope mentions that until the plan is approved, we can't do anything with the property that would benefit residents. Allison met with the town attorney regarding the hunting debate. He has provided a legal opinion regarding the laws surrounding the debate and Allison will send this to the other board members so they may look it over before the next meeting. Allison mentions that Federal Law is law and that the 1,000-foot buffer is not a recommendation, but law. Allison wants the language and law surrounding this to be very clear for future selectboard members so there is no confusion on this in the future.

Bill mentions he would like to add providing alternative access to the Maple Shade property for hunters to Goal #4. Allison would like to hold off on that conversation until they can discuss it in context with the legal opinion letter.

Bill continues saying in his opinion that he does not agree with restricting the hunting seasons to deer and turkey season. Julia Andrews mentions that the restricted seasons was a recommendation

from the committee that allows both hunters to have access during primary seasons and allows non-hunters to walk safely during off-seasons. Bill says that not all hunters have the same primary seasons. Allison mentioned that during the survey the committee did during the creation of the Lands Document that hunting was not a top priority. Bill says he still doesn't agree with the limiting of hunting seasons. Julia feels that the committee spent a long time creating a plan and getting opinions from all residents.

Seth Jensen mentions that when two properties are in a single plan it allows us to look and discuss them in context with one another. Seth says that the concept of recreation mostly occurring on Misty Meadows and less so on Maple Shade could be strengthened from language saying that early on in the document. Seth also mentions that he is not a hunter but that it is an important conversation. Seth thinks that language in the body of the plan could be strengthened to reflect the role hunting plays in wildlife management and thinks its important to acknowledge.

Seth also brings up that he knows there is a debate on if the plan should be adopted before or after the access issue is solved. Seth mentions that the applications for Water Conservation Fund grants are due soon, fall of 2020. Seth says it will be easier to obtain grants if the town is able to secure secondary access for hunters from a land owner nearby the property. Seth offers that he will write the grant to make that happen. Seth says that supporting documentation in the body of the Lands Document would strengthen a grant application.

Marge mentions that the online survey regarding the town lands probably captured the broadest section of the community and was more diverse. Marge mentions that when she reads the results of the survey in the "what the community wants" section vs the comments there is a difference in what is reflected. Marge thinks the survey could have been broken down better. She mentions that walking got its own section, but that biking was in the variety group of which it made up 25% of.

#### **WESTFORD ICE RINK**

Bill Cleary attended a Recreation Committee meeting regarding the Westford Common Ice Rink. Bill summarized the history of the ice rink and broomball tournament for the board. Bill mentions that last time there was discussion on the rink there was a Front Porch Forum post to save the rink and it resulted in a large selectboard meeting which is where the current Rink Master, Dan McLean, took over the rink.

The Recreation Committee thinks that the rink is too large of an item for them to maintain and the broomball tournament would be too large for them to organize. The recreation committee considered the option of having an outside company run the broomball tournament, but this would dissolve the charity/fundraiser aspect of the tournament. The Recreation Committee also believes that the rink should be preserved and that it is a town asset. More volunteers, better storage for boards and snowblower, budget for a better liner and an accessible water source would make maintenance of the rink easier.

Allison Hope expressed her thoughts and said that we've only ever used volunteers in the past, she is frustrated that the rec committee is looking to maintain the status quo on volunteers. Allison brings up that the broomball tournament fundraiser used to cover the cost of the liner, but now the committee no longer wants to run the tournament as a fundraiser.

Meghan Orisko, a representative from the Recreation Committee, brought up that the cost of the liner is \$450 and that the boards for the rink need replacing along with various other expenses. Julia Andrews mentions that this Rec Coordinator has a set number of hours and that would increase if the committee took over the rink and broomball tournament. Julia suggests several options

available. 1) the Rec Coordinator would be paid for additional hours. 2) a part-time rink master could be hired for the season to maintain the rink. Julia thinks the rink falls under recreation.

Meghan mentioned that the loss of the Adams from town makes maintaining the rink very difficult, since the Adams lived on the common when they were maintaining the rink and had access to water sources. She reminds the board that a single person cannot keep up with the rink daily in the same way Dave Adams did.

Allison mentions that the rink quality was not good this year. Dan McLean, Rink Master, mentions that he was out of town a lot this winter and it was hard to keep up with the rink. The weather this winter also did not help. Dan mentions that an accessible water source would be the most help and he mentions that there are grants for community projects like this. Dan also mentions that before the next season the rink will need significant repairs such as repainting the boards. The whole rink system is aging and needs replacement within the next couple of years.

Julia does not recall seeing a call for volunteers for this past season. Dan mentions there were volunteers for set up and tear down, the more volunteers he has the easier it is. Bill Cleary wonders why the Common Committee can't get involved in rink maintenance since the rink is on the common. Bill also mentions that the Common Committee has its own separate funds. Nanette clarifies that those funds are not for things like this. Hendrik Kruse donated that money for maintenance of the common itself, not recreation.

Meghan expressed the Recreation Committee's frustrated over how many emails the committee and Tonya got regarding the rink; she says they felt badgered. Lori Johnson, a member of the Common Committee, mentioned that the rink is still not fully cleaned up and it is June. Lori says there are lots of holes still in the rink area and the grass is not growing. The goal is to grow grass, she mentions putting out grass seed will help.

Allison reminds everybody that we are all in this together. We want the common to look nice after removal of the rink and this year that is not going to happen and that is frustrating. Allison also mentions that we all expected too much of Dan, it is a lot for one person to do. Allison's goal is to make this work for everyone, the rink is a great asset to town. Bill asks how we might get more volunteers; he suggests a poll on FPF might be useful. Allison mentions that the biggest attendance of a selectboard meeting ever was about the rink and that discussion started on FPF. Bill also suggests an email list or group.

Julia says that her struggle is that we have a recreation budget for the coming fiscal year that has already been voted on by residents. We are also putting out ideas on how to deal with the rink but how does it get paid for? Julia brings up the for-profit company idea that the Rec Committee had thought about. Julia mentions that the broomball tournament used to benefit the recreation budget funds. She thinks this plan needs a financial perspective.

Meghan says that the Committee doesn't have the capacity to organize the tournament and that the committee has a lot of turnaround which makes things difficult. She mentions that a written guide on what is and isn't expect when the rink is put up and taken down would be helpful. Julia mentions that there is a thumb drive of files about the broomball tournament that used to be held by the rec coordinator, some of this information exists. Nanette mentions that Sue Adams typed up a document on rink information and that it is still on a town computer.

Bill once again brought up the idea of the online poll, Allison mentioned that while it is great to get information, it's not the only way to make a decision. She would like to see the rink dealt with in a

more internalized way. Meghan mentioned that the idea of a poll was brought up because there was discussion on who uses the rink, Meghan mentions that a lot of non-residents use the rink. Allison mentioned that the rec committee has full authority to do whatever they want regarding poll etc. Bill thinks any post needs urgency because it does bring up the question if we are going to have a rink or not in the future. Allison says she cannot have that same conversation again as the board did years previous. We need a solution or recommendation on what to do. Allison asks if this will come from the recreation committee. Meghan responds that it will.

Allison mentions that she would like the Recreation Committee to consider these things in their discussions: a potential stipend for a dedicated part-time rink master and/or a rink events coordinator. Lots of money comes from the broomball tournament and it is important not to lose those funds for the community. Julia Andrews mentioned that the files from the Adams and the previous rec coordinator will be helpful and thanked Dan and the Rec Committee for their time.

#### **TOWN OFFICE BUILDING ASSESSMENT**

The board tabled discussion on the assessment of the Town Office Building until next meeting.

#### **PERMIT FOR 4<sup>th</sup> OF JULY PARADE**

It was brought to the town's attention that a permit is required to have a parade on a state road (Route 128). Nanette mentioned that the application was filled out and given to the State Police, but she had not yet received anything back. The town needs the select board's support of the event and authorize Allison to sign the application. Julia Andrews moved to approve, Bill Cleary 2<sup>nd</sup>, moved 3-0.

#### **REQUEST TO USE COMMON AUGUST 10**

The selectboard was asked to approve a request to use the common on August 10 for a class reunion. Bill asked if there were any rules regarding alcohol on the common. Dave Lavalley responded that there are no rules, ordinances or laws in Westford regarding public consumption of alcohol. Allison confirmed this. Nanette Rogers mentioned that the group also requested permission to put a rented tent on the common in case of weather. In her opinion this is not needed since the group also has access to the Brick Meeting House for their event. Julia Andrews motioned to approve the request to use the common, Bill Cleary 2<sup>nd</sup>, moved 3-0.

#### **REQUEST TO USE COMMON AUGUST 24**

A request was received seeking permission to use the common on August 24<sup>th</sup> for the grand finale of the Summer Music Series as well as a celebration of the common's 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The event will take place between 4pm and 8pm. It has been determined that a Mobile Food Vendor permit is not required for those selling food and that the breweries selling beer will be responsible for any licenses they may need. The Rec Dept. may have kids games or activities. Bill Cleary motioned to approve the request to use the common, Julia Andrews 2<sup>nd</sup>, moved 3-0.

#### **WARRANT FOR UNLICENSED DOGS**

Nanette presented a warrant so the Dog Warden may take care of dogs without a current license. Allison thought the language of the warrant was aggressive, Nanette replied that it is state statute. Allison asked that if somebody hasn't paid for their license that Dave Tilton, Dog Warden, has permission via this warrant to round up unlicensed dogs. Nanette mentioned that Westford does not do this, but that the language is required to enforce the ordinance. We usually send a phone call, then letter etc. Allison wanted to hold off on the approval of this warrant for better language.

#### **SHERIFF'S CONTRACT**

The selectboard was asked to approve the contract for service of the Chittenden County Sheriff's Office. Nanette Rogers amended the appendix that accompanied the contract to include preferences

on where and when to patrol, but the rest of the document is the same as previous years. Bill Cleary made a motion to approve the contract, Julia Andrews 2<sup>nd</sup>, moved 3-0.

### **CORESPONDANCE**

Nanette received an email about the VCRD conference, Julia Andrews says she cannot make this. John Roberts mentioned a correspondence regarding the drainage of a Beaver Pond on Woods Hollow Road, the State had approved his project.

### **TASK LIST**

Allison was all set with the task list.

### **SUMMER MEETING SCHEDULE**

The selectboard discussed their summer schedules and reviewed the summer schedule for meetings. Dates were set aside for setting the new tax rates.

### **HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT**

John Roberts reviewed the road schedule from May 24 through June 13. Julia Andrews moved to approve the road schedule, Bill Cleary 2<sup>nd</sup>, moved 3-0. Nanette also wanted to bring up the kind words being said about the quality of the roads recently on FPF. John mentioned that he had even had a resident from Fairfax stop into the town garage to give compliments to the crew on the quality.

### **2018 WESTERN STAR**

John explained that the town has a single axle 2018 Western Star purchased by Brent that does not work well for the town. The Western Star is only able to do paved roads and only puts down 7 yards of material at a time, not even Osgood Hill can be done with it. John has been researching on trading in this vehicle for a tandem. John found a vehicle that will work better for the town through Charlebois.

Bill Cleary had a question regarding the cost of the new vehicle. He sees that it is not much more expensive than the older vehicle we currently own. John replies that this is because the 2018 Western Star is a decked-out vehicle, but regardless it is still not what the town needs. We will need a reliable machine if the 2014 vehicle we currently use breaks down. Currently if that vehicle is broken the road crew is out of luck. Having 3 trucks that can work anywhere in town will greatly benefit the town.

Julia asks if there is a downside anywhere. There is not one that John can think of. Greg mentions that this would also make the road crew more productive. John says that having three functional vehicles would cut back on how long a route takes and decrease overtime hours for the road crew. Julia Andrews made a motion to approve the purchase, Bill Cleary 2<sup>nd</sup>, moved 3-0. Allison commended John on his creative thinking and well-presented information that made the decision so easy to make.

### **FY'19 CAPITAL EXPENDITURES**

John says that we have a rubber tire excavator that does not work for our roads so he wants to downsize to a smaller machine that is zero turn to make it easier to ditch in a safer manner. The only catch with this is that the smaller machine would need a trailer. The smaller machine is half the cost of the machine budgeted for and this budget excess would allow us to pay cash for the trailer. John would also like to hold on to the rubber tire excavator and add the smaller machine. It is helpful to also have the large machine, but it is just too large to ditch on many of the dirt roads safely.

Julia Andrews says that the trailer seems reasonable, Bill mentions that the small machine would be useless without the trailer. Julia moves to approve the purchase of the trailer for this year and for the cost not to exceed \$2,500. Bill Cleary 2<sup>nd</sup>, moved 3-0.

#### **ENGINEERING QUOTES FOR ROGERS ROAD**

John Rogers explained he had received back quotes for the Rogers Road Culvert design. KAS declined, Dickinson can't do the project until mid-January. Eco-Solutions quoted it at 8,000 and O'Leary Burke also provided a cheaper quote. John's thought is to go with O'Leary Burke because of how professional they have been on projects they did in Essex and their quote was half the price of Eco-Solutions.

Bill Cleary made a motion to approve O'Leary Burke to do the project providing the document is to our liking. Allison commented to make sure to forward the document if there are no comments. Julia Adams 2<sup>nd</sup>, moved 3-0.

#### **PLAINS ROAD EXTENSION**

John Roberts' neighbor on Plains Road filed an appeal of the court's decision. The selectboard had only previously approved placement of gravel on Plains Road Extension if she did not appeal. John mentioned he is only putting down gravel so he can get to his property on Plains and improve the extension. It is a class 4 road.

Julia feels worried about this because the board's initial decision was based on if the neighbor would appeal or not. She feels this puts the board in a difficult position. John offered to provide the legal emails and court decision to the board. Bill ponders if the neighbor might dig in and take issue with the town.

#### **EXCESS WEIGHT PERMITS**

The Chair signed permits for Warren Palmer, Craig Cowles/Cowles Excavating, Andrew Plante, and Bradley Hayden/HLG Excavating.

#### **ACCOUNTS PAYABLE & PAYROLL**

The board approved the accounts payable and payroll warrants.

#### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Bill Cleary motioned to go into executive session at 9:30 pm. Julia Andrews 2<sup>nd</sup>, motion passed 3-0. Those in attendance were Allison Hope, Bill Cleary, Julia Andrews, John Roberts and Nanette Rogers. The board exited Executive Session at 9:39 p.m. No action was taken.

#### **ADJOURN**

The meeting adjourned at 9:40 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Allison Hope, Chair  
Westford Selectboard

Callie Hamdy  
Assistant Town Clerk



**TOWN OF WESTFORD HIGHWAY DEPT.**  
**ROAD SCHEDULE**  
**May 24, 2019 – June 13, 2019**

Work to be done

- Grade roads when we can.
- Work on Huntley Rd. grant project.
- Procure bids for the Rogers Rd. culvert replacement.
- Ditching on Rollin Irish Rd.
- Replace culverts at 778 Woods Hollow Rd. and 181 Woods Hollow.

Work completed

- Graded and put chloride on most of the roads.
- Added 8 loads of gravel to a section Old # 11 Rd.
- Replaced 2 "STOP" signs.
- Repairs to the grader.
- Changed the fuel tank on the loader.
- Finished beaver baffle on Woods Hollow Rd. and looked at installing one on Old # 11 Rd.
- Cut trees and ditched on a short section of Old Stage Rd.
- Cut trees on Milton - Westford Rd. and Woods Hollow Rd.
- Finished Rubaud Rd. Grant project.
- Did the grant work and added 10 loads of gravel to Manley Rd.
- We cut brush on Huntley Rd.

Approved at the 6/13/19 Selectboard Meeting.

TOWN OF WESTFORD  
SELECTBOARD MEETING  
GUEST LIST

Date: June 13, 2019

Name (please print)

Address

David Laugher

138 Old # 11 Rd

Lori Johnson

22 White Church Ln

Meghan Orisko

62 Learned Drive

Daniel McLean

1988 Route 128

St M Jensen

274 Munroe Rd

Marge McIntosh

201 Huntley