

**SELECTBOARD MEETING**  
**September 24, 2020**  
**Draft Minutes**

Present:	Julia Andrews Bill Cleary Allison Hope Nanette Rogers	Callie Hamdy John Roberts Greg Barrows
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Guests:        See attached

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. The meeting was held via Zoom. All attendees attended remotely.

**CHANGES TO AGENDA**

RFP for Grant Writer, Request to Use Gazebo on 10/4.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

**MINUTES**

Bill Cleary made a motion to approve the September 10, 2020 Minutes as amended. Allison 2<sup>nd</sup>. Motion passed 3-0.

**ROAD SCHEDULE**

The Road Foreman, John Roberts, discussed the September 11<sup>th</sup>–September 24<sup>th</sup> Road Schedule. Bill motioned to approve the Road Schedule. Allison seconded. Motion passed: 3-0.

**ROADSIDE MOWING CONTRACT OPTION**

This year we did roadside mowing twice, first week of June, second week of September. The contractor would like a contract to do the same thing for the next three years for the same exact price. John had no complaints about the job they did, just that the first mowing could be done a week earlier for parsnip control and the contractor agreed that would be fine if we were to sign a new contract.

In Julia's mind if we're happy with their service and they're giving us a good price we'd be open to doing that, but we should write a contract that gives us an out just in case anything happens. They were the only bid for the current year. Allison thinks we could look at updating our current contract with them. Julia would like to put that once a year we should hear from them so feedback could be given. They don't need to check in with the board, but a check in with John would be appropriate. Bill made a motion to work on approving a three-year contract with the current roadside mowing contractors. Allison 2<sup>nd</sup>. Motion passed 3-0.

**CCRPC ANNUAL REPORT**

Charlie Baker from the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission was present to discuss the CCRPC Annual Report for Westford. In FY'20, the CCRPC provided assistance to Westford on several projects including Municipal Plan Development Assistance, Chittenden

County Brownfields Program, Emergency Management, Water Quality Planning Assistance, Geographic Information Systems and Technical Assistance. They also assisted Westford in the VT Route 15 Paving. The board updated Charlie's list of representatives in town that were pertinent to the CCRPC. Julia suggested Andy Fulton and Pat Haller for future potential contacts as they have shown interest in related subjects. The Westford Planning Commission has really appreciated the CCRPCs continued support in their projects over the past year. Charlie suggested he might be able to help with the grant writer position that had been budgeted for.

The Selectboard had been talking with the RPC about doing a traffic study and then Covid happened so it didn't seem the most important thing, but now that people are getting out and about the concerns about speeds have started up again and Westford even had a fatal crash where residents had to behave as first responders so understandably there's a need to keep the topic alive and continue to push to have a traffic study. Charlie will follow up and the town will hear back around next week.

### **SUMMER CONCERTS ON THE COMMON**

Michael Kirick was present. He would like to petition direct funding of summer concerts by the selectboard rather than the cumbersome process of cobbling together funding from various other town functions like the Library and Rec Department. It all comes from the town budget regardless. This would also give the summer concerts a dependable funding source as Michael has noticed that the Recreation Department is trying to cut his concert budget after he has already committed funds to hire bands.

Michael detailed all the work he has done to expand upon the summer concerts, such as offering more concerts overall and bringing in food and drink vendors. This has increased turnout and the concerns have continued to be successful during Covid which Michael had to be very careful about head count due to restrictions because the concerts were so popular. Having a block of continuous Sundays in the summer is ideal because people know exactly when concerts are happening. That's what he's looking to have for this coming summer concert season. Michael figures \$75-100 per hour pay for musicians would be appropriate based on the musicians he has talked to. If his budget is smaller, he'd have smaller bands, but if budget is larger he can hire larger bands. He wants the process to be simplified.

Bill thanked Michael for his hard work, the Town Common Celebration last year was incredible, and Bill agreed with Michael's numbers, clearly the concerts are popular. He is fully in support funding the concerts more directly, his only concern is that the crowds are often older, if he could get a younger crowd out there would be great. Michael has tried to pick many different genres and styles and is open to suggestions. Julia was appreciative that Michael does this at all and thinks it's a huge service to the town and she also really appreciates how far in advance Michael has brought this to the Selectboard because they will actually be able to budget for things appropriately. Julia suggests Michael adapts his document to ask for a specific dollar amount than it is a budget request and they can consider it in the budget building process.

### **SOLUTIONS & EXPENDITURES FOR STORMWATER MITIGATION – LIBRARY**

Vicky Ross and Pat Hechmer, Library Trustees were present. To Pat this was more of a Q&A conversation. To Julia, clearly the Library Stormwater drainage is an issue that needs to be addressed. The trustees have been doing things piece by piece, the sump pumps were just done drawn out of the library reserves. The current part of the stormwater project is too

expensive for the library to cover on its own, which is why it was taken in front of the Selectboard.

Bree, Librarian, was present. They put out the 1A work out to bid, Dave Whitney of Eco Solutions is doing the catch basin work and his bid came in under the budgeted \$5,000. Does the library give the remaining funds back to the town or use it for stormwater down the line or ask Dave what they can get in the realm of stormwater while he already has things dug up for that price. They could extend the drainage which would reduce the icing on the concrete pad which would reduce liability. They would like to take that extra hundred dollars and make the project a little bit bigger. They are talking under \$500-800 dollars but wanted to get the okay to use the money to benefit drainage from the Selectboard. Dave is ready to start tomorrow for the already approved work and it would be a deal for the additional work because his equipment is already there.

Julia thinks it's wise to use the money and Dave's expertise to the fullest extent possible. The money has already been budgeted. Bill had two questions: if he did the work that he bid on to this point and got to the conclusion of that portion and didn't have to dip into the contingency he thinks it would be great to do the extra work, but if he dipped into the contingency we'd have to dip into extra funds, is that correct? Bree explains that the additional work could be done without any additional permits, but you are right in the sense that contingency would need to be clarified. Bree explained that Dave knows that the \$5000 is limited to just that and is aware he will need to work regarding the contingency. The second question Bill had was that the board gave the library the ability to go out to bid and choose, how many people submitted a bid? Three people expressed interest and two bids came in. The two bids were very close in cost, but Dave Whitney's was the cheaper bid and he has done preexisting work and had consulted on the storm water study the town had done in the Fitzgerald engineering study.

#### **LIBRARY TRUSTEE APPOINTMENT**

The Library submitted Patty Pittala as a library trustee. Allison made a motion to approve, Bill 2<sup>nd</sup>. Motion passed 3-0.

#### **INQUIRY TO PURCHASE TOWN OWNED LAND ON WESTFORD MILTON ROAD**

Mark Drapa had written to the selectboard inquiring about the lot owned by the town on Westford Milton Road. The property was conveyed to the town in 1973 and deeded with contingency it only be used for recreation, so it is not a buildable lot. Julia's reading of it was for the recreation of people in the town, so she is unsure how that would shake out in terms of private person owning it. Her guess is that they would not be able to turn it into buildable land or if the town can even sell it, but that is her non-legal opinion. Allison explained that there was interest from two town committees the Recreation Committee and Conservation Commission that would like to explore uses for that property in the future. To Bill, the deed is clear on the property use. It should not be sold to a private person.

Mark Drapa was present. This parcel is adjacent to his lot, they've been there for 15 years and he's never seen another person on it, however they spend a lot of time cleaning up trash out of there so he was curious if the town had plans for it or not. He is interested if it needs to be clarified on exactly what the deed's language needs. Nanette will email Mark the deed so he can see it for himself, as the language is quite clear. He was surprised that it was town land. What the town has done in the past when they want to sell land is open up that opportunity to taxpayers, however she feels the desires of the recreation and conservation commission

would take priority if they wanted to use it. Julia would like Mark to look over the deed and then start thinking about next steps.

### **RFP FOR GRANT WRITER**

They had budgeted \$5000 for a grant writer this year, Koi Boyton developed an RFP and now we are at a place where we could put it out into the world. Koi asked how the RFP would be sent out and how are we going to set questions and interview people for that role. This is not something typically the selectboard would do, so it would be good to think through the process.

Nanette explained that if the board is amenable to it, FPF post for potential locals, town website and a Vermont bid website are all free mediums to look for grant writers. If that yields no response, one could pay for advertisement in a publication. Allison also asked if Nanette could reach out to other towns and see if they have experience working with anybody in a situation like this. Koi also knows somebody who writes grants professionally and could field questions. The Planning Commission had also wanted the board to be in charge on the new grant writer, but as things are now, Julia does not feel that is appropriate. She thinks it should be a Planning Commission related interview etc.

### **REQUEST TO USE GAZEBO**

The board appreciated that the person requested to use the common, but they feel the use is fine as others have been. Bill has noticed the uptick of requests including requests from those who don't reside in Westford and was curious if we had ever thought about charging. Julia thinks that's not possible since it's a public place, but it would be interesting to explore. Bill feels charging for non-resident use would be more appropriate. Bill thinks its interesting that people from other towns use the property and that it's popular. Julia thinks it's something to talk about during budget discussion and the season for common requests are winding down so there's time. Nanette thinks if we are to charge for use of the common an easy way for application and payment submission would be crucial. Allison also didn't want to add any administrative burden that goes along with that sort of thing. Bill motioned to approve use of gazebo, Allison 2<sup>nd</sup>. Motion passed 3-0.

### **CORRESPONDENCE**

There was no correspondence.

### **COMMUNICATION**

John and crew are putting up new signage regarding what can or can't be put into the metal dumpster to make things clearer to residents in addition to the cameras.

### **VCRD TASK FORCE FUNDS**

Melissa Manka, Planning Coordinator, had researched if it would be an acceptable practice for the town to accept and disperse project funds for the VCRD Community Task Force's on their behalf. Eric Ford, one of the task force chairs had estimated about \$300 would be the budget as they are actively pursuing a kiosk on the common and there are other things such as grants that will need a place to land. The auditors had no issue with the town keeping the money, Greg will work with MJ to set up a separate fund. Julia has no problem with the funds and feels Greg is on his way to making this work. Allison made a motion that we accept and then extend the funds on behalf of the VCRD work so that bills can be paid which will then be reimbursed by VCRP, Bill 2<sup>nd</sup>. Motion passed 3-0.

**ROGERS ROAD GRANT PAYMENT REQUEST**

John and Greg went over the grant payment briefly and there are going to be some minimal changes to the payment request. Julia asked how slowly or quickly this may get reimbursed? Greg was not sure but thinks the state will be more responsive than FEMA. Nanette predicts we'll get it this fiscal year.

**ACCOUNTS PAYABLE & PAYROLL WARRANTS**

Greg went over the accounts payable & payroll warrants. The Selectboard members will come into the office to sign.

**ADJOURN**

The meeting adjourned at 8:31 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Julia Andrews, Chair  
Selectboard

Callie Hamdy  
Assistant Town Clerk

**TOWN OF WESTFORD HIGHWAY DEPT.  
ROAD SCHEDULE  
September 11, 2020 – September 24, 2020**

Work to be done

- Grade roads.
- Add gravel to Old Stage Rd.
- Continue with FEMA work.
- Ditching project on Old Stage Rd.

Work completed

- Graded sections of Cambridge Rd., Plains Rd., Covey Rd., Old # 11 Rd., Old Stage Rd., Manley Rd., Woods Hollow Rd., Macia Hill Rd.,
- Cut brush and added gravel at 711 Osgood Hill Rd.
- Hauled in gravel for road surface work.
- Hauled in the remaining winter sand.
- Added 50 loads of gravel on the North end of Old Stage Rd.

**GUEST LIST**

Vicky Ross  
Bree Drapa  
Pat Hechmer  
Charlie Baker  
Buddy LVTV  
Mark Drapa  
Michael Kirick