

**SELECTBOARD MEETING**  
**October 22, 2020**  
**Draft Minutes**

Present:	Julia Andrews	Callie Hamdy
	Bill Cleary	John Roberts
	Allison Hope (arrived 7:20)	Greg Barrows
	Nanette Rogers	

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

Added Recreation Committee Requests (Santa Mailbox, etc.) to Discussion, added Grant Writer Position.

## PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

## MINUTES

Bill Cleary made a motion to approve the October 8, 2020 Special Meeting minutes as written. Julia 2<sup>nd</sup>. Motion passed: 2-0.

Bill Cleary made a motion to approve the October 8, 2020 Regular Meeting minutes as written. Julia 2<sup>nd</sup>. Motion passed 2-0.

## ROAD SCHEDULE

The Road Foreman, John Roberts, discussed the October 9, 2020 – October 22, 2020 Road Schedule. Bill made a motion to approve the Road Schedule. Allison seconded. Motion passed: 3-0.

## ESSEX RESCUE FY'22 BUDGET REQUEST

Will Moran from Essex Rescue was present. They have worked hard during the pandemic to modify how they work and keep the community safe. They have done their best to reduce expenses and defer purchases as part of their efforts to control costs during this unusual year. For FY'22 they are requesting \$2,610 from Westford which is a per capita rate of \$3.87 for the fourth consecutive year.

Bill asked approximately how many residents Essex Rescue is responsible for. It is an estimated 674 residents. Will and Julia discussed when was and was not an appropriate time to call an ambulance as a resident. Will explained that there's not a lot of good education out there on the matter, but 911 in the United States is treated as a catch all. The point of their services is triage the patient and then decide if they need to be transported or not.

Bill was interested in Essex Rescue's low rate and thought it was a good thing for the community to potentially expand upon that service. Will explained that it is never in their

interest as a rescue service to compete with other rescue services. The people they are serving come first.

#### **FAIRFAX RESCUE FY'22 BUDGET REQUEST**

Michael Wheeler from Fairfax Rescue was present. They are requesting \$12,064 which is an increase since last year. Michael echoed the familiar story of challenges during Covid, especially during a health related industry.

Bill asked how many residents Fairfax Rescue serves, Fairfax rescue services around 1,400 residents. Allison and Michael discussed grants that Fairfax Rescue might have received. Bill observed that per capita Fairfax Rescue charges a substantial amount more than Essex Rescue and wondered if there was a way to negotiate that rate and he asked if they could justify the higher rate. Michael echoed what Will had said about not wanting to compete with other services. Julia was hesitant to be too budget conscious at the expense of residents, especially the large population that lives close to the Fairfax town border.

#### **CONSERVATION COMMISSION FY'22 BUDGET REQUEST**

Sarah Pinto from the Conservation Commission was present. The WCC recognized that the board was requesting level-funded or reduced budget requests but are asking for a small increase of \$400 from last year's budget. The outdoor recreation industry has thrived during the pandemic and the trails in town have seen a surge in use and the Conservation Commission would like to try and make the trails as user friendly as possible.

They would use the increased budget to print physical copies of their new guidebook which would then be laminated and available at trailheads, library and town office. The funds would also go towards much needed equipment that is used to create and maintain the trails. Currently all the WCC equipment is stored in the Hallers' barn on Brookside, but this is not a long-term solution. They would like to discuss more permanent and secure storage of the WCC equipment in the form of a large shed that would be located on town property. In addition, the WCC would use the additional funds to install more trailhead kiosks like the ones recently installed at the Misty Meadows trails and build a small bridge on Schultz trail.

The WCC would also like to address the major erosion issues on the Machia Hill end of Schultz trail. This would require engineering and implementation of the design with anticipated costs of at least \$1,500.

They are also requesting funding to continue offering outreach and educational events for the public. Outdoor education has become very popular due to the pandemic. Leading up to the purchase of Maple Shade, there were a number of walks with ecologists, wetland specialists, flora & fauna experts including foresters, invasive species consultants and even "The Bird Diva". They would like to continue these nature walks and to coordinate with Westford Elementary to provide opportunities for students. This also provides potential for fundraising as they can offer some events for a fee with a portion going towards the budget or Conservation Fund.

The board members reiterated their appreciation for the WCC and the hard work they have done. They all appreciate and use the trails on a regular basis, they are a great asset for Westford.

### **RECREATION COMMITTEE FY'22 BUDGET REQUEST**

Tonya Calley & Chuck Medick from the Recreation Committee were present. As with everybody, Covid had a big impact on them. They have been working with the Conservation Commission to work on the trails and increase recreational uses. They have also proposed to do a recreational snowshoe series with the Conservation Committee throughout the winter.

Julia expressed how impressed with the Recreation Committee and how they showed up without a huge hole where revenue would be. She thanked them for the creative thinking and encouraging people to be active throughout Covid. Tonya explained that they got donations that allowed them to continue to run programs and without the help of those donations they would not have been able to continue the programs. Julia was also appreciative of how transparent with expenses the Rec Committee has been this year, it is nice to see.

### **WESTFORD CEMETERY COMMISSION FY'22 BUDGET REQUEST**

Lynn Gauthier from the Cemetery Commission was present. The Cemetery Commission is requesting a reduced budget request of \$8,000. This is a \$2,500 decrease from last year and they can do so because of available reserves. They will use the budgeted money to completed unfinished restoration projects, repair gravestones, mowing & trimming in all the cemeteries, monitor trees in the Brookside, Plains and Richardson cemeteries, install E911 signs at the entrances to the cemeteries and continue exploring the possibility of installing a Veteran's monument within the village center.

The Cemetery Commission is also asking the Selectboard to add a stipend as part of the Westford Town Budget. The amount they are request is \$400.00 (level-funded) to be included 2021-2022 budget. The board felt that stipend was fair.

Bill complimented the Cemetery Commission on the work they've done especially on the Osgood Hill Cemetery which he has noticed a remarkable difference in. He thanked Lynn for coming to the board with a substantial budget cut from last year. He appreciates the effort in these times. Julia also thanked the Cemetery Commission and feels they are an underappreciated Commission in town.

### **DEVELOPMENTAL REVIEW BOARD FY'22 BUDGET REQUEST**

The DRB is requesting reduced funding for FY'22, a total of \$7,325 which is a decrease of 27% from last year. Bill is also on the DRB and was present to present for them as well. He is proud of how much they were able to shave from the budget.

### **LIBRARY STORMWATER MITIGATION SUMMARY OF PHASE 1A**

Pat Hechmer was present, the Stormwater work was finished. Previously they had asked for the whole \$5,000 last time and they did end up using those extra funds where the further excavation took place that the engineers felt was contributing to the runoff on the eastern side of the building. The culvert does still need to be flushed and are wondering if it can be put on an annual maintenance schedule.

Julia thinks that's a question for John, he was no longer on the call but they would circle back to him with the questions. The Culvert was under 128 so Nanette is betting that we don't touch that, he will have to figure it out with the state.

### **DRB APPOINTMENT**

The DRB is recommending the appointment of Francois Ross to the vacant seat on the DRB. Francois currently serves as an alternate board member. Bill made a motion to appoint Francois, Allison 2<sup>nd</sup>. Motion passed 3-0.

### **SANTA MAILBOX REQUEST**

The Recreation Committee is looking to do a Letter to Santa program this year. The Library has agreed to have the Santa Mailbox outside after 11/15 through the week of Christmas AND will have letter supplies on hand for the kids visiting the library looking to write a letter. The Recreation Committee requests permission to put up the Mailbox.

Allison thinks it's a delightful idea. Allison made a motion to approve the Santa Mailbox, Bill 2<sup>nd</sup>. Motion passed 3-0.

### **ICE RINK**

The Recreation Committee is in the planning process of getting the Ice Rink up and ordering the new liner, however the question was posed if this was feasible due to COVID trace tracking since this is a come and play as you would like with no real supervision.

Considering the contact tracing and the recent Covid outbreak in Montpelier due to ice rink usage, they are concerned. Allison thought that it was mostly inside rinks that were becoming an issue and she thought perhaps an outside rink would allow people to still do ice activities outside. But she does think we need to be conscious of how many people are on the ice at the same time as well as respectful to the nearby neighbors. Tonya suggested a "sign your name and date" might work well. Bill & Julia agreed with Allison, but Julia thought that broomball was a different situation and she feels like it would be more people than the government recommends in one place. Tonya and Game On VT, who runs the broomball tournament, are currently in talks to discuss this since tournaments themselves aren't allowed per state guidelines this year.

### **RECREATION COMMITTEE APPOINTMENT**

The Recreation Committee is submitting Ashley Siliker to the vacant position on the Recreation Committee and she was approved by the committee with an unanimous yes vote.

Bill made a motion to approve Ashley, Allison 2<sup>nd</sup>. Motion passed 3-0.

### **GRANT WRITER**

There has been an application to the Grant Writer position and two additional people who have expressed interest. Julia put it on the agenda to keep an eye on it. Normally Koi Boynton would be taking this on but is having a surgery soon and her recovery takes precedent so she passing it off to the board.

### **CORRESPONDENCE**

Julia wanted to address the discussion about the speed on Woods Hollow Road. Allison had previously worked with Charlie Baker at CCRPC on doing a traffic study which will be done at some point. Allison also wanted to address the front porch forum post from a resident that wanted to build their own speedbump that the answer to that is a big no. That puts our road crew and others at huge risk.

A local state trooper who lives in town has been putting speed carts out around town, Andrew Collier, the state trooper in question, had seen the discussion about speed on FPF and is putting a speed cart on Woods Hollow Road. Julia wanted to put out more information about the speed issue since she is at the end of her rope with the complaints about speed on Woods Hollow because she does not feel the tone has been constructive.

Bill wondered if it would be possible to ask law enforcement to be stricter on their ticketing for speeding in town. We do get reports from them, but they do go quite heavy on the warnings. Nanette mentioned that the most recent report had a lot of stops occurring on 128 in the majority. She will send them a message reminding them that we want to focus on several heavily focused town roads since that is much more of a safety issue for pedestrians.

#### **COMMUNICATION**

Allison and Julia will draft a FPF response to all the speeding complaints on Woods Hollow Road.

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

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

#### **ADJOURN**

The meeting adjourned at 8:55p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Julia Andrews, Chair  
Selectboard

Callie Hamdy  
Assistant Town Clerk

**TOWN OF WESTFORD HIGHWAY DEPT.  
ROAD SCHEDULE  
October 9, 2020 – October 22, 2020**

Work to be done

- Grade roads when we can.
- Continue with FEMA work.
- Replace a cross culvert on Seymour Rd.

Work completed

- Graded many sections of roads.
- Added gravel to Osgood Hill Rd. and Allen Irish Rd.
- Changed a cross culvert and ditched a section on Old Stage Rd.
- Hauled in gravel for road surface work.
- Made repairs to the 2014 Western Star.
- Serviced the 2014 and 2017 Western stars.
- Put winter tires on all 3 trucks prepped for plowing.
- Replaced the alternator on the grader.
- Had a Dead tree removed on Osgood Hill Rd.

**GUEST LIST**

Buddy, LCATV  
Dave Lavallee  
Lee McClenny  
Michael Wheeler  
Lynn Gauthier  
Tonya Calley  
Sarah Pinto  
Will Moran  
Vicky Ross  
Pat Hechmer  
Glenn Rogers  
Chuck Medick