

**SELECTBOARD MEETING**  
**January 28, 2021**  
**Minutes**

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

Guests:        Nathan Segale    Buddy Meilleur (LCATV)

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

**CHANGES TO AGENDA**

Under highway added Request to Work in Town Right of Way, VEC Town Right of Way Utility Request. Under discussion added Humane Society Annual Agreement.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

**MINUTES**

Bill Cleary made a motion to approve the January 14<sup>th</sup> minutes as amended, seconded by Allison Hope.. Motion passed: 3-0.

Allison Hope made a motion to approve the January 19<sup>th</sup> minutes as written, seconded by Bill Cleary. Motion passed: 3-0.

**ROAD SCHEDULE**

John Roberts, Road Foreman, presented the Road Schedule from January 15, 2021 – January 28, 2021. Bill Cleary made a motion to approve the Road Schedule, seconded by Allison Hope. Motion passed: 3-0.

**FIREWOOD LOTTERY**

Bill brought up roadside cutting and firewood ownership with lottery, it was something Bill had seen discussed for other towns. Julia would like to talk about it, but they needed more information, to her it sounds complicated. It is important not to push additional work on to our town employees unexpectedly, so the Board needs to examine this more fully.

**REQUEST TO WORK IN TOWN RIGHT OF WAY**

John Roberts is requesting the ability to work in the town right of way so that Vermont Electric Coop can get service up to his property off Plains Road. Power would run aside the driveway up to where the house will be built. Julia was only concerned because John is listed as both the applicant and the Road Foreman, otherwise it is very straightforward. She is wondering if we change the signature line so that Nanette can sign the form as a town official instead. Bill volunteered to be present for the inspection after the completion of the project.

Bill made a motion to approve the request to work in the town right of way and to approve the Vermont Electric Coop ROW utility request with the change that Nanette will sign the form and

the final inspection will be done by a member of the Selectboard, seconded by Allison Hope. Motion passed: 3-0.

#### **CERTIFICATE OF HIGHWAY MILEAGE**

This is a form done annually. Allison Hope made a motion to approve the certificate of highway mileage, seconded by Bill Cleary. Motion passed: 3-0.

#### **FY'20 AUDIT FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

Nathan Segale was present to go over the FY'20 Audit Report. It's an adverse opinion but it's not a big deal as the Town is concerned. The adverse opinion is because the Town is not providing the Government wide financial statements. The Town is presenting financial statements in their full and acceptable forms, just not in the way the generally accepted accounting principles for government entities typically are.

Nathan stated that the only thing an adverse opinion does for some entities is in regard to lending, however for municipalities and government entities it has zero impact. Bill asked if we are the only Town Nathan deals with that has the adverse opinion issue and can the wording be changed to better reflect what actually happens? Nathan stated no, Westford is not the only town he works with that has an adverse opinion and the wording can't be changed. What the auditors are looking for as a municipality is that our numbers are good which they are.

Nathan explained the report in detail. Allison asked Greg if we already have \$99,000 set aside for the reappraisal? Greg confirmed that, they are assigned funds. Allison wondered if once those funds are used for the reappraisal if the town will need to build it back up over time? Nanette thinks that we get those funds from the State annually, therefore the Town doesn't foot the whole bill.

Julia thanked Nathan for his work on the report. To finalize the Board needs to sign the management letter. Once the Auditors receive the signed letter, they will send the final which Greg will sign. Allison Hope made a motion to accept the FY'20 Audit and have Greg and Julia sign the audit management letter, seconded by Bill Cleary. Motion passed: 3-0.

#### **DOG WARDEN TRAIL SIGNAGE FOLLOW UP**

Before beginning, Bill wanted to bring attention to a decision in Williston where they closed a trail to dogs entirely due to issues. He wanted the Board to keep this in mind when discussing. Ultimately it should not come to this point.

After the last meeting, Allison tried to walk on the Maple Shade trails regularly. All our signage there tries to educate others about not going on to the Haller's property, however, does not indicate about the other bordering residential properties near the trail. In addition, there is a gap in the stone wall near by the Baczewskis. She feels additional signage is needed to clarify that this is not a trail for users. She also thinks that we need to remind people that we have a Dog Ordinance. Allison put copies of the Dog Ordinance on the kiosk, but they had disappeared. Everybody she ran into this weekend and last were respectful and dogs were well behaved. Bill had no strong objections to the signage. Considering the article from Williston it would be a travesty to the responsible dog walkers in town to shut trails down to dogs, so if signage helps avoid that it's a good thing.

Allison noted that she received positive feedback regarding the usage of the trail by the Cross-Country team.

### **ANNUAL HUMANE SOCIETY AGREEMENT**

There was a slight increase in fees for cats, but the Town only gets charged if we bring an animal in. Otherwise, it is the same as other years. Allison Hope made a motion to approve the annual agreement with the Humane Society as written and for Nanette to sign it, seconded by Bill Cleary. Motion passed: 3-0.

### **CORRESPONDENCE**

Nanette sent a draft post card to the Board and asked for feedback. The postcard will be mailed to active registered voters and will outline changes to Town Meeting.

A resident contacted the Town regarding an increase in logging activity on their road. They were not sure if the loggers were doing so legally. Allison had also noticed an increase in logging activity over the past year, but it doesn't seem out of the norm right now. She was surprised they were still doing it in certain road conditions. Bill explained that logging is a common activity here and on Machia Hill Road the logging trucks are probably using a specific type of brake that makes them louder. He had no issue with the logging. Julia will touch base with the Conservation Commission regarding the logging and resident complaint.

Bill was part of a conversation that took place where the discussion was about a 2% or 3% increase for school versus a 9% increase which would be positive. Julia thinks that the school boards know they can't burden people that way right now. It is encouraging news.

### **COMMUNICATION**

Addressed.

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

Greg Barrows, Town Treasurer, reviewed the Accounts Payable and Payroll Warrants.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Bill Cleary made a motion to move into Executive Session at 8:13 p.m. to discuss a legal opinion, seconded by Allison Hope. Motion passed: 3-0. People in attendance were Julia Andrews, Bill Cleary, Allison Hope, and Nanette Rogers. The Board exited Executive Session at 8:30 p.m. No action taken.

### **ADJOURN**

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Julia Andrews, Chair  
Selectboard

Callie Hamdy  
Assistant Town Clerk

**TOWN OF WESTFORD HIGHWAY DEPT.**  
**ROAD SCHEDULE**  
**Jan. 15, 2021 – Jan. 28, 2021**

Work to be done

- Plow, sand and salt when needed.
- Roadside brush cutting.
- Receive the new one ton from Iroquois.

Work completed

- Plowed, sanded and salted roads several times.
- Worked on the trucks.
- Fixed the F550 brakes.

Approved at the 1/28/21 Selectboard Meeting.