

Lee McClenny made a motion to approve Pat Haller's request to work in the right of way to make repairs to the stonewall, seconded by Dave Baczewski. Motion passed: 3-0.

**REQUEST TO BURY UTILITY LINE IN RIGHT OF WAY ON COMMON ROAD –
WESTFORD HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

The Westford Historical Society is requesting permission to bury utility lines in the town right of way on Common Road. The work will be completed between July 5th and September 30th of this year.

Bill asked John if he saw any problems with the request. John explained that it is standard work, however he has requested the trench be four and a half feet deep instead of the typical three feet to accommodate future infrastructure for the community wastewater system.

Dave Baczewski made a motion to approve the Westford Historical Society's request to bury utility lines in the right of way on Common Road, seconded by Lee McClenny. Motion passed: 3-0.

**ACCESS PERMIT APPLICATION FOR TEMPORARY ACCESS ON WOODS HOLLOW
ROAD**

Jeremy Devlin submitted an access permit application for a temporary on 15 Woods Hollow Road to install a septic system to replace a failed system. This is the only way the trucks and equipment can access the property. John is fine with the application and noted that the approval will include a condition to remove the access and seed and mulch the area within 30 days after the project is completed.

Lee McClenny made a motion to approve Jeremy's application for a temporary access, seconded by Dave Baczewski. Motion passed: 3-0.

FY'21 HIGHWAY BUDGET STATUS

Greg Barrows, Treasurer, reviewed the FY'21 Highway Budget status report. It is the end of the fiscal year. Greg provided an explanation of why the highway property tax revenue is higher than budgeted. He discovered an error in an adjustment of the allocation. There is approximately \$76,000 that will need to be removed from the Highway Fund to the General Fund. After the transfer, the balance in the Highway Fund will be approximately \$53,000.

**WESTFORD MOTION TASK FORCE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATION AND
COMMENTS REGARDING THE 2020 CCRPC SPEED STUDY**

Pat Haller, Devin Porter, Doris Bittruf and Andre Roy from the Westford Motion Task Force Committee (WMTFC) were present. Pat gave a short history of the task force.

The Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) conducted a speed study on Old Stage Road, Woods Hollow Road, Brookside Road and Cambridge Road in the Fall of 2020. Pat iterated that the CCRPC study was based on speeding, not necessarily about road safety. Most people are driving the speed limit, but people still do not feel safe walking, biking, etc. on Westford's rural dirt roads.

The WMTFC reviewed the CCRPC study and recommends that the Selectboard not rely on the study as the sole basis for transportation planning in Westford because it is inconsistent with the 2021 Westford Town Plan for transportation. While they believe the study provides

useful information on vehicle safety, more consideration and action are required to address recurring safety concerns expressed by Westford residents.

The WMTFC would like the Selectboard to seek a more detailed investigation of road safety that would consider factors left out of the CCRPC Report to address safety concerns and be more in line with the 2021 Town Plan. Their suggestions are as follows:

- More thorough observation and analysis of vehicle behavior such as an independent traffic engineering study to consider both motorized and non-motorized traffic,
- Prepare a survey of town resident to answer questions on road safety, and
- Create a traffic incident reporting system.

Lee McClenny read the CCRPC study and thought it informative but agrees with the WMTFC. He would like to see more data and citizen input on road safety conditions. Dave Baczewski appreciated the WMTFC's report. He views the CCRPC's study as a step. He feels if the Town moves forward with another study, a clear timeline of when the study should take place should be identified and that the study should include non-vehicular behavior. He is interested in the cost of the next step. Regarding the incident reporting system, Dave thinks there may be some legal and privacy concerns that need to be considered.

Pat explained that when the WMTFC contacted the CCRPC to ask them if they did speed studies, the CCRPC advised they were already in the process of the one discussed in the report. After the speed study the WMTFC asked the CCRPC about pedestrian and traffic calming measures. Typically, the recommendation would be to make the road narrower, but this makes it difficult for non-vehicular users on rural, gravel roads. Bill feels the survey suggested by the WMTFC is the first step to seek citizen's opinions. Dave appreciated the WMTFC pointing out that the CCRPC study was done prior to the adoption of the current Town Pan and feels strongly that the goals in the new Town Plan need to be considered in future studies.

Bill asked if Pat thought the CCRPC would be amenable to conducting a survey outside of COVID conditions. It was noted that CCRPC studies are based on making the most efficient use of traffic flow which is based on State guidelines including speed limits and stop signs. All speed studies deal with speed and accidents, which does not address the perennial complaints from residents about safety for non-vehicular use. The WMTFC does not feel they have the expertise to help walkers, bikers, horseback riders, etc. to come to a solution to feel safer. Groups such as Local Motion are geared towards bicycle use would be more informed on how to increase bike-ability and walkability. Pat and the WMTFC are willing to look into grants for funding projects.

Bill thanked Pat and the WMTFC for their hard work and passion to continue such work.

DISCUSS SURVEY FOR POTENTIAL WALK-ABILITY AND BIKE-ABILITY ENDEAVORS

Pat Haller, Doris Bittruf, Devin Porter and Andre Roy from the WMTFC were present. At the advice of Zoning Administrator Kate Lalley, they reached out to Local Motion who recommended doing a survey to find out how people feel about specific solutions for traffic calming all of which would be paid for by the CCRPC.

The WMTFC provided a draft survey to the Selectboard. The survey is geared to gather citizen input on increasing walkability, bike-ability, and general pedestrian safety measures. The WMTFC is seeking permission from the Selectboard to publish the survey.

Dave Baczewski asked if the survey is for Westford residents only. It is however if someone knows Westford's zip code, they can take the survey. Greg Barrows asked residents who have a neighboring town zip code but live in Westford. Pat explained they could perhaps change the language to clarify using the physical location zip code. Dave felt that offering gift certificates for completing the survey turns it into a raffle and people may try to complete the survey more than once to better their chances. He wants to have confidence that the survey will be statistically valid because of the potential decisions that will be made based on the results.

Dave felt the survey as written presents some biased language and contains leading questions. He does not know if he would be comfortable making decisions based on the data collected from the survey as currently written. That being said he feels it is a great step. He just wants to make sure the survey has the validity to have the impact the WMTFC is hoping for.

Devin Porter explained in their meeting with Local Motion they did discuss making sure Westford received data that could be relied on. They discussed to some extent how much detail they needed to get into in the survey to strike the right balance. Devin was willing to take suggestions from the Selectboard. Pat and Devin were willing to consult with an experienced individual, perhaps someone from VLTC, to review the survey.

APPROACHING PRIVATE LANDOWNERS ON BEHALF OF THE TOWN FOR THE SITING AND INSTALLATION OF TOWN OF WESTFORD WELCOME SIGNS AT KEY POSITIONS ON ROUTE 128

Eric Ford of the Westford Arts, Events and Communications Task Force (WAECTF) was present to request permission to approach Westford residents to obtain permission to site the welcome signs on their land and obtain estimates on costs for fabrication and installation with assistance from the town road crew. Welcome signs along Vermont Route 128 would increase awareness of the Town. Sign locations that Eric identified are on the borders of Essex and Fairfax and on each entrance to the Common (Village) area. A design is already in the works and the WAECTF has received guidance from VTRANS regarding the location and right of way on Vermont Route 128.

Bill notices town welcome signs when he is driving around. He does not have any objections, but the cost will be an important factor. As far as approaching landowners the Board is willing to give Eric permission to approach landowners on behalf of the Town. Eric would appreciate assistance from the Town to identify residents who may be open to the idea and the best way to approach them. Bill noted that it should be mentioned that the request is not only siting the sign, but also the maintaining of its visibility.

Lee agreed and thought that a lot of people will pay attention to the signs. Westford is a great town and people should be aware they are coming into Westford. He thinks property owners would want to know what the signs would look like prior to agreeing to the installation. Dave agreed.

Bill thinks welcome signs are important for navigation and town pride. Lee believes the Town's history, character and uniqueness is something that we should highlight and be proud of.

EXPLORE CREATION AND COSTS/TIMELINE ASSOCIATED WITH A NEW TOWN OF WESTFORD WEBSITE, WITH IMPROVED ACCESSIBILITY FOR RESIDENTS AND THE TOWN OFFICE

Eric Ford, of the Westford Arts, Events and Communications Task Force (WAECTF) was present to request permission to create a plan, timeline and seek cost estimates for developing a new Town website. Prior to the pandemic, WAECTF identified that this as one of their goals. There is renewed interest as well as support from the Westford Economic Development Task Force (WEDTF). Current users of the website feel that an updated website would vastly improve access and usability for taxpayers.

What can we do to improve functionality on the back end to make town employees' jobs easier and what can we do on the front end to help users? Eric explained that WAECTF has talked with town employees regarding how they use and would like to use a website. The Recreation Department has a lot of trouble functioning the way they would like in the website's current state. A modernized website could also help organize events, common usage, and communication. The WAECTF has yet to identify a funding source, but that would be the next step if the Selectboard approves going forward.

The Board thinks this is a great idea and approved with the WAECTF moving forward.

REQUEST TO OFFER BOTANY AND PLANT IDENTIFICATION CLASSES ON TOWN TRAIL

Amber Kennedy was present via Zoom. She is requesting permission to teach botany and plant identification classes on the Seymour Trail. Amber is an herbalist and lives near the trail. A portion of the classes would be held on her property. Groups would be kept small and stay on the marked trails while taking photos and notes. The Board cautioned Amber to make sure that when walking on trails that Amber and her students stay within the town right of way.

Lee McClenny made a motion to approve Amber's request to hold botany classes on town land consistent with good neighborly behavior along the trails, seconded by Dave Baczewski seconded. Motion passed: 3-0.

DOG WARRANT FOR UNLICENSED DOGS

This is an annual document, but it was not done last year because of COVID-19. Dog Licenses were due on April 1st. Nanette pointed out that the language in the warrant can come off harsh, but typically the Town takes a softer approach. People are receptive once they get an initial contact from the Dog Warden to license their dogs. In addition to reminder notices on the Front Porch Forum and in town newsletters, dog owners who did not license their dogs received a letter in May reminding them to license their dog(s).

Andre Roy asked how the Town is made aware of unlicensed dogs. The list is based on dogs that were licensed last year but not the current year. Dogs are removed from the list if a dog owner notifies the Town of the dog's passing or moving to another town.

Lee McClenny made a motion to approve the Dog License Warrant as presented and instruct the Dog Warden to contact the individuals who may have unlicensed dogs to ask them to come into compliance with town and state law, seconded by Dave Baczewski. Motion passed: 3-0.

FY'22 CONTRACT FOR SERVICES WITH CHITTENDEN COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

The Sheriff's contract expires at the end of this month. The Sheriff's office advised that there would not be an increase in the hourly rate for FY'22. The contract is the same as the prior year and includes an appendix identifying the budget amount as well as requesting that high traffic roads be patrolled.

Dave Baczewski made a motion to approve the contract for services from the Chittenden County Sheriff's Office for July 2021 through June 2022, seconded by Lee McClenny. Motion passed: 3-0.

CORRESPONDENCE

The Town received thank you letters from the agencies the Town allocates donations to.

The Board has been in contract with the vendor that mows town properties to make sure the common and other areas look good for the Fourth of July celebration.

COMMUNICATION

There were no communications.

ANNUAL INTERNAL FINANCIAL CONTROLS CHECKLIST

Greg Barrows, Treasurer, reviewed the Internal Financial Controls Checklist. Dave Baczewski motioned to approve the Annual Internal Financial Controls Checklist as presented and approved the chairman to sign it, seconded by Lee McClenny. Motion passed: 3-0.

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE & PAYROLL WARRANTS

Greg Barrows, Treasurer, reviewed the accounts payable and payroll warrants. The Selectboard signed the warrants.

FY'21 GENERAL FUND BUDGET STATUS REPORT

Greg Barrows, Treasurer, reviewed the FY'21 General Fund Budget status report.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Lee McClenny made a motion to go into Executive Session at 9:03 p.m. to discuss personnel, seconded by Dave Baczewski. Motion passed 3-0. People in attendance were Bill Cleary, Lee McClenny, Dave Baczewski, Greg Barrows and Nanette Rogers. The Board exited Executive Session at 9:32 p.m. Dave Baczewski made a motion to increase all employee wages by 2.5%, except for one employee who will receive a \$1.00 per hour increase, and to change the Town Clerk and Town Administrator positions from hourly to salary, seconded by Lee McClenny. Motion passed: 3-0.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 9:33 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Bill Cleary, Selectboard Chair

Callie Hamdy
Assistant Town Clerk/Minute Clerk

GUEST LIST

Pat Haller
Eric Ford
Dave Lavallee
Michael Wright (LCATV)
Shawn Fennelly (LCATV)
Andre Roy
Doris Bittruf
Devin Porter
Amber Kennedy

TOWN OF WESTFORD HIGHWAY DEPT.
ROAD SCHEDULE
June 10, 2021 – June 24, 2021

Work to be done

- Grade roads as needed
- Add gravel to roads
- Continue working on Old Stage Road ditching and culvert replacement
- Continue hauling in winter sand

Work completed

- Graded Huntley Rd., Brookside Rd., Phelps Rd., Maple Tree Ln., Common Rd., Allen Irish Rd., Bill Cook Rd., most of Old Stage Rd., most of Cambridge Rd., most of Woods Hollow Rd. half of Osgood Hill Rd., lower half of Old #11 Rd., upper half of Covey Rd.
- Hauled in winter sand
- Swept the intersection of Brookside Rd., and 128
- Chloride roads after grading
- More of the ditching, stone lining and culvert replacements on Old Stage Rd
- Serviced the Cat excavator
- Cut some wind damaged trees on several roads

Approved at the 06/24/21 Selectboard Meeting.