

**SELECTBOARD MEETING
July 8, 2021
Minutes**

Present: Bill Cleary (chair) Callie Hamdy
Lee McClenny Greg Barrows
Dave Baczewski Nanette Rogers

Guests: See attached list

The meeting was called to order at 7:12 p.m. The meeting was held in person and via Zoom.

CHANGES TO AGENDA

Deleted Planning Commission Monthly Update, added Accept VCDP Grant Agreement & Approve the Resolution, added Authorize Selectboard Member to Sign the SE Group Contract

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

MINUTES

Lee McClenny made a motion to approve the minutes of June 24, 2021, as amended, seconded by Dave Baczewski. Motion passed: 3-0.

Dave Baczewski made a motion to approve the minutes of July 6, 2021, as written, seconded by Lee McClenny. Motion passed: 3-0.

ROAD SCHEDULE

Bill Cleary reviewed the Road Schedule from June 25, 2021 – July 8, 2021. Dave Baczewski made a motion to approve the Road Schedule, seconded by Lee McClenny. Motion passed: 3-0.

REQUEST FOR ACCESS OFF MACHIA HILL ROAD OR SCHULTZ TRAIL

Jim and Kati Anderson wanted clarification regarding future projects on the Schultz Trail so they can ensure future projects do not further restrict access to their property. Sarah Pinto from the Conservation Commission was present and asked how they had been restricted. The Andersons explained that the bridge put in across the river on the Machia Hill side of Schultz Trail restricts their access to that corner of their property for silviculture purposes as they use an ATV to cross the river in that shallow area.

Dale Rodgers from the Conservation Commission was present. He explained that the bridge was very mobile and could be moved. The Andersons took more issue with the fact that there was no communication prior to the project happening so they were worried that would happen again. Dale Rodgers explained that the bridge had been placed in that location because it was a shallow area with stable ground, perfect for a crossing. Sarah explained that the work done on Schultz Trail went before the Selectboard and apologized if the Andersons were not given proper notice and that would be amended going forward. The bridge and ditching project were a decade or two wish-list projects in the making that used a considerable part of their budget and going forward they do not have other big plans other than maintenance. Sarah asked if the Andersons would like a letter every time they do maintenance or perhaps for events such as the Trail Passport Program event happening now.

Bill asked if the Andersons were satisfied with Dale's response and if they would be able to run their four-wheeler to the side of the bridge. That was correct. Dale explained that it happened on short notice because the contractor was able to come down and had a short window to do so. The Andersons were present on the day and adjustments with the contractor were made during that time.

The Andersons were also requesting permission to remove some trees from the right of way of the Trail especially near their driveway and northern part of the property. Dale would like notice if they skidded logs. Sarah explained that neighboring properties logging using nearby trails for logging had permission to do so only for themselves, the Andersons would need their own permissions. Bill asked the Andersons if they feel comfortable that the message was received clearly by the Conservation Commission? They were and were welcome to discuss their forestry plan in relation to the Trail in the future.

FY'21 HIGHWAY BUDGET FINAL STATUS REPORT

Greg Barrows, Treasurer, reviewed the final Highway Budget status report.

DRAFT APPLICATION FOR EVENTS ON THE COMMON

Lori Johnson from the Common Committee submitted a draft application for events on the Town Common along with a list of routine uses that could be approved by the Common Committee and Town Clerk without having to go through the Selectboard.

Lori was present. The draft application looked good to Bill, and he thanked Lori, Nanette, and those on the Common Committee for their hard work. It will free up time on the Selectboard agenda and it is good to give those looking to use the Common a more streamlined application process. Lee and Dave agreed. The Town attorney will give it a look and give any needed changes.

Dave Baczewski made a motion to approve the Town Common Application for Use pending any changes from the town attorney, seconded by Lee McClenny. Motion passed: 3-0.

ACCEPT VCDP GRANT AGREEMENT & APPROVE THE RESOLUTION

Dave Baczewski reviewed the documents as he was the Chief Executive Officer appointed to sign on to GEARS to accept the grant agreement. Any potential expenses had been budgeted for in the Planning Commission special project funds.

Dave wanted to bring to the attention of the Board to accept this money there is strings. Prior to taking this money we must include the following in our Town Policy language: equal employment opportunity, fair housing, use of excessive force, cannot do federal lobbying, drug free workplace, code of ethics for administration of VCDP, whistleblower protection, and no texting while driving. This will be included in our Town Policy so we can receive the grant and to improve our best practices.

Lee McClenny made a motion to approve the VCDP Grant Agreement and the resolution, seconded by Dave Baczewski. Motion passed: 3-0.

AUTHORIZE SELECTBOARD MEMBER TO SIGN THE SE GROUP CONTRACT

This was the 'Selective Project Consultant'. The Planning Commission interviewed several consultants, and this is the firm of choice. This is the entity that will be conducting the work for the grant previously talked about above.

Lee McClenny motioned to approve Bill Cleary to sign the SE Group Contract, seconded by Dave Baczewski. Motion passed: 3-0.

PROPOSED ROAD NAME FOR SUBDIVISION OFF ROGERS ROAD

Jonathan and Celestine Czapski were applying for a road name for their subdivision off Rogers Road. The three options provided by the Czapskis were: Creekside Crescent, Whitsunday Lane, and Whitsunday Crescent.

Nanette suggested that based on 911 road names she is not sure that crescent is an accepted road term. She was not sure if this would change how Sally and Jonathan would like to use the names, but she does believe crescent cannot be used. Sally Czapski was present and suggested that Whitsunday Lane was a fine choice. Lee McClenny made a motion to approve the name 'Whitsunday Lane' for the new road off Rogers Road as requested by the Czapskis, seconded by Dave Baczewski. Motion passed 3-0.

CORONAVIRUS LOCAL FISCAL RECOVERY FUNDING (CLFRF)

Dave Baczewski made a motion that the Town of Westford accept its allocation of Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Funding (CLFRF) from the US Treasury, along with the Award Terms & Conditions and Assurances of Compliance with the Civil Rights Requirements of accepting these funds, seconded by Lee McClenny. Motion passed: 3-0.

The Town then needed to designate an authorized representative. Dave Baczewski made a motion to appoint the Selectboard chair to serve as the Town of Westford's "Authorized Representative" as required by the Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Funding (CLFRF) from the US Treasury, along with the Award Terms & Conditions and Assurances of Compliance with the Civil Rights Requirements by July 15, 2021, seconded by Lee McClenny. Motion passed: 3-0.

Lee McClenny made a motion that Greg Barrows be the "Contact Person" for the Town of Westford's CLFRF Award from the US Treasury, seconded by Dave Baczewski. Motion passed: 3-0.

TOWN OFFICE WI-FI CONNECTION FOR MEETINGS

VT Connections, the IT service provider the Town uses, provided a quote for upgrading the office Wi-Fi. This upgrade is important to helping with the Town's continued use of hybrid meetings. The total cost including initial set up, new wireless connector with hardware, licensing and support, and an injector is \$2,729.52.

Melissa Manka, Town Planner, had sent a letter of support regarding the upgrade. Bill had done research into a less expensive option that would include Wi-Fi extenders but understands that people would have concerns with that versus an IT professional. Nanette appreciates Bill's fiscal responsibility, but a non-professional resident had installed our original Wi-Fi in-house, not a professional and the office needs something that is built to support businesses.

Dave thinks this would fall under ARPA money because it aids in pandemic recovery and thinks we should investigate that funding source. Virtual and hybrid meetings are not going away. Nanette acknowledges it is a lot of money, but a lot of it has to do with licenses, hardware, and support. To her it is insurance that things will go smoothly and that it would be

supported in the future. Dave investigated the ARPA fund requirements, and they do list improvements to public buildings as part of that, so he thinks this could apply.

Dave hears Bill's concern about the costs but thinks this is an important item to move forward on. Lee McClenny made a motion to approve VT Connections' quote for Wi-Fi improvements, seconded by Dave Baczewski. Motion passed: 3-0.

CORRESPONDENCE

Dave had some communications over July 4th with residents asking what we were going to do with the ARPA money. Dave spoke with the residents and gave them the VLCT ARPA resources website as a starting point for how the Town may be able to spend certain funds. Dave would like to add an agenda item in August to get the ball rolling on who is on the committee.

COMMUNICATION

There was no communication.

AUDIT RFP

Greg sent out three requests for proposals. Bids were received from Fothergill Segale & Valley, our current auditing firm, and Sullivan Powers & Co. The firms are similar in age and size, Greg feels they will be similar. Fothergill, had a pricing increase and Sullivan's prices were even higher. From a cost perspective we have been using Fothergill for about six years and they are very familiar with the Town's financial records.

Bill was concerned about Fothergill's untimeliness in the past few years, although COVID is certainly something to consider. Greg suggests that whoever we choose we need to get on their schedule as quickly as possible so we can get the audit done in a timely manner. Nanette did stress to them the importance of having those numbers together in a timely manner so the budget can be put together properly. Lee asked if beside timeliness if there were any other concerns with the firm, there were not.

Lee McClenny made a motion to accept the proposal from Fothergill, Segale and Valley as compliant with all our requirements, seconded by Dave Baczewski. Motion passed: 3-0.

DESIGNATE BOARD MEMBER TO SIGN WARRANTS UNTIL NEXT MEETING

The Board needed to designate a Board member to sign warrants until they have their next regular meeting in August. Lee McClenny made a motion to authorize Dave Baczewski to sign the warrants between July 9th and August 1st, seconded by Dave Baczewski seconded. Motion passed: 3-0.

FY'21 GENERAL FUND FINAL STATUS REPORT

Greg Barrows, Treasurer, reviewed the final General Fund status report.

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE & PAYROLL WARRANTS

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

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ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 8:54 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Bill Cleary, Selectboard Chair

Callie Hamdy
Assistant Town Clerk/Minute Clerk

GUEST LIST

Michael Wright (LCATV)
Shawn Fennelly (LCATV)
Sarah Pinto
Kirsten Tyler
Dale Rogers
Lori Johnson
Glenn Rogers
Jim & Kati Anderson
Elias Rosenblatt
Sally Czapski

TOWN OF WESTFORD HIGHWAY DEPT.
ROAD SCHEDULE
June 24, 2021 – July 8, 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 Cambridge Rd., Plains Rd., parts of Woods Hollow Rd., Manley Rd., Pettingill Rd., and Old Stage Rd.
- Hauled in winter sand
- Chloride roads after grading
- Replaced riser and cover on septic tank at town office and installed fencing to protect it
- More of the ditching, stone lining and culvert replacements on Old Stage Rd
- Grass trimming around guardrails at the town library
- Cut and chipped trees at the intersection of North Rd. and Westford/Milton Rd.
- Had the pinion seal replaced on the 2014 Western Star truck

Approved at the 7/8/21 Selectboard Meeting.