

**SELECTBOARD MEETING**  
**February 23, 2022**  
**Minutes**

Present: Bill Cleary (chair) Callie Hamdy  
Dave Baczewski Nanette Rogers  
Lee McClenny John Roberts

Guests: See attached list

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. The meeting was held in person and via Zoom.

**CHANGES TO AGENDA**

There were no changes.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

**TOWN MEETING PUBLIC HEARING**

Bill opened the public hearing and presented the 2022-2023 fiscal year town budget.

The budget that will be voted on March 1 is \$2,047,224. This figure reflects a Highway Budget of \$932,663 and an Administration Budget of \$1,114,561. After factoring in anticipated revenue and utilizing \$20,000 of the FY'21 surplus, the total amount to be raised by taxes is \$1,749,314. The projected municipal tax rate is \$0.6861, which is a decrease of 1.896% from the FY'22 tax rate. Bill pointed out that this is just a municipal tax rate, not the education tax rate.

The highway expenses are increasing by 0.15%. Notable changes are increases in salaries, diesel fuel and building improvements, and decreases in ditching, gravel for resurfacing, rebuilding and mud season, and removal of the Western Star truck payment because the loan has been paid in full.

Administration expenses are increasing by 2.25%. The increase in salaries reflects reconfiguring the Town Administrator position from part-time to full-time, adding a part-time assistant for the Development Review Board (DRB), a minute clerk for the Planning Commission, and the Rec Coordinator. The amount budgeted for Essex Rescue is increasing due to staffing issues and the plans to construct a new building. The loan for the Maple Shade Town Forest has been paid in full so this expense was removed. The allocation for the Rec Committee was removed due to the Rec Coordinator's salary being moved to the admin expenses.

Anticipated revenue for the Highway Department did not change. Revenues for Administration are anticipated to increase by 7.5%, mostly due to recording fees and the metal dumpster.

The Selectboard thanked Greg, Nanette, and MJ for assisting with creating the budget and thanked all town staff, elected/appointment officials and volunteers for their role in our community.

There were no questions from the public. The hearing was closed at 6:25 p.m.

### **MINUTES**

Dave Baczewski made a motion to approve the February 10, 2022 minutes as written, seconded by Lee McClenny. Motion passed: 3-0.

### **ROAD SCHEDULE**

John Roberts, Road Foreman, reviewed the February 11, 2022 through February 23, 2022 Road Schedule (see attached). Lee McClenny made a motion to approve the Road Schedule, seconded by Dave Baczewski. Motion passed: 3-0.

### **DRAFT PUBLIC RECORDS REQUEST POLICY**

This is a policy written by the Vermont League of Cities and Towns for towns to adopt. It lays out the process of requesting public records, so every department follows the same process and requests are being handled the same way. This ensures things are done fairly.

Barb Peck, using the wastewater project as an example, asked if she were to ask for records and there are no records, the Town can just say "sorry there are no records". Dave clarified that there may not be a specific record of the request, but the information may exist in other documentation. What the person would then need to do is request those separate records. The policy will formalize the process. Nanette pointed out that towns have been advised to not create new public records in response to public records requests, rather use the various documents where the information may exist. Lori Johnson asked what the difference is between a Public Records request and an Information Request. Dave explained it depends on the type of record it is, not all records in town are privy to the public. The law lists clearly what must be kept as a public record. Nanette and the Board will go through the document and present a final draft for acceptance at the next meeting.

### **ARPA COMMITTEE UPDATE**

Dave Baczewski gave an update on the ARPA Committee. The Committee's discussion has centered around changes made to the rules, which goes into effect April 1, 2022. Small municipalities were struggling with the reporting requirements and how to spend the money. The changes expand the type of projects that ARPA funds can be used for. The Committee felt it was important to digest the new information and see if any changes need to be made to the application process. Bree and Martha will be putting together a presentation for the Selectboard so that the public can see what the change means for Westford. Dave advised that Bree provided the Committee with an update about joining a Communication Union District (CUD). The sooner the Town joins one the more beneficial it will be for Westford.

### **GOODRICH TRAIL LICENSING AGREEMENT - HAZEN**

Jamie Hazen submitted the signed license agreement for the Goodrich Trail as negotiated between the Town's attorney and his attorney for the Board's approval and signatures.

Ben Bornstein was present and expressed some concerns. He and A. Johnson have a need to access their property off the Goodrich Trail and he doesn't think it's clear that the map provided by the Hazen's cuts across their right-of-way. He would like the approval to be postponed until at least March 24<sup>th</sup> until his and A. Johnson's attorneys can review the document.

Bill pointed out that the area in question is impacting 158 square feet of material and feels it does not impede Ben's access to the Goodrich Trail. Nanette pointed out that the Town and its attorney are aware of the court order with regard to the Bornstein and A. Johnson Co.

access and use of the trail, which was taken into consideration when the agreement was written. It was also pointed out that this agreement does not include installing a gate within the town right of way.

Lee asked Ben if his easement/right of way across the Hazen's land intersects in anyway with the 158 square feet or does it go further up and cross the Hazen's driveway. Ben advised that it does cut across the 158 square feet.

Bill stated the Town Attorney advised that if Ben argued for revisions to the agreement, the Board could rebut stating that this Agreement is what was recommended by the Town Attorney, and that any boundary disputes are private between the property owners and do not involve the Town. This Agreement is only between the Hazen's and the Town with regard to the part of the trail being improved to be used as a driveway. Dave Baczewski made a motion to approve the License Agreement with the Hazens, seconded by Lee McClenny. Motion passed: 3-0.

#### **CORRESPONDENCE**

Lee responded to a question about ARPA from Barb Peck. Dave had exchanges with the Planning Commission and the Town Planner on what's released and what isn't released regarding records.

#### **COMMUNICATION**

The Board would like the Dog Warden position advertised frequently until filled and reminders to dog owners when licenses are due.

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

The Board signed the accounts payable and payroll warrants.

#### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Lee McClenny made a motion to Enter Executive session at 7:42 pm to discuss personnel, seconded by Dave Baczewski. Motion passed: 3-0. People in attendance were Bill Cleary, Lee McClenny, Dave Baczewski, Nanette Rogers, and Callie Hamdy. The Board exited Executive Session at 8:30 p.m. No action taken.

#### **ADJOURN**

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Bill Cleary, Selectboard Chair

Callie Hamdy,  
Assistant Town Clerk/Minute Clerk

## GUEST LIST

Colleen Nesto  
Ben Bornstein  
Bree Drapa  
Amanda Spector  
Lori Johnson  
Barb Peck  
Peter McCormick  
Sheila Franz  
Doris Bitruf  
Rebecca Baczewski  
Martha Heath  
Andre Roy  
Maureen Wilcox

**TOWN OF WESTFORD HIGHWAY DEPT.  
ROAD SCHEDULE  
February 11, 2022 – February 24, 2022**

Work to be done

- Plow and sand when needed.
- Brush cutting.
- Fixing potholes.

Work completed

- Sanded and plowed several times.
- Pushed snowbank back in several areas.
- Steamed several culverts.
- Had a few trees cut on Old Stage Rd.
- Bathroom demo/ remodel.
- Graded part of Cambridge RD.

Approved at the 2/23/22 Selectboard Meeting.