

**SELECTBOARD MEETING**  
**March 10, 2022**  
**Minutes**

Present:	Lee McClenny (Chair) Dave Baczewski Greg Barrows	Callie Hamdy Nanette Rogers John Roberts
Guests:	Dave Lavallee Sheila Franz Lori Johnson Mark Drapa	Matthew Champlin Barb Peck Maureen Wilcox Chuck Medick

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

**CHANGES TO AGENDA**

Added request to prune trees on town common, Recreation Committee appointment, and an Executive Session for attorney communication.

**REORGANIZATION**

Dave Baczewski made a motion to nominate Lee McClenny as chair, seconded by Lee McClenny. Motion passed: 2-0.

Lee McClenny made a motion to nominate Dave Baczewski as vice-chair, seconded by Dave Baczewski. Motion passed: 2-0.

Dave Baczewski made a motion that the Board meet regularly on the second and fourth Thursday evenings of each month beginning at 6:00 p.m. downstairs at the Town Office, seconded by Lee McClenny. Motion passed: 2-0.

Dave Baczewski made a motion to designate Seven Days as the primary newspaper for publication of legal notices and the Burlington Free Press being the secondary newspaper, when necessary, seconded by Lee McClenny. Motion passed: 2-0.

**MINUTES**

Dave Baczewski made a motion to approve the February 22, 2022 minutes as amended, seconded by Lee McClenny. Motion passed: 2-0.

Dave Baczewski made a motion to approve the February 23, 2022 minutes as amended, seconded by Lee McClenny. Motion passed: 2-0.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

**ROAD SCHEDULE**

John Roberts, Road Foreman, reviewed the February 24, 2022 through March 10, 2022 Road Schedule. Dave Baczewski made a motion to approve the Road Schedule, seconded by Lee McClenny. Motion passed: 2-0.

### **PLANNING COMMISSION PROJECT UPDATES**

George Lamphere was present from the Planning Commission (PC). Conversations with the State have been productive; they've been positive and supportive of our Wastewater Project during the engineering firm transition and support moving ahead with Stone Environmental if that is the decision made. The PC supports this choice. Stone has been involved with the Town for years and has a lot of experience with the project. Although nobody wants to change engineering firms during a project, a transition early in the process, which is where Westford is at, is better. Should Stone decline to take over as the engineering firm there are other options available.

The PC has three candidates to interview for the vacant commission seat. The PC hopes to make a recommendation to the Selectboard within the next couple of weeks. A search has begun for a meeting minute taker, which the PC has approved special project funds to cover any costs for this prior to the new fiscal year.

The PC is targeting late April or early May for the next public meeting for the 1705 Outreach Committee to share an update on the project. SE Group, the engineering firm has provided a revised scope of work based on feedback on the previous concepts.

### **JOINING A COMMUNICATIONS UNION DISTRICT (CUD)**

Mark Drapa was present. A CUD is an entity that allows two or more towns to come together to form a municipal entity to build communication infrastructure. Mark is exploring existing CUDs to see if any are a good fit for Westford to join. A CUD attempts to bring fiber optic cable to every home within a town and their role is to put the infrastructure in place. The two neighboring CUDs do not intend to be Internet providers themselves, but rather will just build the infrastructure and it will be an open market for the companies to use that fiber. The neighboring CUDs are not just targeting underserved areas, but all residences within the towns. There isn't a limit to the number of towns that can participate in a CUD. Per law, CUDs cannot receive revenue through taxation. The only way they may fund their efforts is through the user/subscriber fees. There is a zero financial obligation for a town. Different CUDs are dealing with ARPA funds in different ways. The two nearest to Westford have chosen not to solicit ARPA funds from member towns.

One of the potential partners is Northwest Fiberworks who recently merged with Lamoille Fiber. Northwest Fiberworks is at 22 member CUD with an open access model that allows multiple IUPs to use the fiber. Their first potential partner is Google Fiber, which would be 1-2 GBs per second both download and upload. Google Fiber will be targeting 2 GBs which is comparable to the best internet available in a major city for approximately \$70 per month. Currently no location in Westford qualifies for what minimum high speed internet means. Northwest Fiberworks hopes to begin construction in 2022. The build out will address need, although their goal is to cover all areas within a 36 month window for completion from the start of the project. Westford is a desirable option as a CUD member due to having above ground utility lines, having a need for service, and is a connecting area to other towns that are CUD members.

If Westford does not join a CUD there will be less options for residents and will lessen Westford's desirability. With work from home being more common, properties that do not have access to high speed internet will have reduced property values. Mark sees no other option to have this level of service with local control over the infrastructure. To be involved does not mean Comcast will stop serving people, it's just another choice for residents.

Barb Peck was present and thinks what Mark describes sounds great but wondered how a CUD would work in areas of town that struggle to get infrastructure, such as a portion of Route 128 where there is a gap in the infrastructure. She's not sure if being a state road makes a difference but wanted to clarify that it's not just the case of running more lines. Barb offered to help in any way that she can.

Mark commented that a large entity with the mandate of the state might be able to tackle problems like these, noting that there is likely a similar problem in other member districts. Mark believes this should be part of future discussions.

Dave asked Mark how long he needs to investigate Westford's options. Mark thinks he can get more information on the CUDs and get a pro/con list in about a week. He noted that a representative from Northwest Fiberworks is willing to attend a Selectboard meeting. Ideally, the Town will make a decision this spring.

#### **MODIFIED EMERGENCY SERVICE ZONE FOR NORTHEASTERN WESTFORD**

Chief Matthew Champlin from the Underhill Jericho Fire Department (UJFD) was present. UJFD is switching dispatch services and are working to add their first response team as the agency that will provide emergency medical first response services to ESN Zone 507 which covers the northeaster area of Westford. This area is covered by Essex Rescue. UJFD plans to make the change in early April. UJFD is requesting permission to list this area of Westford in their service area. There is no funding required. Dave Baczewski made a motion that Westford add Underhill Jericho First Response as EMS response to ESN Zone 507, seconded by Lee McClenny. Motion passed: 2-0.

#### **REQUEST TO PRUNE TREES ON THE COMMON**

Lori Johnson from the Common Committee was present. The Committee is requesting permission to prune the woody plants on the Common. This includes removing dead or diseased woods, some of the pine near the gazebo to improve visibility from Route 128, and general pruning. The lilacs need pruning yearly so they ask this request to be considered ongoing for the lilacs. In the past the Road Crew has chipped the clippings. The Common Committee is asking permission for the Road Crew to continue doing this. Dave and Lee were both in approval.

#### **RECREATION COMMITTEE APPOINTMENT**

Chuck Medick from the Recreation Committee was present. The Recreation is recommending the appointment of George Elliot for the vacant seat on the Recreation Committee. Dave Baczewski made a motion to appoint George Elliot as a member of the Rec Committee, seconded by Lee McClenny. Motion passed: 2-0.

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

Dave and Nanette reviewed the policy and made proposed edits to identify persons for appeals, etc. The changes were reviewed with the Board. Lee made a motion to accept the Westford Public Records Request Policy as edited, seconded by Dave Baczewski. Motion passed: 2-0.

**ANNUAL APPOINTMENTS OF OFFICES WITH TERMS THAT EXPIRE IN MARCH 2022**

Nanette presented a list of offices whose terms expire in March 2022:

Fence Viewers (3)	Bruce Root, Scot Phillips, 1 vacant position
Inspector of Wood & Lumber/Weigher of Coal	Kyle Hobart
Land Agent	Benjamin Stark
Town Agent	Willis Breen
Town Grand Juror	Ronald Perry

**Development Review Board**

Term expires 2022 (3 years)	Dave Baczewski
Term expires 2022 (3 years)	Andrew Collier
Term expires 2022 (1 year)	Seth Jensen (alternate)

**Planning Commission**

Term expires 2022 (5 years)	Mark Letorney
-----------------------------	---------------

**Conservation Commission**

Term expires 2022 (4 years)	Joel Fay
-----------------------------	----------

**Recreation Committee**

Term expires 2022 (3 years)	Meghan Orisko
Term expires 2022 (3 years)	Benjamin McElvany

Historically, the person appointed is reappointed and are provided the option of declining. Lee McClenny made a motion to reappoint the individuals on the list to the positions which they currently occupy and ask the Town Administrator to notify the individual, seconded by Dave Baczewski. Motion passed: 2-0.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

Lee is still working on the cell tower letter to the Governor. The Board received an email from Ben Bornstein regarding the Goodrich Trail Agreement.

**COMMUNICATION**

There were no outgoing communications.

**ACCOUNTS PAYABLE & PAYROLL WARRANTS**

Greg Barrows, Treasurer, reviewed the expenses with the Board. The Board signed the accounts payable and payroll warrants.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Lee McClenny made a motion to enter Executive Session at 7:48 pm to discuss personnel, seconded by Dave Baczewski. Motion passed 2-0. People in attendance were Lee McClenny, Dave Baczewski, Nanette Rogers, and Callie Hamdy. The Board exited Executive Session at 8:51 p.m. Dave Baczewski made a motion to compensate the Town Administrator at an annual salary of \$68,702, and the Town Clerk at an annual salary of \$25,000 with a weekly bonus up to \$300 until the Assistant Town Clerk position is filled which is expected to occur by mid to late April, and to contract taking minutes of Selectboard Meetings at \$20.00 per hour up to \$1,200 per year, seconded by Lee McClenny. Motion passed: 2-0.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Dave Baczewski made a motion at 8:52 p.m. to find that premature general public knowledge of reasonably probably civil litigation, of which the Town may be a party, would clearly place the Town at a substantial disadvantage by disclosing to potential party opponents the Selectboard's response to, and strategy regarding, the reasonably probably litigation, seconded by Lee McClenny. Motion passed 2-0.

Dave Baczewski made a motion to enter Executive Session to consider reasonably probable civil litigation of which the Town may be a party, seconded by Lee McClenny. Motion passed 2-0. People in attendance were Dave Baczewski, Lee McClenny, and Nanette Rogers. The Board exited Executive Session at 9:07 p.m. No action taken.

**ADJOURN**

The meeting adjourned at 9:07 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Lee McClenny, Selectboard Chair

Callie Hamdy,  
Minute Clerk

**TOWN OF WESTFORD HIGHWAY DEPT.  
ROAD SCHEDULE  
February 25, 2022 – March 10, 2022**

Work to be done

- Plow and sand when needed.
- Brush cutting.
- Fix soft spots in the roads.

Work completed

- Sanded and plowed several times.
- Brush cutting on Old Stage Rd.
- Steamed several culverts.
- Had a tree to cut on Osgood Hill Rd.
- Had a few trees cut on Old Stage Rd.
- Bathroom demo/remodel.
- Graded parts of Brookside Rd., Old Stage Rd., Woods Hollow Rd. and Huntley Rd.

Approved at the 3/10/22 Selectboard Meeting.