

SPECIAL SELECTBOARD MEETING
February 20, 2023
Minutes

Present:	Bill Cleary Lee McClenny	Dave Baczewski (left at 9:30 a.m.) Nanette Rogers
Guests:	Julia Andrews Gordon Gebauer Melissa Manka Ben Bornstein (via phone)	Irene Wrenner Ira Allen Lori Johnson

The meeting was called to order at 8:36 a.m. The meeting was held in person at the Westford Country Store & Café.

CHANGES TO AGENDA

Added a request for approval to sign a support letter from CCRPC to the Vermont Legislature for additional funding for RPCs.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

SUPPORT LETTER TO FULLY FUND REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSIONS

An email from Ben Bornstein, Westford's representative to the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC), was received. CCRPC representatives have been asked to sign a letter of support from the CCRPC to the Legislature requesting that Regional Planning Commissions (RPCs) be fully funded. Funding for RPCs would increase from approximately \$4.5 million to \$10 million. Additional funding will help RPCs in assisting communities with taking advantage of federal and state funding opportunities that they are not able to do because of staffing constraints, limited/no experience, etc. Due to the significant increase in funding being requested, Ben felt he should consult with the Selectboard.

The Board feels that RPCs provide useful services to communities, especially for projects that require technical assistance, therefore is in support of signing the letter.

Bill Cleary made a motion to authorize Ben Bornstein to sign the CCRPC letter of support requesting additional funding for RPCs, seconded by Dave Baczewski. Motion passed: 3-0.

MEETING WITH STATE REPRESENTATIVE & SENATOR

Representative Julia Andrews and Senator Irene Wrenner met with the Board to discuss pending legislation and hear concerns the Town may have. The Board, Representative Andrews, and Senator Wrenner discussed a wide variety of topics, such as the process for town wide reappraisals, redefining non-homesteads to take into account businesses, farming, universal meals for schools, lack of cell phone coverage, and S.57 (a bill regarding shooting ranges). The Board thanked Julia and Irene for attending the meeting and for representing Westford.

MOWING PROPOSAL

Robert & Sons Lawn Care submitted a proposal for mowing town properties during the 2023, 2024, and 2025 mowing seasons contingent on them being awarded the cemeteries as well.

The proposal is for \$14,000 which would be divided equally over the three-year period. It was noted that Robert & Sons has performed this service before and has done a satisfactory job. If the Selectboard does not want to entertain the proposal, or the Cemetery Commissioners do not accept the three year proposal for mowing the cemeteries, the Town will go out to bid. The contract for services includes a clause for either party to terminate the contract with advanced notice.

Lee McClenny made a motion to accept the three-year mowing proposal submitted by Robert & Sons in the amount of \$14,000 contingent upon the Cemetery Commissioners awarding the cemetery mowing to Robert & Sons as well, seconded by Bill Cleary. Motion passed: 2-0.

PROPOSAL FOR SURVEYING TOWN OFFICE/LIBRARY LOT

Nanette reached out to Valley Land Services and Button Professional Land Surveyors about surveying the town office and library property. Carroll Peters of Valley Land Services, who has done a lot of survey work in the village and updates the Town's tax maps annually, is interested in doing the survey however he would not be able to do the survey until April. Chris Haggerty of Button surveyed the Pigeon property which abuts the town office property, is also interested, and provided an estimate of \$5,030. Button's schedule seemed a bit more flexible. The survey is needed to confirm boundaries and identify any easements on the property to assist with the Town Office Feasibility Study and the future of the town office. Mr. Peters indicated that if the Town hires Button, he is willing share information he has on the property with them. Ira Allen suggested the survey include the topography of the property. It was noted that the wetland delineation should include the topography; Melissa will confirm.

Lee McClenny made a motion to approve contracting with Button Professional Land Surveyors to survey the town office and library property at a cost not to exceed \$6,000 and for the expense to be paid using ARPA funds, seconded by Bill Cleary. Motion passed: 2-0.

CORRESPONDENCE

Bill read an email from Joe Franz suggesting the Town conduct a traffic study regarding traffic patterns, safety, density, projected development, etc. Melissa feels that a transportation planner is the best fit for this scope of work. She suggested looking into a UPWP (Unified Planning Work Program) grant from the CCRPC for the project. The project if approved will require a 20% match. She also suggested that the Selectboard invite Charlie Baker or Chris Dubin from the CCRPC to a future meeting to discuss doing a study. Gordon suggested that the Selectboard be clear with what the focus will be to maximize funding. Lori is concerned with Westford maintaining its rural character. She would like to see a realistic approach of what can be done while preserving the rural character. The Selectboard is in favor of having a comprehensive study done and will contact the CCRPC.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 10:05 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lee McClenny, Chair
Selectboard

Nanette Rogers
Town Administrator