

SELECTBOARD MEETING
October 26, 2023
Minutes

Present:	Bill Cleary Lee McClenny John Roberts	Holly Deslile Callie Hamdy Greg Barrows
----------	---	---

Guests: See attached.

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. The meeting was held in person and via Zoom.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Motioned to enter Executive Session at 5:00 p.m. The board invited consultant Vicky Ross and employees Holly Delisle and Carl Rogers to the session. Discussion ensued about the current Road Foreman's terms of employment and likely availability over the coming weeks. Bill Cleary motioned to approve the terms in a letter dated October 26, as discussed. Lee McClenny seconded. Motion passed 2-0. Discussion moved to what terms of employment should be offered to prospective Road Foreman Sean Cushing. Lee McClenny motioned to approve the terms discussed in an offer letter. Bill Cleary seconded. Motion passed 2-0.

The Executive Session was adjourned 5:45 p.m.

The board reconvened the meeting at 6:01 p.m.

CHANGES TO AGENDA

There were no changes to the agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The board introduced Holly Delisle, the new Town Administrator, as she was present at the meeting.

Lori Johnson was present and asked when and where results from the upcoming bond vote would be posted. Callie Hamdy answered that they would be posted online, on Front Porch Forum, and available in the Town Office.

Vicky Ross was present and announced the end of her temporary consultant work. The board thanked her for her work in helping the town transition between Town Administrators.

MINUTES

Bill motioned to approve the October 12, 2023 minutes as written. Lee seconded. Motion passed 2-0.

ROAD SCHEDULE

John Roberts, Road Foreman, presented the road schedule from October 13, 2023 – October 26 2023. Bill motioned to approve the road schedule. Lee seconded. Motion passed 2-0.

FY'24 HIGHWAY BUDGET STATUS REPORT

Greg Barrows, Treasurer, went over the FY'24 Highway Budget Status Report. We were over budget on sand due to a price increase.

FY'25 LISTER BUDGET REQUEST

The Lister, Caroline Brown, was requesting a level funded budget for FY'25.

FY'25 WESTFORD HISTORICAL SOCIETY BUDGET REQUEST

The Westford Historical Society is requesting a level funded budget of \$1,000.

FY'25 WESTFORD COMMON HALL BUDGET REQUEST

Amber Haller and Julia Andrews from the Westford Common Hall were present and gave a summary of the past year and the programs they have run. Using ARPA money, they completed several projects such as a fire safety exit door, pad for an ADA accessible portalet, and the installation of heat pumps. They have also added a paid part-time Executive Director position which has enabled them to run more events. However, the construction projects forced them to close during the summer and part of the fall, creating a revenue loss. The Westford Common Hall is requesting \$4,500 be authorized to support the Common Hall as they continue to get on their feet.

FY'25 ESSEX RESCUE BUDGET REQUEST

Colleen Ballard from Essex Rescue was present and gave a summary of the emergency services Essex Rescue provide for Westford. They continue to navigate staffing and funding challenges. They are working to bring an additional ambulance online. They are requesting a 3% increase in their budget request to assist with standard inflation.

Julia Andrews was present and wanted to know what drives the increase in call volume. Colleen responded that Vermont's population is aging and with that comes overload on a lot of resources that were not put together well in the first place. The problem is also not just EMS related, but the entirety of healthcare in the state. EMS has become a fallback for lack of response from doctors and other healthcare services.

FY'25 FAIRFAX RESCUE BUDGET REQUEST

Kathy Jochim from Fairfax Rescue was present and gave a summary. They are looking to continue their education. They run an education center out of Fairfax and are able to get volunteers this way. It is predominately grant funded. This year they are asking for \$14,000 which is \$2,000 more than last year because in addition to requiring advanced PMDs, their wages needed to be increased to keep them there. They were losing people to surrounding agencies due to pay competitiveness.

FY'25 DRB BUDGET REQUEST

The Developmental Review Board is requesting a lower budget by 23% to \$5,275. They were dropping money from the Minutes Clerk and legal line items.

FY'25 PLANNING COMMISSION BUDGET REQUEST

The Planning Commission is requesting a budget of \$14,550. It was an increase over last year but the same as FY'22. Even if the November 7th Community Wastewater System Bond Vote fails the Commission will still require funds and/or grant matches to conduct their statutory responsibilities.

FY'25 ZONING ADMINISTRATOR BUDGET REQUEST

The Zoning Administrator was requesting a budget increase of 11.75%. This was to account for proposed salary increases and the replacement of the Zoning Administrator computer.

REVIEW & SELECT 2024 HEALTH INSURANCE OPTIONS FOR TOWN EMPLOYEES

The fundamental question was how do we provide the same quality and quantity of health insurance for employees? We currently use MVP, but Blue Cross Blue Shield was also an option. Bill did not like swapping care plans around as it can be administratively difficult. The MVP plan reflects an increase in costs above last year but is still less expensive than BCBS. Bill motioned to continue our health care coverage through MVP as presented. Lee seconded. Motion passed 2-0.

REVIEW AND CONSIDER APPROVING DRAFT PERSONNEL POLICY

Nanette Rogers and Dave Baczewski had worked on this extensively and it was now ready for potential approval. Bill made a motion to approve the Town of Westford new Personnel Policy as presented. Lee seconded. Motion passed 2-0.

2024 GENERATOR PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE CONTRACT

There was an agreement between the Town and the School since the School acts as the town's emergency shelter. Part of this agreement was the town agreeing to fund the preventative maintenance on the generator located at the school. There is also a generator located at the Town Garage, but that maintenance is handled by the Fire Department. There were 2 service options provided at a 10% increase in cost from last year's contract. Bill made a motion to approve the program 2 contract with Brookfield for servicing town generator. Lee seconded. Motion passed 2-0.

DISCUSS PLANS FOR NOVEMBER 1 INFORMATIONAL MEETING & PUBLIC HEARING

The Planning Commission had asked how they can help at the upcoming informational meeting and public hearing on November 1st. Would the Selectboard like the Planning Commission to put together some sort of presentation for the meeting? The answer was yes. They think it should be a very abbreviated version of past presentations, maybe 10 minutes. Are experts allowed to speak if they are not town residents? Lee wanted to ask the town moderator. The non-resident experts would however not be allowed to participate in debate legally. They need to be careful to follow the right procedures.

DISCUSS PLANS FOR PRINTING TOWN REPORT

Last year we solicited quotes and selected RC Brayshaw for New Hampshire. We solicited a quote this year. Their quote was reduced from last year. Bill motioned to use Brayshaw to print the town report this year. Lee seconded. Motion passed 2-0. Bill suggested featuring Nanette on the cover for her service to the town.

DISCUSS DOMESTIC ANIMALS IN ROAD (BROOKSIDE)

There has been a consistent issue with pigs in the road on Brookside Road and it is becoming a traffic issue. Bill wanted the Chittenden County Sheriff to come and give a knock on their door. Holly will contact the sheriff.

CONSIDER APPROVING CONTRACT FOR MAPLE SHADE TOWN FOREST TRAIL WORK

Bill made a motion to approve the contract for services for Evan Aiken to do the work on Maple Shade Town forest and authorize the Town Administrator to make changes to dates and names and sign. Lee seconded. Motion passed 2-0.

CORRESPONDENCE

Carol Winfield had provided a communication about Winterfest. She is wondering if the town can reexamine town insurance to vendors on the common. The Town had checked with VLCT and the Town Attorney for previous events, like the Farmer's Market and it was said they cannot do that. It would be a liability to do so.

COMMUNICATION

Put Dog Warden, more communication about town re-appraisal, more communication about November 1st and November 7th Community Wastewater Bond Vote.

FY'24 GENERAL FUND BUDGET STATUS REPORT

Greg Barrows, Treasurer, went over the FY'24 General Fund Budget Status Report.

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE AND PAYROLL WARRANTS

The board reviewed and signed the accounts payable and payroll warrants.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lee McClenny, Chair
Selectboard

Callie Hamdy
Minute Clerk

GUEST LIST

Julia Andrews
Amber Haller
Vicky Ross
Lori Johnson
Dick Lavallee
Carl Rogers
Barb Peck
Kim Guidry
Ira Allen
Sheila Franz
Susan Larson
Dave Lavallee
Gordon Gebauer
Colleen Ballard (Essex Rescue)
Kathy Jochim (Fairfax Rescue)
George Lamphere
Seth Jensen
Louise Jensen
Maureen Wilcox
Caroline Brown
Harmony Cism
Matt Wamsganz
Nanette Rogers