

SELECTBOARD MEETING
December 5, 2024
Minutes

Present: Bill Cleary
 Deb Jorschick
 Casey Mathieu
 Pat Haller
 Wendy Doane

Holly Delisle
Callie Hamdy
Greg Barrows
Sean Cushing

Guests: see page 4.

The meeting was called to order at 6:15 p.m. The meeting was held in person and via Zoom.

CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

Bill added an Access Permit request. Added Executive Session to the end of the meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Lori Johnson asked for an update about the insurance regarding food on the Common. She would love to see the Winterfest Chili-Cook-off happen on the Common. Holly Delisle is actively working with VLCT on that and expects to have a more comprehensive update for the Selectboard meeting on the 19th.

MINUTES

Pat motioned to approve the November 19, 2024 Minutes as written. Casey seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

Bill motioned to approve the November 21, 2024 Minutes as amended. Wendy seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

CCRPC UPDATE

Holly shared that the UPWP application was released for CCRPC. She plans to include the intersection feasibility studies for Old #11 and Covey Road and the Woods Hollow Road intersections. There may be an opportunity to add something for 1705, but she is not sure if we are far enough along in the project to do something for this year's application.

ROAD SCHEDULE

Sean Cushing, Road Foreman, was not present due to a weather event. Bill went over the Road Schedule from November 22, 2024 to December 5, 2024. Casey motioned to approve the Road Schedule as presented. Deb seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

FY'24 HIGHWAY BUDGET STATUS REPORT

Greg Barrows, Treasurer, went over the FY'25 Budget Status Report.

ACCESS PERMIT

Margaret Woodworth on Plains Rd applied for a culvert replacement with a larger culvert. Pat motioned to approve the Access Permit. Deb seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

TOWN OFFICE RAMP & STAIRS BID REVIEW

The Town received four bids to replace the town office ramp and stairs. Wendy was surprised at how many different materials were being offered by the different contractors. Holly explained that the RFP did not request specific materials, so it was up to bidders and their various expertise.

Eric Mootz from Land & Rock Works explained that the existing grade makes it possible to use stone pavers as a ramp up to the front of the building. The pavers would be reusable if we made changes in the future. ADA will require a railing along the ramp length. Wendy asked if they could tell the Selectboard more about the retaining wall they proposed. They explained it is minimal to make up the grade to the door, but it is modular so it can be reused. The concrete pavers have a manufacturer warranty and require very little maintenance. The walkway would hit the existing landing by the door which would be replaced with Trex decking.

Alex Payne-White from APW Property Management proposed a traditional stick construction with Trex decking to match the one at the library; cedar/orange decking, black railing and white trim. It would be a more permanent solution, so if the Town Office were going to be moved or renovated, he does not feel his bid is the correct option. Bill asked if there is a half-life to Trex decking or is it a forever plastic? Alex explained it has a significantly longer lifetime than pressure treated wood. Alex explained his Trex decking design would be in the same footprint as the current town office ramp. They will add a concrete pad extension from the end of the ramp to the sidewalk.

Pat noted that they had talked about a more permanent option than stick construction, but what happens if we change the office layout. He asked Green Mountain Trucking/National Ramp how they would propose their aluminum ramp could be reused. Tim Hathaway from Green Mountain excavating had proposed an aluminum ramp in partnership with National Ramp in New York. That ramp could be moved and placed at a new building in the future.

Pat asked the bidders what we would see aesthetically from their designs since none had provided drawings. Bill likes the cost and permanence of concrete, but the contractor that proposed a concrete design, Sloan's Excavating, was not present. Pat asked if the aluminum ramp could be painted. Tony Ruck from National Ramp explained it's typically raw aluminum, but they can powder coat it with a color of choice. That would add 50% to their quote. Harmony Cism, Zoning Administrator, was present. Bill asked her about the requirements for Form Based Code for something like this. Harmony stated that this would be exempt from needing a permit because it is necessary for ADA compliance, though it should be built in the same footprint as the existing ramp. If it extends further into the Route 128 ROW we may need a state permit. Holly has spoken to VTrans, so they have a heads up on this potential need.

Land & Rock Works showed their proposed materials. The pavers are permeable with a classic brick herringbone pattern. The retaining wall would also be made of a stone material. The units are warrantied for life. Bill asked about drainage so it will not heave with frost. Eric explained that the state will require the structure to be fully permeable and drain correctly. If there were further concerns after a soil test, additional drainage would be explored. The cost of this has already been included in the bid. They have found that this type of design does not heave because water cannot get trapped. Pat thinks there would be potential for a lot of spray from plow trucks and salt in that area. How durable is the material to road salt? Eric stated that the lifetime warranty includes salt erosion. Wendy asked how aluminum handles salt. National Ramp stated that a powder coat would prevent corrosion.

The board wanted to discuss it in executive session. They thanked the bidders who were present.

1705 UPDATE **Engineering Review**

Krebs & Lansing had provided us their rate sheet, things looked normal. Sean, Highway Foreman, has agreed to help dig test pits, saving some expense. That will happen on

December 11th, weather permitting. We do not have a contract with K&L yet as they wanted to wait to see what septic capacity we find.

VAST REQUEST TO TRAVEL ON TOWN LAND

Andy Doe from VAST was present. VAST requires a permit from the Town for travel on roads and to access town-owned land. There are only 4-5 riding weekends a year if the weather permits. Bill noted that there are 34 landowners that allow VAST to cross their properties. Bill thanked those landowners. VAST is not asking for access to the Common this year because the Westford Country Store & Cafe is closed. Carol Winfield asked how many miles of trails there are in Westford. Andy thought there was about 32 miles. Bill suggested offering multi-year permission, so Andy doesn't have to ask every year, but Pat likes Andy to explain the value of VAST's work for new Selectboard members and the public. Bill motioned to approve VAST's requested access. Deb seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

TOWN REPORT PRINTER SELECTION

There were two quotes for printing the town report. REPRO Graphics has more back-end costs if we need additional copies or changes. Holly worked well with RC Brayshaw previously. Wendy was concerned that RC Brayshaw is a New Hampshire company, but REPRO is in Winooski. She prefers to keep the business in Vermont. At a \$206 difference and Holly's confidence in RC Brayshaw, Pat motioned to use RC Brayshaw for the Town Report printing for a 3-year contract. Casey seconded. Motion passed 4-1.

MINUTE TAKER MINIMUM PAY REVIEW

Bill suggested setting a minimum pay amount for minute clerks, specifically when they take minutes at very short meetings. The board thought an hours' worth of pay was a good compromise. The minute clerk pay rate has not been reviewed in at least three years. Wendy suggested applying the cost-of-living adjustment for each year since 2022. That would put the hourly at \$21.80. Bill motioned to set the rate at \$22 an hour and pay an hour minimum. Pat seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

REVIEW FY'24 GENERAL FUND BUDGET STATUS REPORT

Greg Barrows, Treasurer, went over the FY'25 General Fund Budget Status Report.

REVIEW AND APPROVE ACCOUNTS PAYABLE AND PAYROLL WARRANTS

Greg Barrows, Treasurer, went over the Accounts Payable & Payroll Warrants.

CORRESPONDENCE

Chittenden County Court letter about county tax. This was inviting Selectboard members to a pre-budget meeting in December.

Peggy Delaney from the State Ethics Commission sent a letter reminding us that we need to appoint an Ethics Liaison.

COMMUNICATION

Deb noted that Gary Smith's Tree Farm donated the Christmas Tree for the Common.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Bill moved to find that premature public knowledge of matters relating to contract negotiations and property acquisition would place the town at a significant disadvantage. Casey seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

At 7:51 p.m., Bill motioned to enter executive session for matters relating to contract negotiations, property acquisition and personnel, and invited Sean Cushing and Holly Delisle to attend. Casey seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

Bill moved to exit executive session at 8:33 p.m. Casey seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

Deb moved to accept the proposal from Land & Rock Works to replace the Town Office ramp and stairs. Casey seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 8:34 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bill Cleary, Chair
Selectboard

Callie Hamdy
Minute Clerk

Dave Gauthier
Kim Guidry
Ira Allen
Andy Doe
Eric Mootz

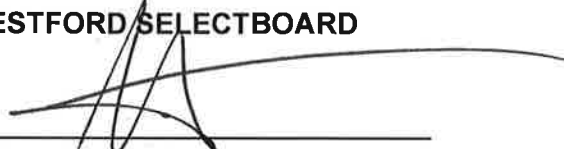
GUEST LIST

Dick Lavallee
Lori Johnson
Carol Winfield
Barb Peck
Tony Ruck


Harmony Cism
Dave Lavallee
Ben Bornstein
Alex Payne-White
Tim Hathaway

ADOPTED THIS 19 TH DAY OF DECEMBER 2024.


WESTFORD SELECTBOARD



William Cleary, Chair

Patrick Haller

Casey Mathieu

Deb Sawyer Jerschick

Wendy Doane