

and pumps. This has a higher upfront cost but allows for pre-treatment and higher capacity. They think they could get the 490-gallon capacity Tudhope proposed. 490 gallons would allow 10 full-time employees in both the town office and library and 85 visitors. They do not recommend a well on the site based on the contamination. They do not recommend heavy development of the property due to the various constraints both environment and archaeological. Because the Town has moved forward with their own engineering firm, Holly had notified Tudhope of this. Bill was pleasantly surprised at the number of employees and guests that Krebs & Lansing predicted. Pat agreed, but wanted to know how they produced the numbers and how going over the 10 employees would affect the number of guests etc. Bill wanted to give Krebs & Lansing more time to get more information. He would like them to find more than 490 gallons if they can. Pat suggested we ask if they see any constraints if we were to put a town office on the property. Casey asked if we were authorizing them to do more test pits? We were.

Carol Winfield wondered whether the placement of the new septic would change the status of the Town Office/Library well, or only if some sort of development occurs? Pat thinks we need more information from the engineers first. Bill wanted to do a Boundary Line Adjustment to make the properties a single lot. Lori thinks the "community system" designation is given when there is a certain number of people using the system. She thinks the threshold is 25 employees.

WINTERFEST REQUESTS

Use of the Common

Carol Winfield requested use of the Common on February 8, 2025 for the annual Winterfest. Carol is hoping to hold the Chili Cook-Off on the Common if she gets insurance.

The Westford Common Hall offered their parking lot area for the Chili Cook-Off and beer tent as it would bring more visitors to the raffle they're holding to benefit repairs to the building.

Bill asked the status of getting a 1-day insurance rider for the Chili Cook-Off. Carol stated that it is not easy to get insurance. It was going to be \$500 for a day. Bill feels the insurance requirements for the Common are a problem and should be addressed. Pat agreed, but the Common Hall offered to have the Chili Cook-Off there. Carol stated that participants would like to see attendees more spread out around the Common, and when the Chili Cook-Off was held at the Common Hall, it centered attendees there instead. Holly noted that the Town's insurance rates increase if there are claims. She thinks part of the reason for the requirements is to keep liability away from the town. Tara Pereira was present. With the Farmers Market, anybody serving and selling food must be inspected by the health department. Holly will investigate whether this is a requirement from VLCT or if it is something the town put in for a specific reason. Kim Phinney from the WCH was present. She agrees the insurance is absurd but understands why. In the short term, the WCH would be happy to host the cook-off because they have insurance. If the weather is bad it also provides a place for people to come inside. Pat noted that we'd given VAST permission to use the Common; we should make them aware of the festival. He thought it would be great if they wanted to arrive via snowmobile. Carol asked to restrict some VAST use during the festival. Bill motioned to approve the use of the Common for Winterfest. Casey seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

Closure of White Church Lane

With permission of the residents that live there, Carol Winfield requested the town close White Church Lane during Winterfest from 10am to 6pm so participants could walk freely. Bill motioned to approve the closure of White Church Lane on February 8, 2025 from 10am to 6pm. Casey Seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

No Parking on Brookside Road

The Winterfest organizers requested permission to disallow parking on Brookside Road during the festival. Bill motioned to approve restricting parking on Brookside Road, Casey seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

COMMON COMMITTEE REQUEST TO USE FUNDS

The Common Committee was requesting to use their funds to trim trees on the Common. They provided two quotes. Bill thought the trees were not bad, but it is the Common Committee's money to use. Pat made a motion to approve the funds as requested by the Common Committee for Heritage Tree service. Deb seconded. Motion passed 5-0. Pat motioned to give permission for Holly to sign the contract. Bill seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

RESOLUTION OF ARPA ALLOCATION

The Selectboard previously approved cutting checks to those who had remaining ARPA funds. Ron suggested we ask our auditors before doing that. They suggested not cutting checks from the ARPA funds, but rather adopting a resolution that moves the remaining funds out of ARPA and into the chosen location within the General Fund then allocated from the General Fund. The Selectboard can choose to maintain the tracking spreadsheet or cut checks to the organizations. Bill motioned that Westford expend SLFRF in the amount up to \$285,392.17 for the purpose of municipal workforce retention to pay for payroll expenses and employee benefits for the period 1/1/2024 through 12/1/2024. Pat seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

MUNICIPAL CODE OF ETHICS UPDATE & DISCUSSION

The state recently passed a new mandate that requires municipalities to follow a standard municipal code of ethics. Bill thought this would use a lot of town resources, although agreed with the ethics code. Holly noted the mandate is already active and we are not yet following it. We must create rules and procedures for receiving and tracking reports of breaches of the municipal code of ethics. Municipal employees and volunteers must complete annual ethics training and the Selectboard must appoint an ethics liaison. Deb wondered if it is mandated by the state, why are they not providing us with more information on how to follow it? The State Ethics Commission is going to develop and provide the training. They will also accept confidential complaints from any source. Ben Bornstein noted that this was raised at the CCRPC meeting. One of the suggestions was that several municipalities get together to have one individual act as an ethics liaison. CCRPC has a point person for equity and inclusion issues already and they are exploring some way of using that position to further support the towns. The board decided to table this until they got more information from the state.

FAIRFAX RESCUE 3-YEAR CONTRACT REVIEW

Fairfax Rescue provided their 3-year contract which they promised during their budget request. It would lock in a price for the 3-year period. Holly noted that St. Albans Dispatch sent their new contract which is 10% more than last year. Bill thought it was ridiculous that we pay more for dispatching than for the rescue service. St. Albans Dispatch serves Fairfax Rescue and switching to a new dispatcher would be a challenging adjustment for the rescue. Pat noted that the 3-year contract for Fairfax Rescue locks us in to using St. Albans Dispatch. He thinks Fairfax Rescue will work with us if we switch dispatchers in the future, we'd just need a different contract. Ben Bornstein suggested Holly touch base with Steve Locke. He has been leading an effort with CCRPC to get a regional dispatch going for the past twenty years. There is a big need for this because the expense is just going to continue to rise.

Casey motioned to approve the 3-year contract from Fairfax Rescue as outlined. Deb seconded. Motion passed 5-0. Pat motioned for Bill to sign the contract. Casey seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

REVIEW FY'24 GENERAL FUND BUDGET STATUS REPORT

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

REVIEW AND APPROVE ACCOUNTS PAYABLE AND PAYROLL WARRANTS

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

CORRESPONDENCE

Browns River Access Concerns

A resident was worried about liability with accessing the Browns River from the 1705 property. Pat replied and described the slope to the resident. When the Selectboard was given access, he went down to the river and the slope was quite gentle. The river frontage we would have access to is only silty sand/clay much like along Misty Meadow's riverside trail. Holly noted that if we move forward with the River Conservancy, ADA accessibility would be on their agenda. Casey commented that the liability was more an insurance question.

Myers Recycling & Loose Papers

This has occurred previously; it happens when they do not compact recycling between stops. Bill will talk to Myers.

COMMUNICATION

There was no communication.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 8:07 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bill Cleary, Chair
Selectboard

Callie Hamdy
Minute Clerk

Dave Gauthier
Dick Lavalley
Ben Bornstein
Maureen Wilcox
Dave Lavalley
Barb Peck


GUEST LIST

Kim Guidry
Ira Allen
Lori Johnson
Carol Winfield
Tara Periera
Kim Phinney


Sheila Franz
Maura O'Brien

ADOPTED THIS 5 TH DAY OF DECEMBER 2024.

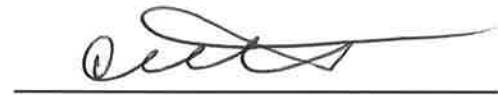
WESTFORD SELECTBOARD



William Cleary, Chair




Patrick Haller



Casey Mathieu



Deb Sawyer Jorschick



Wendy Doane