

Westfield Selectboard/Budget Meeting Minutes
January 7, 2019– 8 am – Town Offices

- **Town officials present:** Selectboard members: Yves Daigle (Chair), Jacques Couture (Vice-Chair) and Anne Lazor; Town Clerk, LaDonna Dunn; Treasurer, Mary Lou Jacobs; Road Commissioner, Eric Kennison; and Listers, Danny Young and Sue Scott

1. **Call Meeting to Order:** Yves called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

2. **Additions and/or Deletions to the Agenda:** NEKWMD Tire Prices as 11E; River Community Grants Program as 11F; Estimates for Town Garage Expansion 11G

3. **Approve Minutes of the December 10, 2018 Selectboard Meeting:** There was a motion by Jacques and second by Anne to approve the minutes with three corrections. Motion passed unanimously.

A. Business from the Minutes: None

4. **Approve Warrants for Expenditures Dated 12/12, 12/19, 12/26 and 12/31/18:** There was a motion by Jacques and second by Anne to approve the warrants as listed. Motion passed unanimously.

5. **Appointment of Auditor:** Yves explained Denny Lyster is willing to help with the 2018 audit. He does not wish to continue as an auditor after that. There was a motion by Anne and second by Jacques to appoint Denny Lyster as an Auditor until Town Meeting Day 2019. The motion passed unanimously. The Clerk will notify Denny and the other two Auditors.

6. **Sheriff's Report for December:** Tabled

7. **Sign Cemetery Quit Claim Deed for Roger and Beverly Gibeault:** The Selectboard signed the Quit Claim Deed for the Roger and Beverly Gibeault for one plot at the Westfield Cemetery.

8. **2018 Equalization Study Results:** The Selectboard reviewed the 2018 Equalization Study Results which reflects a Common Level of Appraisal (CLA) of 108.56% or 1.0856 and a Coefficient of Dispersion (COD) of 15.64%. Both of these numbers are within the State's acceptable range.

9. **Discuss Possible Articles for Town Meeting-March 5, 2019:** LaDonna asked for guidance about articles for the Town Meeting Warning.

- **Westfield Cemetery Headstone Cleaning/Repair:** There was discussion about Debra Dykeman's August 2018 request to have the Westfield Cemetery headstones cleaned and repaired. The Selectboards August 2018 minutes stated they felt this decision should go before the voters at Town Meeting. LaDonna asked if this should be a separate article on the warning or included as a line item in the budget. There was a motion by Jacques and second by Yves to have a separate article on the warning asking the voters if they wished to have the Westfield Cemetery headstones cleaned/repared based on the quote information from August 2018 and funded through donations and the Westfield Cemetery invested money. The motion passed unanimously.
- **ATV Travel on North Hill Rd.:** LaDonna asked if this should be put on the Town Meeting Warning since the voters had authorized a one-year trial period which began March 6, 2018. The Selectboard felt the voters should again decide. They felt there had been no problems with ATV's on North Hill Road during the one-year trial. LaDonna said there have been other complaints mostly on School Street, Ballground Road and Balance Rock Road. There was a motion by Jacques and second by Anne to ask the voters if they want to open all town roads to ATV travel. Motion passed unanimously.
- **Adding a Bay to the Town Garage Building:** Eric requested expanding a bay at the Town Garage for a new piece of equipment that will be used for winter roads on Buck Hill Road. Yves talked to some builders and feels the best option would be to add a new bay which will allow for a separate entrance to

the Town Garage for the road workers. If the expansion of the garage is approved by the voters, Yves would like to take over the bay next to the Recycling Center as recycling continues to grow and already overflows into that area each week. There was discussion about including this in the budget as a line item under Town Garage Capital Improvements or to have a separate article on the Warning and then adjust the budget numbers if the voters authorize the expense. There was a motion by Anne and second by Jacques to have a separate article on the Town Meeting Warning asking voters if they authorize an additional bay to be added to the Town Garage and if they wish it funded by taxes or a loan to be paid back at a later date. Motion passed unanimously. Estimates from two contractors for the construction were opened under Article 11G below.

10. Draft 2019 General Government & Highway Budgets: The Selectboard, Treasurer and Town Clerk reviewed and revised a preliminary draft budget. Mary Lou had some calculations to complete before finalizing the budget for the Selectboards next meeting on Tuesday, January 22nd at 8 a.m.

Budget discussions included:

- A three percent (3%) cost of living adjustment (COLA) was built into the budget for all town workers.
- When drafting the 2020 budget consider increasing the grader reserve to \$50-\$75/hr. from the current \$25/hr.
- Eric proposed instead of the town budgeting for plow blades and paying for sander repairs/replacement, he'd like the town to pay Kennison & Son's \$10/hr. for sander usage and \$5/hr. for plow/wings. He suggested adding this to the budgeted amount for hired equipment and eliminating a budgeted amount for Equipment Repairs and Maintenance. The Selectboard did not take action on this item.
- Consider budgeting \$30,000 for Balance Rock Road but use the money towards the bay expansion at the Town Garage this year. The balance of the money needed could come from the Good Neighbor Fund investment or a bank loan.
- Make sure to budget income/expenses for Better Roads Grant 2019-Buck Hill Rd./Taft Brook (\$16,000/income and \$20,000/expense) and NVDA Muni-Grant 2019-North Hill/Reservoir Rd. (\$5080/income and \$6350/expense) These grants aren't awarded until after the budget is presented at Town Meeting but need to be budgeted for in anticipation of being awarded the grant. Eric said the work would be completed in 2019.
- The Listers presented two budgets. One for the upcoming reappraisal which will begin this year. The expense for NEMRC begins in July 2019 with monthly payments of \$3750 for 12 months. Expenses for the reappraisal will be taken from the money received yearly from the state. The Selectboard has been investing this money in CD's each year so theoretically no money will need to be raised from taxes for the town-wide reappraisal mandated by the state in 2017. The Listers asked for an additional \$1500 for a tablet to be used in the field when they are making site visits for appraisals. They asked that \$10,000 be budgeted for Listers payroll for 2019 in anticipation of extra record preparation required to get ready for the reappraisal. Danny Young said as part of the reappraisal contract NEMRC will support the grievances and run the hearings which will take place in 2020.
- While discussing the upcoming Zoning Bylaw update anticipated expenses, the Selectboard voted to increase the fee for the Zoning Permit. There was a motion by Anne and second by Jacques to increase the Zoning Permit fee to \$50 (currently \$47). The motion passed unanimously. The cost breakdown is: \$10 payable to Clerks Office-Recording Fees; \$40 payable to the Zoning Administrator.
- The Northeast Kingdom Waste Management District will begin charging a per capital assessment for members beginning in 2019 (due date October 1, 2019). This was budgeted as a line item under Recycling Member Fee.
- The Town Office needs a new roof. There is also a problem with the venting of the heater which is causing black marking on the siding of the building. A standing seam roof was being considered but after much discussion it was decided the best way to proceed is with a new shingle roof and a chimney to help the heater venting issue. This is factored into the budget under Town Office-Capital Improvement \$11,500. An estimate was reviewed from Bathalon Custom Homes, LLC in the amount of \$8,200 for new shingle installation (20-25 year material) including removal and disposal of old shingles.

11. Other Business:

A. Next Meeting Date to Approve Budget and Warning for Town Meeting: The next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, January 22nd at 8 a.m. Jacques will participate via phone conference.

B. Sign Thank You Notes: Thank you notes were signed for the people who helped with the Caroling on the Common.

C. Schedule Date for Annual AOT District 9 Meeting: The Clerk will call to schedule the annual meeting, preferable on March 25th at 7 a.m. at the Town Offices.

D. Reminder-1/7/19 Final Public Hearing for Town Plan, 6 p.m. at Community Center: Yves and Anne plan to be present at the Public Hearing for the Town Plan. If there are no objections from the public the Town Plan will be adopted at the meeting. Following adoption by the Selectboard, the Planning Commission will seek NVDA's regional approval.

E. NEKWMD Tire Prices: Yves referred to a letter received from the Waste Management District stating the cost will be increasing to \$130/ton which represents a \$10/ton increase over 2018.

F. River Community Grants Program: Jacques reported grant funds are available through the Upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers Wild and Scenic Committee for projects along our Wild and Scenic Rivers. The deadline for the grant applications is February 1, 2019. The Selectboard felt the town didn't have any projects that would qualify this year. Jacques said this federal money is available each year.

G. Estimates for Town Garage Expansion: Yves worked with Wind Starr (Jason Belisle) and Bathalon Custom Homes, LLC (Ethan Bathalon) to get estimates for budgeting purposes on adding a bay to the Town Garage. The quotes were based on a 24' x 48' expansion to run parallel to Route 100 on the existing Town Garage. Wind Starr's estimate was \$70,933 and Bathalon Custom Homes, LLC was \$71,475. If approved by the voters at Town Meeting the job will be put out to bid.

H. VLCT-Loss Control Consultant: Yves read a letter stating that our current Loss Control Consultant, Jim Carrien, has been promoted to Loss Control Supervisor. Our new Consultant will be Jeff Theis.

12. Adjourn: Following a motion by Anne and second by Yves, all were in agreement to adjourn the meeting at 2:45 p.m.

Minutes submitted by: _____
LaDonna Dunn, Town Clerk

Westfield Selectboard Approval: Date: _____ with _____ changes

Yves Daigle, Chair

Jacques Couture

Anne Lazor

UNAPPROVED