

Westfield Selectboard Minutes
May 18, 2020
5 p.m. Electronic Meeting Due to COVID-19

DUE TO COVID-19 TOWN CLOSURES, THE RECORDED MEETING WAS HELD REMOTELY VIA ZOOM.

Town Officials Present: Selectboard members: Yves Daigle (Chair), Jacques Couture (Co-Chair) and Anne Lazor; Treasurer, Mary Lou Jacobs; Town Clerk, LaDonna Dunn; Assistant Town Clerks, Karen Blais and Heather Johnson; Road Commissioner, Eric Kennison (for a portion of the meeting); and Lister, Danny Young (for a portion of the meeting)

1. **Call Meeting to Order:** Yves called the meeting to order at 5:02 p.m.
2. **Public Comment – 5 Minutes:** None
3. **Additions and/or Deletions to the Agenda:** Added Motorcycles Going Around Barricades at Taft Brook Road/Buck Hill Road as 5F; Cleaning Bathroom at Recycling Center/Town Garage as 5G.
4. **Approve Minutes of the April 20, 2020 Selectboard Meeting:** Jacques made a motion which was seconded by Anne to approve the minutes with no changes. Motion passed unanimously.
 - A. **Business from the Minutes:** LaDonna reported that Anne Lazor was given her Oath of Office on April 22, 2020. This item had been tabled at the March meeting.
5. **Road Updates – Road Commissioner, Eric Kennison:**
 - A. **Update on FEMA Progress and Sign Damage Inventory – Heather Johnson:** Heather asked the Selectboard and Eric if there was additional damage to report other than the work already completed. They said no. LaDonna will submit the final damage estimate to FEMA by the May 29, 2020 deadline. Heather will work with Mary Lou to submit the final documents to FEMA's representative, Joseph Kennedy.
 - B. **Update from AOT on Road Work Permitted:** Due to COVID-19 requirements, at this time a road crew consists of no more than 10 workers wearing masks, while social distancing. Grant work can be performed if these requirements are met.
 - C. **Dykeman Culvert Update:** Yves reported he spoke with Debra Dykeman. Initially she wanted the town to pay all culvert costs, installation cost and pavement repairs. Yves explained the town doesn't pay for private culverts. Debra agreed to pay \$500 for the culvert. There was a motion by Jacques and second by Yves for Debra Dykeman to pay \$500 towards the culvert costs with the town paying the balance of any expenses for installation/paving. The motion passed unanimously. The town will send Debra a bill for \$500 when the work begins.
 - D. **Date for Installation of Radar Signs:** Eric asked if all the permits were in place. Mary Lou stated they were. Eric suggested waiting until he is pouring cement for another job to make the bases with the extra cement. He felt the signs should be up and running within 2-3 weeks. He said the town will have to hire flaggers for the installation. Eric said he doesn't know what will be involved with getting the signs operational such as charging, calibrating, etc. Anne asked if there were instructions that came with the signs. Eric said he hadn't opened the boxes yet. Mary Lou suggested contacting Johnson Hardware, where they were purchased.
 - E. **Discuss Adding Details on Road Invoices from Kennison and Son Excavating per Auditors Request:** The Auditors have asked for more details on Kennison and Son invoices including the road name or culvert number/location where the work was done. Eric said he will provide more details.

F. Motorcycles Going Around Barricades at Taft Brook Road/Buck Hill Road: Yves said he has received a complaint about motorcycles driving fast on Taft Brook and darting between the barricades that are supposed to block access to Buck Hill Road. There is a gap between the edge of the road and the barricades allowing this to happen. Eric said he will move another Jersey barrier from Reservoir Road to block the gap by the end of the week until the guardrails can be put in place. Jacques thought it best to complete this as soon as possible to ensure everyone's safety.

G. Cleaning Bathroom at Recycling Center/Town Garage: Yves asked Eric who was going to clean the bathroom. Eric said he'd clean it one final time and then he wouldn't be using it for the rest of the season. Yves thought the bathroom should be painted—walls, floor and ceiling. The Selectboard was in agreement that Yves should paint the bathroom. Yves confirmed everyone agreed that public use of the bathroom is not permitted. Recycling center and road crew employees are the only ones permitted to use the bathroom at this time. The bathroom supplies will be provided by the town. LaDonna recently gave Yves a box of cleaning and sanitizing supplies including paper towels and toilet paper. It was discussed that due to COVID-19, bath type hand towels should not be used; only disposable paper towels should be used for proper handwashing. Yves will make sure the bathroom is cleaned each week after recycling.

6. Treasurer's Report – Treasurer, Mary Lou Jacobs:

A. Approve Warrants for Expenditures Dated: 4/29/20 \$6,911.40 bills / \$3,101.80 payroll; 5/6/20 \$389.72 bills; and 5/13/20 \$11,976.92 bills / \$3,648.62 payroll / \$2,739.86 federal deposit: Motion by Jacques and second by Yves to approve the warrants as listed. Motion passed unanimously.

B. Budget Status Update (emailed in advance): Mary Lou stated the budget status reports reflect all paid bills as of the previous week. The Selectboard reviewed the reports with Jacques questioning how NEMRC calculates the actual percentage column. Mary Lou said the general fund/highway account has a balance of \$1,644.53 adding \$30,000 of the \$100,000 line of credit has been used to date. The NVDA Grants-in-Aid money from 2019 is still outstanding. Doug Morton replied to emails stating the town should receive the money by the end of June. Jacques asked about the FEMA money from the Halloween 2019 event. Mary Lou stated it is still in the works.

C. Investment Account Update (emailed in advance): Mary Lou noted the Edward Jones investment is starting to rebound with a balance of \$149,699.01, up from the previous month's balance of \$145,791.65. She reported there is \$12,554.94 in the reappraisal fund, available at the North Country Federal Credit Union as well as a CD with \$4,373.81 maturing 4/15/21.

D. Road Budget Comparison with Other Towns for Auditors – Jacques Couture: Yves explained the Auditors asked for a road analysis comparing costs of the town owning the road equipment versus contracting for road services as the town has done with the last three road commissioners. The Selectboard discussed this at earlier meetings and decided to get copies of the town reports from Troy, Newport Town, Jay, Brownington and Coventry to make the comparison. Jacques presented the findings. He stated he took each towns budgeted amount, divided by the highway miles, to establish a cost per mile for comparison sake. Jacques said he would talk with Auditor, Joe Falworth, and explain the chart to him. The Selectboard was satisfied the numbers were in range with area towns. If the Auditors want a deeper look, Jacques said he would provide them with the town reports and discuss how he calculated the numbers.

7. Discuss Reopening Town Buildings/Recreation Areas (COVID-19 State of Emergency Extension 6/15/20): The Selectboard reviewed the Agency of Commerce and Community Development (ACCD) recommendations and made the following determinations:

- Open the Tennis Court. Jacques will remove the donated/shared tennis racquets and balls until further notice and store them downstairs in the Community Center.
- Basketball Court remains closed.
- Library remains closed.

- Town offices open by appointment only for the vault and other limited services. The Clerk maintains a calendar with scheduled times for Clerk, Assistant Clerk, Listers, Treasurer and cleaning. Town business continues to be conducted by email, voice mail, text messaging, drop box and USPS.

8. Listers Report – Chair, Danny Young:

A. Renewing Map Contract with Russell Graphics: Danny reported Dean Russell approached the Listers about renewing the map contract for four years locking in the price at last year's rate of \$1,725 for 2021 and 2023. Danny stated the Listers have been happy with the product and recommends the Selectboard sign the agreement. Currently the tax maps are updated every two years. There was a motion by Jacques and second by Anne to sign a four-year contract locking in the price at \$1,725 for each two-year contract (2021 & 2023). Motion passed unanimously.

B. Update on Lister Pre-Grievance Informal Hearings (5/21 & 5/22) and Formal Hearings (5/29 & 5/30): Danny said many properties went down in assessed value but overall the Grand List increased due to new housing units. Due to COVID-19, informal and formal grievances will be held remotely via Zoom or conference call. NEMRC Assessors will lead the informal and formal hearings with the Listers participating.

C. Appoint Lister to Replace Sue Scott: Danny explained Sue Scott will be resigning as a Lister. It's a bigger job than Sue thought it was going to be. She put in a lot of effort and found an interested person to recommend for her replacement. Scott Dean is willing to serve as a Lister upon Sue's resignation and appointment by the Selectboard. Danny explained because there may be grievances, Sue has agreed to continue as a Lister until the grievance process is complete. This article was tabled until after grievances.

9. Update on Municipal Planning Grant Full Proposals – LaDonna Dunn: LaDonna reported there were four consultants who turned in qualifications to bid on the housing and market study for the recommended reuse of Scenic View RuralEdge. The project committee comprised of Alison Low, NVDA; Pat Sagui, Chair of the Planning Commission; Brian Pickard, Rural Edge; and LaDonna reviewed the applicant's qualifications and asked for full proposals from three of the candidates. One is from Vermont and two of the candidates are from Massachusetts. LaDonna said if all were in agreement, the project committee would interview the applicants and narrow the field to one recommendation for the Selectboard to approve at their next meeting. No one objected. The grant work will be completed by 2021.

10. Review and Approve the Local Emergency Management Plan (LEMP): Anne reviewed the document updates specifically the pandemic mentions. Dennis Neumann stated he can continue being one of the Emergency Management Coordinators for another year but would like to be replaced after that. Anne will work on planning a Zoom meeting for the group and see if someone already involved would like to step up to a leadership role. There was a motion by Yves and second by Jacques to adopt the Local Emergency Management Plan (LEMP). The motion passed unanimously. Yves will come to the office to sign the document. The Clerk will submit the signed adoption form and revised LEMP to Bruce Melendy at NVDA for filing with Vermont Emergency Management.

11. Sheriff's Report for April: There were 16.5 patrol hours, two administrative hours, two incidents and one citation resulting in \$130 in fines reported for April.

12. Appoint Pat Sagui to VLCT's Quality of Life and Environment Committee: LaDonna reported Pat Sagui requested to participate on this committee on behalf of the Town. There was a motion by Jacques and second by Anne to nominate Pat to VLCT's Quality of Life and Environment Committee. The motion passed unanimously. Pat will be asked to report areas of interest/concern to the Selectboard.

13. Northeast Kingdom Waste Management District (NEKWMD) Grant for Composting Facility: Yves said there is a grant for \$250,000 that has been awarded to NEKWMD from the Agency of Natural Resources for a food composting facility. The district is looking for a town that would have town land, away from the village, where such a facility could operate. The composting facility would be owned by a town and monitored by NEKWMD. Yves said this is for informational purposes with no action required by the Selectboard.


14. Other Business:

A. Discuss Making a Municipal Request for MRE's and Distributing: LaDonna said the town received an email stating there are MRE's available for municipalities to distribute locally. She polled the Selectboard to see if they thought it was a good idea to inquire about the availability and see if the Lions Club could distribute them on mealsite day. The Selectboard thought it was a good idea to look into.

B. Trash at Recycling: Yves stated there has been a lot of trash coming to recycling recently. He said this is good because it helps offset recycling expenses. He said we are one of the only centers that accept the white ag bags. Yves said a cement pad is needed just outside of the second recycling bay so the recycling truck can pick the ag bags. Anne asked if this was going to be costly. Yves said the cost would be minimal for a 10' to 12' x 4' cement pad. Yves has been handing out Green Up bags for Green Up Day on May 30th. He said since Green Up Day was postponed from the beginning of May to the end of May due to COVID-19 and the weather has been warm, people have already started to clean up the roads.


15. Adjourn: Following a motion by Anne and second by Jacques, all were in agreement to adjourn the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Westfield Selectboard Approval: Date: June 15, 2020 with 0 changes


Yves Daigle, Chair


Jacques Couture, Co-Chair


Anne Lazor

Minutes submitted by: 
LaDonna Dunn, Town Clerk