

Westfield Selectboard Minutes
JUNE 15, 2020 at 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; Lister Chair, Danny Young (for a portion of the meeting); Emergency Management Coordinator, Dennis Neumann (for a portion of the meeting); and Planning Commission Chair, Pat Sagui (for a portion of the meeting)

1. Call Meeting to Order: Yves called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m.

2. Public Comment – 5 Minutes:

A. There was discussion about a runaway girl who showed up at the Town Clerk's office and how the situation was handled.

B. Heather stated there have been dog complaints about Robert Brewster's dogs running at large.

C. Heather said there have been complaints about speeders on Balance Rock Road.

3. Additions and/or Deletions to the Agenda: Added Increase in Cleaning Pay Rate as Article 15A and Update on Emergency Shelter/LEMP as Article 15B.

4. Approve Minutes of the May 18, 2020 Selectboard Meeting: There was a motion by Jacques and second by Yves to approve the minutes with no changes. The motion passed unanimously.

A. Business from the Minutes: Yves asked if the final damage claim had been submitted to FEMA by the deadline. LaDonna said yes.

5. Municipal Planning Grant/Select Consultant and Sign Contract (emailed in advance) – Pat Sagui: The Project Team for the Municipal Planning Grant has a recommendation for the Selectboard for the consultant to be hired to complete the housing needs assessment for the Municipal Planning Grant. The quality of the written proposal was an aspect that set one of the applicants above the others. Pat stated we were fortunate to have four very qualified applicants. After reviewing the proposals, the Project Team narrowed the field to three which were then interviewed. Due to Covid-19 video interviews were conducted. The Project Team felt the quality of Camoin Associates written work set them above the other applicants. They are based out of Saratoga Springs, NY but have a Vermont presence with Camoin's Project Managers living in Vermont. Camoin's proposal included conducting a community survey as part of the housing needs assessment. There was a motion by Jacques and second by Anne to hire Camoin Associates as the consultant to complete the housing needs assessment. The motion passed unanimously. It was decided that Pat would keep the Selectboard briefed about the progress of the grant with updates at Selectboard meetings. Pat affirmed the purpose of this grant is to complete a market analysis to see what the housing or mixed use needs are in our region. Once that is determined it is up to the property owner (Scenic View RuralEdge) to decide if they move forward with completing the highest and best use outcome determined by Camoin's analysis. By approaching the project in this manner, the town will be setting RuralEdge up to get grants to fulfill that need. Yves thanked Pat for her work on the Project Team.

6. Planning Commission Update on Zoning Bylaw Revisions – Chair, Pat Sagui: Pat said there are many new sections to be written for the revised bylaw:

- Forestry section has some model language.
- Hazard mitigation section will be drafted by NVDA.
- Outdoor storage
- Home scale renewables

Pat said she needs help writing and organizing new portions of the document. She also feels the document needs to be revamped. She is recommending someone be hired to assist her and the Planning Commission with this task. NVDA has a graduate student who can do some of the work. She won't know how much time will be available until the graduate student completes current work commitments for other projects. Pat mentioned she may speak with Ellen Fox about her

availability to do some writing. Ellen has already contributed over 100 edits to help the document be more consistent. Pat will report back to the Selectboard after she talks with NVDA and knows more about the graduate student's availability.

7. Road Updates – Road Commissioner, Eric Kennison: Eric was not able to be present but called before the meeting and gave LaDonna his reports.

A. Update on FEMA Progress – Heather Johnson: The paperwork has all been turned in and we are awaiting final FEMA and state approvals. The FEMA representative thought the process would be completed within a month.

B. Dykeman Culvert Update: Eric will schedule time to install the culvert the beginning of July and will get the culvert ordered now. Deb Dykeman will pay for her portion of the culvert upon completion.

C. Date for Installation of Radar Signs: Eric will take care of the precast anchors. For safety, he will also schedule flaggers to be present during the installation.

D. Topsoil to Finish Grant Work on Buck Hill/Email Request from Dianne Laplante: Eric confirmed he will seed and mulch the areas of concern. He said it was too late in the season to seed it properly when the grant work was completed. He will take care of the seeding and expense it to this year's budget. Eric stated at the time the grant work was completed he put topsoil on the sloped area per Dianne's request.

E. Letter of Understanding – LaDonna Dunn: There was a motion by Anne and second by Jacques to accept the Letter of Understanding which was previously modified but had not been officially signed. Motion passed unanimously.

F. Guardrails at Taft Brook and Buck Hill Road: Eric stated he will be getting guardrails from the District by the end of the season. He wanted to know if the Selectboard wanted to make it clear with some new signage where the swimming hole was and where people should park. LaDonna pointed out to the Selectboard that there has been a problem with people parking on the Buck Hill Road side up against the jersey barriers just outside of the traveled lane at Taft Brook Road. She expressed her concern for the safety issue this creates. The Selectboard agreed that when the guardrails are installed they should be placed closer to the Buck Hill Road side so it leaves no room for a vehicle to park on Buck Hill. This will eliminate the safety issue. The Selectboard stated they hoped people parking to enjoy the swimming hole, fishing or hiking, would drive around on Balance Rock Road, turn on to Taft Brook Road and park near the guardrails, where there is no traffic. They did not feel it was necessary to add additional signage at this time.

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

A. Approve Warrants for Expenditures Dated: 5/20/20 \$7,206.85; 5/27/20 \$7,871.83 bills / \$2,141.76 payroll; 6/3/20 \$1,011.40 bills; 6/10/20 \$2,689.71 bills / \$4,512.26 payroll and \$1,416.50 federal deposit: There was a motion by Yves and second by Anne to approve the warrants as listed. Motion passed unanimously.

B. Budget Status Update (emailed in advance): Mary Lou reported there was \$931.41 in the general fund checking account and \$41,500 of the 100,000 line of credit has been used. Anne asked about legislative action regarding COVID and if the town would be able to get any lower interest loans. Mary Lou said the town receives a low municipal interest rate of 2.25% on the line of credit currently through Community National Bank. Recognizing tax bills will be issued late due to the state and federal tax deadlines being pushed back until July 15, there was discussion about increasing the current line of credit, if needed. Anne made a motion which was seconded by Jacques to increase the line of credit by \$50,000 if necessary. The motion passed unanimously.

C. Investment Account Update (emailed in advance): Currently the Edward Jones account balance is \$151,725.09 which reflects a small increase over last months \$149,699.01. The North Country Credit Union CD's are valued at \$13,186.27.

D. Delay in Setting Statewide Education Tax Rate: Due to pushing the tax due dates until July 15th because of COVID-19 and because we are a reappraisal town, there will be a delay in receiving Westfield's education tax rates this year. Consequently, the mailing of tax bills will be delayed for 2020.

9. Discuss Reopening Town Office/Community Center/Library/Recreation Areas (COVID-19 State of Emergency Extension 6/15/20):

- **Library:** To re-open on June 23, 2020 while meeting the CDC requirements. The Selectboard determined masks are to be worn. One person at a time will be permitted in the computer lab with a 30 minute usage limit. Parents will be asked to speak to their children about respecting the six foot social distancing practice while in the Library and attending reading circles. Hand sanitizer as well as all necessary cleaning products will be provided to the Librarian. LaDonna will provide the necessary signs for posting inside and outside of the Library.
- **Tennis Court:** Open. The donated racquets and balls have been removed to eliminate unnecessary touchable surfaces.
- **Basketball Court:** Open for shooting hoops but scrimmaging is not permitted at this time.
- **Playground:** Remains closed until further notice as there are too many touchable surfaces that can't be cleaned according to CDC guidelines.
- **Porta-Potty:** There will not be a porta-potty near the Community Center this year since it can't be properly cleaned according to CDC guidelines.
- **Community Center:** Available for use as long as staying within 25 person occupancy and using social distancing. Pat Sanders sent an email to the Selectboard requesting a second day of usage for the Agency on Aging Exercise Group. They currently meet on Thursdays before the mealsite and are requesting a second day (probably Tuesday). No one charges or receives any money for providing this service. The Selectboard was in agreement to allow a second exercise day, per week, at no charge provided it does not deprive other parties of using the space. Yves will measure the windows upstairs at the Center so the window shades that were budgeted for can be ordered.

LaDonna will update the signs and call to make sure the customary porta potty is not automatically dropped off.

10. Listers Report – Danny Young, Chair:

A. Update on Grievance Process: Danny reported there were no grievances to be brought before the Board of Civil Authority (BCA). He said all Lister grievances were successfully resolved.

B. Appoint Lister to Replace Sue Scott: Sue's letter of resignation was read. Scott Dean expressed an interest in filling Sue's term until Town Meeting day. There was a motion by Jacques and second by Anne to appoint Scott Dean as Lister until Town Meeting Day 2021. The motion passed unanimously. The Selectboard thanked Sue for the work she did on the Lister Board.

11. Replace Town Trees & Green Up Tree/Marker: Yves said he checked with Nate Deslandes and he is no longer doing landscaping. Jason Belisle agreed to plant three trees to replace the dead trees discussed at earlier meetings. The dead tree on the Common will be cut up and donated to a Westfield resident in need. Jacques suggested grinding the stump because if removed it will leave a large hole. Yves will make the arrangements.

12. Sheriff's Report for May: The report reflected 16.25 patrol hours, four incidents (threatening, motor vehicle complaint, VIN inspection and directed patrol) and \$970 in fines (five municipal speed ordinance, persons required to register and operating without a license).

13. Adopt VLCT COVID-19 Resolution: The Selectboard signed a VLCT drafted resolution in between meetings regarding COVID-19 support to rebuild local American economies. There was a motion by Yves and second by Anne to ratify their support of the resolution. Motion passed unanimously.

14. Recycling Update: Yves said after July 1 food scraps are no longer allowed to be put in dumpsters. He said people are doing a good job using the compost bins. He also reported the Town of Westmore is interested in having a composting facility which will be funded by a grant discussed at previous meetings. He said the waste management district showed a profit of over \$7,000 for May because cardboard is selling well now.

15. Other Business:

A. Increase in Cleaning Pay Rate: Karen Blais requested the cleaning pay rate be upgraded from \$14.18/hr. to \$18.54/hr. for herself and Connie LaPlume. Karen cleans the Town Office and Connie cleans the Community Center. Karen stated most cleaning people get a minimum of \$20/hr. Jacques asked how many hours a month

Karen spends cleaning the town office building. She stated approximately five hours. Jacques made a motion to increase the cleaning pay rate to \$18.54 effective immediately. Anne seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

B. Update on Emergency Shelter/LEMP: Anne explained she asked Dennis to join the meeting to give an update on what more could be done to make the Local Emergency Management Plan (LEMP) more effective and discuss the volunteer situation with the shelter. Dennis said currently there are 12 volunteers for the shelter including six who signed up at Town Meeting. He explained for the shelter to open the Selectboard would have to declare an emergency. He is working on a call list. He will forward the numbers to the Town Office. He is also working on scheduling a training session.


16. Adjourn: Following a motion by Anne and second by Jacques, all were in agreement to adjourn the meeting at 8:12 p.m.

Westfield Selectboard Approval: Date: 7/20/20 with ∅ changes


Yves Daigle, Chair


Jacques Couture, Co-Chair


Anne Lazor

Minutes submitted by: 
LaDonna Dunn, Town Clerk