

Westfield Selectboard Minutes
March 15, 2021 @ 5:00 p.m. – Westfield Town Offices & via Zoom

Due to COVID-19 some people participated in person and some participated remotely via Zoom.

Town Officials Present: Selectboard members: Yves Daigle (Chair), Jacques Couture (Vice-Chair) and Anne Lazor-via Zoom; Treasurer, Mary Lou Jacobs; Town Clerk, LaDonna Dunn; Assistant Town Clerks, Heather Johnson and Karen Blais; Road Commissioner, Eric Kennison (for a portion of the meeting); Librarian, MaryLee Daigle (for a portion of the meeting); and Planning Commission Chair, Pat Sagui (for a portion of the meeting)

Others Present: Sheriff Jennifer Harlow

1. **Call Meeting to Order – Yves Daigle, Chair:** Yves called the meeting to order at 5:03 p.m.
2. **Public Comment – 5 Minutes:**
 - A. **Librarian Report – MaryLee Daigle:** MaryLee reported the reopening is going well. She has been busy. She has a young man taking a zoom meeting twice a week. Carrie Glessner applied for a grant on behalf of the Library, and it was awarded. MaryLee is hoping to upgrade the computers in the computer lab with new ones and put those computers downstairs in the basement creating two new workstations. Wiring would be involved. MaryLee thinks this would be the best use of the grant money. She has not looked into pricing yet. Carrie said she will work with MaryLee to implement the grant. MaryLee reported she looked through the online courses on the State Library website. She is looking into the internet connectivity training as her first training course. MaryLee said she is leaning towards not holding an Easter Egg hunt this year.
3. **Additions and/or Deletions to the Agenda:** Added LEMP as 15A; Email from Christine DeMello as 15B.
4. **Approve Minutes of the 2/15/21 Selectboard Meeting & 2/25/21 Informational Meeting plus Business from the Minutes:** Tabled
5. **Organizational Tasks/Appointments (24 V.S.A. §871):**
 - A. **Elect Chair:** Yves expressed his interest in continuing to be the Chair because he has the most time and is available in town most days. Motion by Jacques and second by Anne to elect Yves as Selectboard Chair. Motion passed.
 - B. **Elect Vice Chair:** Motion by Anne and second by Yves to elect Jacques as Vice Chair. Motion passed.
 - C. **Elect a Selectboard Clerk:** Motion by Jacques and second by Yves to elect LaDonna as Selectboard Clerk. Motion passed.
 - D. **Establish Regular Meeting Dates and Times:** 3rd Monday each month at 5:00 p.m.
 - E. **Adopt Selectboard Rules of Procedure (emailed in advance):** The Selectboard reviewed and signed the Rules of Procedure.
 - F. **Designate Three Posting Locations:** Westfield Post Office; Westfield General Store; and the Town Clerk's Office.
 - G. **Select Newspaper of Record:** Newport Daily Express with the Chronicle as the backup.

H. Appointment of Tree Warden: The Selectboard.

I. Appointment of a Poundkeeper: Normand Piette.

J. Appoint NEKWMD Supervisor and Alternate: Motion by Jacques and second by Anne to elect Yves as Supervisor. Motion passed. No Alternate was appointed.

K. Oath of Office for Yves Daigle: Yves was given his oath by the Clerk.

6. Sign Sheriff's Contract and Discuss February Report: Yves expressed concern about the lack of information on the new reporting system. Sheriff Harlow said a new online system will be available soon that allows towns to login and view officers activity. The Selectboard signed the new 2021 contract in the amount of \$14,822.40. This rate works out to 22.5 patrol hours per month. The Town will be charged at the rate of \$55.12 per hour for extra hours. There were 12 hours patrol hours reported for February. Yves asked about the Sheriff's policy if the town requests the Sheriff Departments assistance on an issue. Sheriff Harlow said those calls go towards the 22.5 hours per month the Town has contracted the Sheriff Department. Yves said in the past he requested help with someone that had illegally dumped trash at recycling. He never heard back from the Sheriff's Department. Sheriff Harlow said that was before she became Sheriff, but she would look into it. Yves asked for better communication with the department.

7. Planning Commission – Pat Sagui, Chair:

A. Executive Session to Discuss Personnel Issue: There was a motion by Yves and second by Jacques to enter Executive Session. Motion passed. Following the Executive Session discussion, Jacques made a motion to exit Executive Session. Yves seconded and all agreed.

B. Contract for Zoning Bylaw Rewrite-Ellen Fox: It was determined Ellen would draft a contract for \$7,500 to send to the Selectboard for review and signatures as soon as possible so work can begin. The Planning Commission wants to stick with their timeframe to ensure hearings happen this fall.

8. Roads: Eric Kennison, Road Commissioner:

A. Status of Speed Sign Calibration: Yves said he spoke with Jason Sevigny about the problem with the signs not working. Jason said he would look into it. Jacques offered to call and speak with a technical support technician. Mary Lou will provide contact information.

B. Discuss Wild and Scenic Infrastructure Improvement Grant \$5,000/10% match: Eric said he wants to work on the Cemetery Road culvert that crosses Loop Road. He wants to change it to a 24" culvert. He will work with Heather on the grant paperwork.

C. Reminder of AOT District 9 Meeting 3/29/21 @ 8 a.m. via Zoom: All Selectboard members plan to attend the meeting.

D. Update on Authorization to Discharge Under MRGP: LaDonna reported all paperwork and payments have been submitted and recorded.

E. Purchase of Grader Blade: Eric said he wanted to purchase a grader blade that has a set of teeth. He feels it will help dry out the roads in the spring. He said he would like to use the money in the budget for the grader maintenance. He said the cost would be approximately \$3,200. There was a motion by Anne and second by Jacques to purchase a grader blade with teeth. Motion passed.

F. Dykeman Culvert: Eric said he will be working on the Dykeman culvert when things dry out.

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

A. Approve Warrants for Expenditures Dated: 2/18/21 \$18,450.47 (bills); 2/3/21 \$5,554.59 (payroll); 2/22/21 \$3,519.88 (bills); 3/4/21 \$14,720.17 (bills); \$3,963.69 (payroll); 3/8/21 \$11,750 (bills); and 3/11/21 \$3,983.87 (bills): There was a motion by Jacques and second by Yves to approve the warrants as listed. Motion passed.

B. Review Budget Status Report, Checking Account Balance & Investment Accounts: Mary Lou reported she took \$5,000 out of the general fund and put it into a CD for the reappraisal account. She double checked the amount that should have been invested for the Good Neighbor Fund. She transferred money to balance with the income received from Green Mountain Power bringing the account at Community National Bank to \$31,750. The balance in the general fund is \$269,845.01. There is a CD maturing on 4/15/21 at North Country Federal Credit Union for \$4,448.35 (reappraisal). The Edward Jones account balance is \$162,159.87 which reflects a less than 1% increase over last month's balance of \$160,700.61.

10. Recommendation for Health Officer-Term Expires 3/31/21 then Defaults to Selectboard Chair: Anne is still reaching out to Andrew and Laura Emery.

11. Open Mowing Bids and Award Mowing Contract: There was one bid received for the 2021 landscape season from Peak View Property Care (Tommy Bathalon) in the amount of \$2,000 for mowing and \$500 for fall cleanup, totaling \$2,500. It was noted the cost was up from the previous contract. The Selectboard was pleased with the services provided by Tommy Bathalon and appreciated him stepping in to complete the previous years contract. There was a motion by Jacques and second by Anne to award the 2021 Mowing Contract to Peak View Property Care in the amount of \$2,500. Motion passed unanimously. The Selectboard signed the contract.

12. Sign ATV Landowner Permission Form & Discuss the Town Issuing ATV Permits for the 2021 Season: The Selectboard agreed to sign the annual form giving permission for the Vermont ATV Sportsman's Association, Inc. (VASA) to use the same roads as last year—Loop Road, Cemetery Road, Kennison Road, Reservoir Road and North Hill Road. The Selectboard also agreed to not issue ATV permits for 2021.

13. Final Report on Municipal Planning Grant-Housing Study: Pat Sagui reported the steering committee had their final meeting with the consultant. Rural Edge is seriously looking into building out 10 studio apartments and 2 one- or two-bedroom apartments. Due to the funds that were made available for housing due to Covid, Rural Edge already has the funding in place for this project. The steering committee felt this was the best possible outcome they could have hoped for.

14. Recycling Update: Yves reported scrap metal is up to \$60/ton. The price of plastic has gone up. The Waste Management District had to buy another truck. They applied for a \$40,000 grant to help offset the cost of the truck. Yves thanked Jacques for bringing his tractor and compacting the steel dumpster.

15. Other Business:

A. Local Emergency Management Program (LEMP): Anne said the LEMP does not need a lot of updating. She asked LaDonna to email her the document in word format for updating.

B. Email from Christine DeMello: Christine DeMello who lives on Monteith Road, sent an email discussing a problem with people parking at the gate-closed section of Route 58 at Monteith Road. She said there has been an uptick of people parking there and recently building a fire on the side of the road. Eric Kennison said people have been parking there for years. It does not impede him being able to do his job, but he said it is annoying to the people who live there. It was suggested to the property owner to make the Sheriff's office aware of the situation. There was also discussion about putting up a Town Truck Turnaround sign in this location next winter to deter parking/partying.

16. **Adjourn:** Following a motion by Anne and second by Yves all agreed to adjourn the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

Westfield Selectboard Approval: Date: 4/19/21 with 0 change(s)

Yves A Daigle
Yves Daigle, Chair

Jacques Couture
Jacques Couture, Co-Chair

Anne Lazor
Anne Lazor

Minutes submitted by: *LaDonna Dunn*
LaDonna Dunn, Town Clerk & Selectboard Clerk