

**Westfield Selectboard Minutes**  
**February 12, 2024 @ 5:00 p.m. In-Person Meeting at the**  
**Westfield Town Office, 38 School St.**

**Town Officials Present:** Jacques Couture, Selectboard; Richard Degre, Selectboard; Dennis Vincent, Selectboard; LaDonna Dunn, Town Clerk; Eric Kennison, Road Commissioner (Partial Attendance); Niki Dunn, Selectboard Clerk; Danny Young, Lister (Partial Attendance); Jennifer Johnson, Hitchcock Memorial Museum and Library Librarian (Partial Attendance); Pat Sagui, Planning Commission Chair (Partial Attendance)

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**1. Call Meeting to Order – Jacques Couture, Chair:** Jacques called the meeting to order at 5:02pm.

**2. Public Comment – 5 Minutes:** None

**3. Additions and/or Deletions to the Agenda:** None

**4. Approve Minutes:**

**A. Village Wastewater Project Kickoff Meeting Minutes 12-19-23: (emailed in advance)** Richard motioned to approve the minutes from the Village Wastewater Project Kickoff Meeting from 12-19-23, Dennis seconded. Motion passed.

**B. Selectboard Meeting Minutes 1-15-24: (emailed in advance)** Dennis motioned to approve the minutes from the Selectboard Meeting on 1-15-24, Richard seconded. Motion passed.

**C. Joint Selectboard Meeting Minutes on Rasputitsa Bike Event 1-29-24: (emailed in advance)** Dennis motioned to approve the minutes from the Joint Selectboard Meeting on 1-29-24, Richard seconded. Motion passed.

**5. Discuss Professional Services Agreement – Proposed Village Wastewater Project – Pat Sagui, Planning Commission Chair: (emailed in advance)** Pat Sagui asked if the Selectboard had any questions about the services agreement. Jacques feels that some of the wording is vague and implies there may be additional costs. He would like them to just agree to one final cost. Pat had a question about wording involving construction and whether they are subcontracting a lot of the work. The total cost of the project is much higher than anticipated and although it will be completely covered by grant funds, the state may not accept this large of an amount. If they do not the project will need to go back out to bid. Pat feels that they may have written the agreement to New York State standards, not to the standards required by Vermont. Pat will call AES and then speak with Tom. After Tom looks the contract over it may be worth having another meeting with AES to discuss what he says. Pat believes the next contract will go into much more detail and should have a line-item budget. The board would like to wait until Tom sees the agreement before they sign it. Pat will be emailing Tom tomorrow.

**6. Lister Update – Danny Young, Lister:**

**A. Sign Certificate of No Appeal (emailed in advance):** This is to certify that there are no suits pending against last year's grand list. Richard Motioned to accept and sign the Certificate of No Appeal, PVR4155, Dennis seconded. Motion passed.

**B. Sign Contract with CAI for 2024 Tax Maps (emailed in advance):** Danny explained why the bill for the tax maps is \$1,500 this year when it was only \$1,000 last year. He noted that it was because they should have charged the town \$1,300 last year and they only billed for \$1,000. Dennis motioned to accept the contract with CAI for the 2024 tax maps at \$1,500, Richard seconded. Motion passed.

**7. Highway Update – Eric Kennison, Road Commissioner:**

**A. FEMA Info Needed:** The FEMA information needs to be submitted in 12 days or the town may lose the FEMA fund reimbursement. Eric will look into getting the information needed. Eric will meet with LaDonna tomorrow to get the information gathered.

**B. Need New Letter of Understanding & Equipment Price List with Kennison & Son Excavating for 2024:** Eric will get the price list and letter of understanding for January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024 - December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024.

**C. Culvert Replacement:** The person working on the culvert replacement project reached out to Eric again, but the town would still have to spend about \$30,000 on the project out of the town budget. The culvert they want to focus on first doesn't really need to be replaced at this point, there are culverts that need to be replaced sooner. Jacques questioned how often the state checks the bridges and culverts. Eric noted that they should be checking them. Jason Sevigny could be notified about the culvert that has pin holes beginning in it.

**8. Treasurers Report – Lisa Deslandes:**

**A. Approve Warrants 1/4/24 \$8,563.30 (bills); 1/09/24 \$808.90 (bills); 1/16/24 \$3,138.57 (bills), \$5,391.34 (payroll); 1/25/24 \$2,292.44 (bills); and 1/29/24 \$56,462.15 (bills), \$8,645.47 (payroll):** Richard motioned to approve the warrants, Dennis seconded. Motion passed.

**B. Review Investments (emailed in advance):** Board reviewed the investments.

**C. Review General & Highway Fund Budget Status Reports (emailed in advance):** Board reviewed the budget reports. LaDonna explained that this year the grant funds will be separated into special funds. This will make it easier to track where the funds are being spent and what is left. She also explained that each year in the Town Report the Selectboard needs to report how much money they are receiving and spending from grant monies. Lisa made a separate graph for this year's town report to show ARPA and FEMA funds.

## **9. Municipal Energy Resilience Program (MERP):**

**A. Discuss Purchase of Digital Display(s) – Niki Dunn:** Jacques questioned if the information is readily available somewhere. LaDonna explained that Carter Finegan will be joining the Selectboard at next month's Selectboard meeting to discuss the building energy assessments that were done on the town buildings and that she may have more information on where to find this information. The thought for the displays is to have one at the Recycling Center and one at the library. These could always be moved around if/when needed. Dennis motioned to approve the purchase of two digital displays, Richard seconded. Motion passed.

**10. Recycling Update:** Dennis noted that the people who pick up the recycling would like the free table moved because they have to maneuver around it. Dennis will help Richard move things around this Saturday.

### **A. Recycling Schedule for March:**

**March 2<sup>nd</sup>:** Jacques Couture

**March 9<sup>th</sup>:** Maurice Doyon, Roger Tetreault

**March 16<sup>th</sup>:** Dennis Vincent

**March 23<sup>rd</sup>:** Dennis Vincent

**March 30<sup>th</sup>:** Richard Degre

**11. Discuss New Attorney to Conduct Yearly Tax Sales:** There are quite a few properties with unpaid taxes. LaDonna explained the process of how the tax sales work. LaDonna got the names of a few lawyers that may do tax sales, she will check with some of them to see if they are willing to do the tax sales this year. The tax sale should happen in April or May.

**12. Sheriff's Report for December 2023:** There was no sheriff's report, tabled until next meeting.

**13. Discuss and Sign Retainer Letter with Attorney Clarke Atwell – Rasputitsa Bike Rally 4/20/24 (emailed in advance):** Dennis motioned to accept and sign the retainer letter to retain Attorney Clarke Atwell to represent the town regarding the Rasputitsa Bike Race, Richard seconded. Motion passed.

**14. Request from Jay Focus Group Regarding Mental Health First Aid Training at Community Ctr.:** The Jay Focus Group would like to be able to use the kitchen for free during this event. Dennis motioned to let the Jay Focus Group use the kitchen at no charge for the Mental Health First Aid Training event at the Community Center, Richard seconded. Motion passed.

**15. Library Update:** Jennifer Johnson, the new librarian at The Hitchcock Memorial Museum and Library, attended the meeting to give the library update. She is thrilled to be part of the Westfield community now. She lives in Newport and works at the Dailey Memorial Library in Derby. Some of her priorities for the library include getting more people in the door, even if it is just to enjoy the space, not necessarily to check out books. She will begin automating the book collection so that the book circulation can be kept track of. This will include putting barcodes inside of the books and will also include giving out library cards. She has investigated some different systems to do this and will be consulting with a staff member at the Vermont Department of Libraries this week to go over the options. She would also like to get the ABLE Library going for blind and visually impaired individuals. She would also like to continue having

kids from the school enjoy the library. She welcomes any feedback regarding any programs or services or material suggestions. She is holding off on taking donations until the collection has been gone through, she may be accepting them in the future. Jacques mentioned the free table at recycling and how people leave free books there. He will keep an eye out for books that may be something worth adding to the library collection, and Jennifer can decide if she thinks they will work or not. LaDonna asked Jennifer to discuss her experience working at the Vermont Department of Libraries. Jennifer explained that her role there was mostly in youth services and with the ABL Library. She is very happy to see that the library now has a board of trustees and is working with the Vermont Department of Libraries. Richard inquired about the Jay/Westfield School after school program coming to the library and Jennifer let him know that they came during her first week of working and the visit was great. The staff member who accompanied them was excellent as well. Pat Sagui inquired about the children's library at Johnson State College and whether there is still a relationship with them. Jennifer was unsure but she will look into it. She was aware of a program through the Vermont Department of Libraries where libraries could get around 30 children's books a month. She wanted to give kudos to Maureen Zimmerman and the Library Board of Trustees for all the work they have done and how they have gotten the library into great shape. Richard let her know that D&D Electric should be coming this week or next week to get the wiring done. He will reach out to them tomorrow to make sure they are getting it done.

**16. Executive Session (if needed):** Not needed.

**17. Other Business:**

**A. Reminder-Planning Commission 2<sup>nd</sup> Public Hearing re: Zoning Bylaw, 2/20/24, 5:30-6:30 at the Westfield Community Center, 59 North Hill Road:** Information Only

**B. Town Reports Available 2/22/24:** Information Only

**C. Joint Selectboard Meeting – Rasputitsa Bike Race 2/21/24 at 6pm – Westfield Community Center:** Information Only

**18. Adjourn:** Dennis motioned to adjourn at 7:02 pm, Richard seconded. Motion passed.

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Westfield Selectboard Approval Date: 3/18/24 with 0 change(s)

**X** *Jacques Couture*

Jacques Couture  
Selectboard Chair

X 

Richard Degre  
Selectboard

X 

Dennis Vincent  
Selectboard