

WESTFIELD SELECTBOARD MEETING
April 15th, 2024 @ 5:00 p.m.
Westfield Town Office, 38 School Street

Town Officials Present: Jacques Couture, Selectboard Chair; Dennis Vincent, Selectboard; Richard Degre, Selectboard; LaDonna Dunn, Town Clerk; Lisa Deslandes, Treasurer; Niki Dunn, Selectboard Clerk; Jennifer Johnson, Librarian Hitchcock Memorial Museum and Library (Partial Attendance); Ellen Fox, Planning Commission (Partial Attendance)

Others Present: Rosemary Croizet (Partial Attendance); Denny Lister, On Behalf of Westfield Congregational Church (Partial Attendance); Rick Danforth, On Behalf of Westfield Congregational Church (Partial Attendance)

1. Call Meeting to Order – Jacques Couture, Chair: Jacques called the meeting to order at 4:59 pm.

2. Public Comment – 5 Minutes: There were no public comments.

3. Additions and/or Deletions to the Agenda: Richard added Discussion About Community Center to Other Business (E). Lisa added Tax Sales to Other Business (D). Jacques added Green Up Day to Recycling. LaDonna added Dog Problems to Other Business (F).

4. Approve Minutes:

A. Selectboard Meeting Minutes 3-18-24: (emailed in advance) Richard motioned to approve the selectboard minutes from 3-18-24, Dennis seconded. Motion passed.

B. Selectboard Public Hearing Minutes 3-18-24: (emailed in advance) Dennis motioned to approve the minutes of the selectboard public hearing from 3-18-24, Richard seconded. Motion passed.

5. Road Concerns:

A. Crawford Trail, Carmel Road & Route 100 – Rosemary Croizet: Rosemary spoke about Carmel Road, a private road that borders her property. The culvert on the road is not working properly. It has been dug out before, but the debris builds back up and it gets plugged again, causing one of her fields to flood and it is becoming a swamp. Jacques thought maybe The Agency of Natural Resources would be able to offer some input on the matter. Rosemary feels that the culvert needs to be replaced with a larger culvert that can handle the water flow better. Linda Cunningham has been reaching out to the other property owners on the road to try to get help with the funds to replace the culvert but has not been having any luck. Ellen Fox wondered if there is anything in the property deeds that discuss maintenance of the road and who is responsible for it. She also noted that there are clean water funds that may be able to be accessed to address the problem. The property owner(s) would be the recipient of the funds, not the town as it is a private road. Ellen would like to discuss this with Ted Sedell this Friday when he is in town looking at the other culverts. Rosemary then spoke about Crawford Trail. It is a legal trail that comes off Ballground Road. Before the camp the trail goes through a corner of her property. A piece of land on the trail was recently purchased by Cyrus Eastman. He is working to re-do the road and she is concerned with erosion and who is responsible to maintain the road and re-do the road and what permits are required to do that type of work. Jacques noted that the town has no responsibility to maintain a legal trail, but it is still available for public access. He also explained that from Ballground road it is .67 of a mile before the legal trail ends and it becomes private property. Ellen thought using GIS maps to measure where the legal trail ends might be helpful. LaDonna noted that a permit is needed to do significant moving of dirt, building a road, etc. Jacques asked Ellen if the zoning board gets involved in a matter like this. Ellen explained that they would only if someone was

doing things without a permit, and they continued to do so after being told they needed a permit. Ellen noted that there is a class 2 delineated wetland that the trail goes right through. There are ways to build a road that doesn't impede the waterways and the runoff. The property owner would need to avail themselves to help with the process of rebuilding the road the correct way. Rosemary wondered if she and other neighboring property owners would be able to weigh in on the process. Ellen explained that the permit would be posted in the town office and near the property, probably at the end of Ballground road. If there's conditional use, then a letter goes to every abutting landowner and there would be a hearing. Jacques felt that this could be discussed with Ted as well and it would be good to speak with Will Young about the zoning implications. Rosemary questioned if Mr. Eastman can improve the legal trail portion of the road, or only the private property portion. Jacques noted that people will add gravel over the years, cut trees in the road, etc., but they can't move the legal trail in any way. Rosemary then spoke about VT Route 100. She is concerned that with the bridge out on Route 14, there have been many MBI trucks driving by. They leave trash residue, and they drive fast through the village. The trucks also shake the foundation of the houses. Richard noted that they are planning to open the new bridge on Route 14 by May 1st which will ease a lot of truck traffic. Rosemary wondered if something like adding a sidewalk or rumble strips could be looked at as possible solutions. She is concerned that if it's not the MBI trucks, then it will be other trucks going fast. She feels the police don't stop trucks, only cars and it's not safe for people walking in the village. The selectboard thought that asking the DMV to see about stopping truck traffic that is going too fast through the village might be helpful.

- B. Loop Road, Lane Road Flood Cleanup – Karen O'Donnell:** Jacques noticed that the washout from last summer is still in the O'Donnell's corn field. He felt that Lane Road was not bad though. He also noted that it floods into that same field every time it floods. Ellen thought sponsoring a river clean up might be helpful. She also noted that a river corridor easement could be done. There was some funding for the culvert where Mill Brook goes under the Loop Road, so maybe there would be some funding for the section that washes into the field.

6. Highway Update – Eric Kennison, Road Commissioner: There was no highway update.

7. Library Update – Jennifer Johnson, Librarian: Jennifer let the board know they have not heard back yet about the grants they applied for. Some of the ADA compliance projects could be covered by the grant Jenn Stelma was working on if they receive that one. She was informed that there is a bit of a backup with grants at the state currently. She recently went to Jay/Westfield Elementary School to speak with Hunter Couture to collaborate on a few things with the school including the Summer Reading Program and working with the Encore summer program. She will also be applying for a grant that will give money to the library and the school for books and will allow for some presentations. The automation project is going well. She has volunteers working to process the books so Jennifer can go in and just scan the books into the system. The library is still not ready to take donations yet. Jennifer would like to make sure the basement is okay before she starts accepting books, as books may need to be stored down there. Lisa noted that Mr. Clean will be there on Friday to do the cleaning and she will go to unlock and lock the building for them. He can do the basement deep clean as well, but he may not be able to do the basement on Friday.

- A. Donation from Church:** The library received a generous \$15,000 donation from the sale of the Westfield Congregational Church. The Library Board of Trustees and Jennifer made a list of items they would like to use the money for. Getting a book drop or replacing the side door so that it is ADA compliant and adding a book drop slot to it are possible uses. Also, anything that can be done to improve air quality in the basement including moisture meters and air purifiers. Richard noted that the bathroom floor plan would need to be larger, and the toilet would need to be bigger to become handicap accessible. Also, the children's room doorway needs to be about 6" wider for a wheelchair to fit through. Richard thought Roger Tetreault could open the children's room doorway and install the new door. Jacques noted that the

mold issue in the basement is taken care of. Jennifer explained that she was leaving the dehumidifiers running in the basement but had only been getting a small amount of water. Richard explained that the basement floor has radiant heat on top of concrete, so it is better to leave it on all summer to not create moisture. Jennifer noted a couple of furniture purchases they would like to make with the donation money also. A new circulation desk, which will give more room to process books while the computer is also set up. Jennifer noted that they are very grateful for the donation and along with sending out thank you notes the library would like to put a plaque up acknowledging the donation.

- B. Playground Donation- Denny Lyster and Rick Danforth:** The Westfield Congregational Church also donated \$2,500 to be put towards the recreational areas in town. Denny heard there is interest in Pickleball facilities, so he did some research into costs. Some towns have used the tennis courts and put pickleball nets at either end which accommodates two pickleball courts. The lines would need to be placed on the courts, and balls and nets would need to be purchased as well as a storage building to hold the equipment. Richard thought Roger Tetreault could build a wooden storage shed. LaDonna questioned how to keep track of who is using the equipment, using a combination lock or online sign up are options. Denny would like it to run through a point person in the pickleball community to keep track of who is using it. Richard noted that the tennis court won't be available if pickleball is being used. Denny explained that in Newport they schedule times when pickleball is available and times when tennis is available.

8. Treasurers Report – Lisa Deslandes:

- A. Approve Warrants 3/08/24 \$7,314.97 (bills); 3/12/24 \$23,153.64 (bills), \$8,870.83 (payroll); 3/20/24 \$8,000 (bills); 3/26/24 \$34,066.41 (bills), \$6,955.55 (payroll) and 3/28/24 \$8,134.82 (bills): (emailed in advance)** Richard motioned to approve the warrants, Dennis seconded. Motion passed.
- B. Review General & Highway Fund Budget Status Reports (emailed in advance):** Lisa questioned if she should leave the playground donation amount in the budget or put it in a special fund. The board feels it will all get used this year so it can stay in the budget.
- C. Review Investments (emailed in advance):** Edward Jones put money into the wrong account and Lisa is having a hard time getting ahold of them. She will keep working on getting this fixed.

9. Update on Vault Digitization with ARPA Funds:

- A. Approve Purchase of Computer Tower for Land Records Public Access Area:** The public access area needs a computer tower. Niki will use it to continue scanning the land records and once the records are live online it will become a public access area. We will need an IT person to hook the computer up to the network. LaDonna will call Dennis Beloin to see if he is able to do this. Niki found a few options that match the specifications that NEMRC suggested, and they range from \$680-\$800. The funds for the computer purchase will come from ARPA funds and the tower is the only thing that needs to be purchased. There is already a monitor, keyboard, and mouse available to be used for the computer station. Dennis motioned to purchase a computer tower for the public access area using ARPA funds, Richard seconded. Motion passed. ARPA funds are currently at approximately \$103,000.

10. Recycling Update: Green up day bags are available. The board would like to find out how much they charge for commercial businesses to bring lights. A spot for the digital display to reside was discussed. It will be moved near the "free table" for the time being.

A. Recycling Schedule for May:

May 4th: Jacques Couture
May 11th: Maurice Doyon, Roger Tetreault
May 18th: Richard Degre
May 25th: Dennis Vincent

11. Sherriff's Report:

A. Sheriff's Report for February 2024:(emailed in advance) 8 Tickets Issued, 10 Warnings, \$1,437 Total Fines, 2 Arrests, 74.5 Hours Billed

B. Sign Sheriff's Contract for 2024: (emailed in advance) Board signed contract.

12. Approve Mowing Contract: (emailed in advance) The mowing contract went up a little bit, he added a small amount for cleanup. Richard motioned to approve the mowing contract; Dennis seconded. Motion passed. The board signed the contract.

13. Appoint CUD Representatives: Carrie Glessner and Laura Emery are currently the CUD Representatives and are willing to continue in this role. Richard motioned to appoint Carrie Glessner and Laura Emery as the Westfield CUD representatives; Dennis seconded. Motion passed.

14. Update Local Emergency Management Plan (LEMP): Dennis motioned to accept the Local Emergency Management Plan; Richard seconded. Motion passed.

15. Rasputitsa Bike Race: The exact routes have not been released yet, however a couple possible routes have been posted online. The race takes place on Saturday, April 20th.

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

17. Other Business:

A. Culverts Tour with Orleans County NRCD, April 19th at 12:30PM, Meet in Town Office Parking Lot: Informational.

B. Annual AOT Meeting, April 26th 12:30PM at the Town Office: Informational.

C. Appoint Health Officer: The current Health Officer appointment ends 5/31/24, Shelley Martin is willing to continue. Dennis motioned to appoint Shelley Martin as Health Officer; Richard seconded. Motion passed.

D. Tax Sales: Lisa spoke with Ashley Jacobs and was informed the town can hold the tax sales whenever they want. Typically, they happen in May, however with the change of Delinquent Tax Collector the paperwork and final notices will be sent out later than usual. If any sales are needed it may be closer to July.

E. Community Center: Richard has been looking into prices for painting the outside of the building. He also noticed the upstairs windows need to be replaced, Richard will look into prices to replace the windows. The window replacement might be able to be done using the energy audit money. Jacques noted that Nadeau's came and put the sensor in the ramp for the heat. The cost for the painting will come from ARPA funds.

F. Dog Problems: Cyrus Eastman's dogs have been spotted all over town. They are going on people's properties and upsetting the homeowners and their dogs. The DMV has picked up one of the dogs on Route 100 already. LaDonna would like both constables to call him and impress upon him that he needs to keep the dogs in his yard. Jacques noted that there is no leash law outside of the village. LaDonna explained that state law says they can't run at large, even if there is no leash law.

- G. Rick Danforth explained that the stop sign in front of his driveway is largely ignored. People do not give him the right of way when he pulls out of his driveway. He thought maybe the board could talk with the Sheriff's Department to watch out for people not stopping at the sign. Jacques thought that painting "stop" in the road by the sign may help people notice it more. The board will talk to Jason Sevigny about the painting and/or a blinking red light on the stop sign.

18. Adjourn: Richard motioned to adjourn at 7:40pm, Dennis seconded. Motion passed.

Westfield Selectboard Approval Date: 5/27/24 with Ø change(s)

X Jacques Couture
Jacques Couture
Selectboard Chair

X Richard Degre
Richard Degre
Selectboard

X Dennis Vincent
Dennis Vincent
Selectboard

