

**Westfield Selectboard MINUTES
AUGUST 17, 2020 at 5 P.M.**

Due to COVID-19 some people participated in person at the Town Office and some participated 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; and Road Commissioner, Eric Kennison (for a portion of the meeting)

1. **Call Meeting to Order:** Yves called the meeting to order at 5 p.m.
2. **Public Comment – 5 Minutes:** None
3. **Additions and/or Deletions to the Agenda:** Added 14C. Hazard Mitigation Hearing
4. **Approve Minutes of the July 20, 2020 Selectboard Meeting:** Tabled
 - A. **Business from the Minutes:** None
5. **Update on Municipal Planning Grant – Pat Sagui/LaDonna Dunn:** LaDonna reported the housing community survey is available online and in paper form at the Westfield General Store, Westfield Post Office, Hometown Hardware and at the Recycling Center.
6. **Road Updates – Road Commissioner, Eric Kennison:**
 - A. **Update on FEMA (Halloween Storm 2019) Progress – LaDonna Dunn:** Despite a couple of reminders to the State, there still has been no grant agreement issued. LaDonna will continue to monitor and send reminders.
 - B. **Timeline Update on Unfinished Projects:**
 - **Installation of Stone Barriers at Roger Tetreaults:** Eric spoke with Roger and the stones will be placed before winter.
 - **Dykeman Culvert:** The culvert is here and will be completed as soon as Eric can fit it in.
 - **Landscaping at Town Garage:** Eric states he will complete by the end of September.
 - **Installation of Missing Road /Speed Limit Signs; Installation of Radar Signs:** The State can perform the flagging anymore because of liability. After discussion it was decided Eric can most likely stay off the highway with his equipment so no flaggers will be needed. Any repairs will be made to property owners grassy areas damaged by Eric's equipment.
 - **Installation of Guardrails at Taft Brook Road/Buck Hill:** Eric stated this will be completed before winter.
 - **Two Wild and Scenic River Grants:** Eric said one grant is started with 'before' pictures completed. Heather reminded Eric we will need 'after' pictures to send with grant reimbursement request.
 - **Structures Grant on Balance Rock Road:** Eric said the culvert is getting delivered on Wednesday and will be assembled onsite.
 - C. **Paving on School Street:** The Selectboard reviewed and signed the paving quote to machine pave School Street, approximately 1340' x 20' x 2" for \$24,955.00.
 - D. **Request by Bill Salmon for Gravel/Grading on Ballground Road:** Yves explained Bill Salmon's request. While the Selectboard empathized, they felt they could not comply because the requested section of road is not a town road. A concerned citizen did offer to pay for two loads of gravel/grading for the section of road in question. Eric will personally complete the work by the weekend. Yves will talk with Bill and explain the Selectboard's decision.
7. **Treasurer's Report – Treasurer, Mary Lou Jacobs:**
 - A. **Approve Warrants for Expenditures Dated: 7/22/20 \$8,650.28 (bills) & \$3,605.15 (payroll); 7/29/20**

\$482.64(bills); 8/5/20 \$5,461.50 (bills & \$7,468.83 (payroll); 8/12/20 \$3,948.66 (bills including Federal Deposit of \$2,202.42): There was a motion by Anne and second by Jacques to approve the warrants as listed. Motion passed unanimously.

B. Budget Status Update (emailed in advance): Mary Lou reported there was \$8,207.98 in the general fund checking account. We have used \$45,500 of the line of credit to date for 2020 (\$39,300 last year at the same time had been used). Yves asked what the DMV fees were for. LaDonna explained the Town Clerk's office receives a \$3/fee per DMV registration processed. The checks for registrations are made out to Vermont DMV and are mailed out with the renewals to DMV on a weekly basis.

C. Investment Account Update (emailed in advance): There is currently \$5,426.17 in deposit accounts and \$4,396.23 in investment accounts at North Country Federal Credit Union. The Edwards Jones investment account is up \$2,568.39 over last month, with a total value of \$155,416.05 in investments and money market.

D. Education Tax Rates/Tax Bills: The State set the education tax rate for homesteads at \$1.4788/per \$100 assessed value and non-homesteads at \$1.5515/per \$100 assessed value for fiscal year 2021.

8. Zoning Administrator (ZA)/Assistant Zoning Administrator (AZA) Applicants: LaDonna explained Will Young has submitted a letter requesting the position of Zoning Administrator and Andrew Emery has submitted a request to be the Assistant Zoning Administrator. There was discussion about the timing of the transition. Ellen Fox has been kind enough to help the Town out by serving as the Interim Zoning Administrator. There was a back log of applications when Ellen stepped in to help, some of which required hearings. Ellen is also willing to train a new Zoning Administrator and Assistant. LaDonna explained the Zoning Bylaw explains the Planning Commission should make a recommendation for possible candidates to the Selectboard. The Planning Commission meets the week after the Selectboard so a recommendation can be made at the September meeting. This timing works out for all the parties concerned. The Selectboard was pleased to have two people interested in the position. They asked the Clerk to get some job descriptions/understanding of how it would work from other towns that have a ZA and AZA model, as we have not had an assistant in the past. The Planning Commission will be asked for clarification about the ZA and AZA sharing the job or if the AZA would step in only if the ZA were unable to fulfill the duties of the position.

9. Sign Catering Permit and Discuss Authorizing Town Clerk to Sign Catering Permits: LaDonna explained with the new wedding barn venue open for business, the Town is receiving catering permits to sign. She stated the Selectboard has the option of giving the Town Clerk authority to sign these permits which are then forwarded on to the Alcohol Board for issuance. LaDonna said the purpose of the Town signing off on them is so the Town is aware of these events taking place at a given location. Jacques asked what types of events these permits are issued for. LaDonna stated the ones she's received are for weddings and if one happened to come through for another type of an event, such as a concert, she would bring it to the Selectboard for their consideration. There was a motion by Jacques and second by Yves to authorize the Town Clerk to sign the Request to Cater Malt, Vinous and/or Spirituous Liquors. All were in agreement.

10. Sheriff's Report for July: Tabled

11. Recycling Update: Yves reported we are a couple hundred dollars ahead of last year in income. He said last week they ran out of room in the compost totes. He took a load of tires to Lyndonville recently and the rest will be saved for Jay's collection day at \$2/tire. He spoke about the importance of clean cardboard. If Westfield were to receive wet, dirty or otherwise contaminated recyclables, we would be subject to fines.

12. Communication from Vermont State Police: The Selectboard received a letter from the Walter Smith, Lieutenant-Station Commander of the Derby Barracks. The letter is asking for input from municipal leaders about how police services can and should evolve to meet the demands of the 21st century policing. Yves felt social equality for all was very important and the police should be blind to the color of a person's skin. There were questions about how the community would be notified if a potentially dangerous person were to move to the area. While the Selectboard felt positive about the current policing efforts, they thought it would be good to invite Lieutenant Smith to a meeting to get a better understanding of some of the State Police policies. A written message will be sent to arrange a meeting at a future Selectboard meeting.

13. Sign Dog Warrant: The Selectboard signed the Delinquent Dog Warrant which will be given to Constable, Mike Piper. Mike will visit the six owners and collect the delinquent dog license fees plus the owners will be charged an additional \$25 for the Constable visit.

14. Other Business:

A. Email from Kristy Ellis: LaDonna read an email from past Principal Kristy Ellis introducing the new Jay/Westfield Joint Elementary School Principal, Jessica Villeneuve and the new Administrative Assistant, Deveney Choquette.

B. Anonymous Letter: The Selectboard reviewed an anonymous letter they received which required no action because it had nothing to do with Town business.

C. Hazard Mitigation Hearing: LaDonna explained part of creating the new Hazard Mitigation Plan is having a public hearing. LaDonna said Alison Low from NVDA asked for some input about scheduling the public hearing. LaDonna offered to be present and have the Community Center open for people who would like to meet in person and set up to have an electronic Zoom option available for those who are not comfortable meeting face to face. The room would be set up to ensure social distancing and participants will be required to wear masks. The Selectboard felt this option would work.

D. Problem at Swimming Hole: LaDonna reported there has been a complaint by a property owner about people gathering at the swimming hole/waterfall on Balance Rock Road and Taft Brook Road. The property owner reported local people are swimming at the spot late at night and after the ATV curfew. The property owners are concerned about liability and littering left in the area.

15. Adjourn: Following a motion by Anne and second by Jacques, all were in agreement to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 p.m.

Westfield Selectboard Approval: Date: _____ **with** _____ **changes**

Yves Daigle, Chair

Jacques Couture, Co-Chair

Anne Lazor

Minutes submitted by: _____
LaDonna Dunn, Town Clerk