

Westfield Selectboard Minutes

March 20, 2023 @ 5:00 p.m. In-Person Meeting at the Westfield Town Office, 38 School St. with Zoom Option

Town Officials Present: Jacques Couture, Selectboard; Richard Degre, Selectboard (By Zoom); Dennis Vincent, Selectboard; LaDonna Dunn, Town Clerk; Lisa Deslandes, Treasurer; Niki Dunn, Selectboard Clerk

Others Present: Bobby Jacobs, Troy Fire Department (By Phone, Partial Attendance); Roger Gosselin, Ambulance Representative (By Phone, Partial Attendance)

1. Call Meeting to Order-Jacques Couture, Chair: Jacques Couture called the meeting to order at 4:58 pm. Jacques welcomed Dennis Vincent to his first meeting as a member of the selectboard.

2. Public Comment – 5 Minutes: No public comments.

3. Additions and/or Deletions to the Agenda: No additions to the agenda.

4. Approve 2/20/23 Minutes: Richard Degre motioned to accept the minutes from the February 20th, 2023 Selectboard meeting, Dennis seconded.

A. Discuss/Amend Minutes from Budget Meeting 12/15/22 – Article 13, first bulleted item (emailed in advance): Lisa Deslandes explained that the minutes should be amended to show the COLA (Cost of Living Adjustment) increase would go into effect starting town meeting day of 2023, not October 1st, 2022. Richard motioned to make the amendment to the December 15, 2022, budget meeting minutes, Jacques seconded.

5. Organizational Tasks/Appointments (24 V.S.A. §871):

A. Elect Chair & Vice Chair (currently Jacques Couture and Anne Lazor): Chair: Richard made a motion to elect Jacques Couture as Selectboard Chair, Dennis seconded. Dennis made a motion to elect Richard Degre as Selectboard Vice Chair, Jacques seconded.

B. Elect Selectboard Clerks-currently LaDonna Dunn and Niki Dunn (minutes): Dennis motioned to elect LaDonna Dunn and Niki Dunn as Selectboard Clerks; Richard seconded.

C. Oath Given to New Selectboard Member, Dennis Vincent, 3/9/23 by Town Clerk: Dennis took his oath with LaDonna prior to the meeting.

D. Establish Regular Meeting Dates and Times (currently 3rd Monday each month at 5 pm): Dennis motioned to keep the current meeting date and time (3rd Monday of each month at 5pm), Richard seconded.

E. Re-adopt Selectboard Rules of Procedure (emailed in advance): Dennis noted that he read through the procedures prior to the meeting. LaDonna explained that usually the Vermont League of Cities and Towns sets the policies and asks the towns to adopt them. Richard motioned to re-adopt the Selectboard Rules of Procedure, Dennis seconded.

F. Designate Three Posting Locations (currently Clerks Office, General Store and Recycling Center): Dennis motioned to keep the posting locations the same (Clerks Office, General Store and Recycling Center), Richard seconded.

G. Select Newspaper of Record (currently Newport Daily Express): Dennis motioned to keep the Newport Daily Express as the newspaper of record, Richard seconded. Jacques noted that once in awhile the board will also use The Chronicle.

H. Appointment of Tree Warden (currently Jacques Couture): LaDonna let the board know that they can now have the selectboard as the Tree Warden rather than choosing just one person. Dennis questioned what the tree warden responsibilities are. Jacques explained that they do not do much here, it's mostly bigger cities that need them. It applies to shade trees and any trees within the road right of way. Dennis motioned to appoint the selectboard as the Tree Warden, Richard seconded.

I. Appointment of a Pound Keeper (Normand Piette): Richard motioned to appoint Normand Piette as the Pound Keeper; Dennis seconded. Jacques explained that if the constables pick up a dog and need a place to put the dog, they can house them in Normand's barn. LaDonna noted that after 5-7 days they go to the shelter if not claimed by anyone.

J. Appoint NEKWMD Supervisor and Alternate (currently Jacques Couture, RD alternate): Dennis asked what this board pertains to. Jacques explained that all 49 towns that are part of NEKWMD each have a representative on the board. He noted that they are also open to the public, however each town only gets one voting member per meeting. LaDonna will send contact information to them for Dennis so he can get the zoom meeting links and the emails they send. Dennis motioned to appoint Jacques Couture as Supervisor, Richard Degre as Alternate and Dennis Vincent as Attendant, Richard seconded.

K. Re-adopt Purchasing Policy (emailed in advance): Dennis motioned to re-adopt the Purchasing Policy, Richard seconded.

L. Re-adopt Policy Regarding Conflict of Interest and Ethical Conduct (emailed in advance): Dennis motioned to re-adopt the Policy Regarding Conflict of Interest and Ethical Conduct, Richard seconded.

6. Ambulance Report – Confirmation when MVAS Service Ends and NAS Starts:

LaDonna called Roger Gosselin to see if he had any updates. April 1st start date for NAS is what he heard from MVAS. He also noted that NAS is actively renovating the building to house Troy Rescue. Roger has not had any updates directly from anyone at NAS. Jacques will get Roger's contact information to NAS.

7. Update on Library Trustee Board:

LaDonna let the board know that the Library Trustees are going to meet at the end of the month for the first time. They are meeting at the town clerk's office for this first meeting. Jen Stelma has been taking the lead on organizing the meeting and she will be inviting Anne Lazor to the meeting. LaDonna wanted to make sure payroll and expenses are still being handled by the selectboard. Jacques clarified that they are for now. LaDonna wondered if the board would like to have the Library Trustees put on the agenda each month. Jacques thought it would be nice to have a representative from the board come each month to update the Selectboard. LaDonna thinks that for now they should warn the meetings and take minutes, as according to VLCT, Library Trustees are considered a town board. Richard wanted to clarify that there is no payroll for trustees right now. LaDonna said that is correct.

8. Highway Update – Eric Kennison, Road Commissioner: No highway update, Eric was not in attendance.

9. Treasurer's Report – Lisa Deslandes:

A. Approve Warrants for Expenditures Dated 2/1/23 \$11,703.46 (bills) & \$6,722.67 (payroll); 2/7 \$1,900.01 (bills); 2/9 \$8,470.00 (bills); 2/14 \$5,938.36 (bills) & \$7,275.16 (payroll); and 2/20 \$36,426.31 (bills): Richard motioned to approve the warrants; Dennis seconded.

B. Review Budget Reports and Balance Sheet (emailed in advance): Budget Reports and Balance Sheet were reviewed and there were no questions.

C. Discuss Setting up a Pay Scale Policy: Lisa discussed setting up a Pay Scale Policy. Some other towns have this set up regarding the COLA increases. She would like to vary the amount of COLA increase per employee based on the level of job difficulty, years of experience, education level needed, part time vs full time etc. She is going to look into how neighboring towns have theirs set up. Jacques thought it would be interesting to see how the other towns are doing this. Lisa will bring something for the board to look at in a future meeting.

D. Review Assessment of County Tax for Year 2023 – \$11,637.34: This is money that Westfield gives to the county court system and the Sheriffs Department each year. Jacques wondered if the board could get a breakdown in the future of what this money goes toward specifically.

E. Discussion with Daniel Pellerin – Edward Jones: Daniel Pellerin was not available to attend this meeting, Lisa is still working on getting a hold of him to have him come to a future meeting. Jacques would like to look at possibly moving money into some CD's at Community National Bank in the future as their rates are much better at this point.

Dennis inquired as to the amount of money currently invested with Edward Jones. Richard believed there is about \$160,000 currently invested. Lisa let the board know that there are some Edward Jones CD's that will be expiring in 2024, February and April.

10. Vermont ATV Sportsman's Association (VASA) Road Agreement: Jacques believes this has been working well, it brings business to town. LaDonna let the board know that there is one person who is currently not happy with the policy. She did let the individual know that they should come to a Selectboard meeting to discuss this, however the person did not show up. The board agreed to continue revisiting this policy every year at this point. A motion to re-adopt the VASA Road Agreement was made by Dennis, Richard seconded.

11. Discuss Mowing Contract: Dennis asked what the contract covers. Jacques explained that it is the cemetery on north hill, town common areas, library. LaDonna asked the board if they wanted to put it out to bid or keep the current person. Richard would like to keep the same person and see what price they are willing to charge this year. Dennis thought the board should get a quote from him first. Lisa agreed that the board should get a new quote from him. LaDonna will email the board the quote when she receives it. Dennis wondered if the current person does cleanup also. LaDonna explained that Don Berthiaume and Eric Kennison do the cleanup from the plowing/ sanding. Jacques wondered if the town should ever consider using salt instead of sand on the paved town roads. He thought it would help with cleanup in the spring and wouldn't fill the ditches up with so much sand. Jacques would like to ask Eric what he thinks at next month's meeting.

12. Recycling Update:

A. Recycling Attendants Schedule for April: Dennis cannot work on the 25th of March. Richard checked with Maurice Doyon and Roger Tetreault, and they can cover for him.

1st – Dennis Vincent

8th – Maurice Doyon, Roger Tetreault

15th – Richard Degre

22nd – Jacques Couture

29th – Dennis Vincent

13. Appoint Someone to Draft Update to Local Emergency Management Plan (LEMP) – Due May 1, 2023: Jacques questioned how much updating needs to be done. LaDonna thought it wouldn't take much to update it this year, she can look at it by next meeting and can have Karen help her go through it. Richard motioned to appoint LaDonna Dunn to update the LEMP, Dennis seconded.

14. Discuss Study Committee for Church: Jacques would like this committee to conduct a feasibility study. LaDonna thought Pat Sagui may want to get it going and apply for a municipal planning grant. Richard wondered if the selectboard should meet with the committee the first time they come together. Jacques thought that was a good idea and clarified that they are charged with finding out whether the town wants the building or not. Lisa wondered if the garage goes

with the church. Jacques let her know that is does not, there is a very small amount of land with the church. Jacques will talk to Pat to see if she would like to head this study committee.

15. Sheriff's Report – January 2023:

There were 0 Tickets, 2 Warnings, \$0 Fines, 0 Arrests.

LaDonna let the board know that next month will be the contract signing.

16. Appoint Representative/Alternate to the NEK Broadband Governing Board (currently Carrie Glessner & Laura Emery): Dennis motioned to appoint Carrie Glessner and Laura Emery; Richard seconded.

17. Update on Speed Ordinance – LaDonna Dunn: LaDonna has been getting other speed ordinances from other towns to make sure the wording is done correctly. Richard checked to see if anyone had spoken to the Sheriffs Department regarding increasing patrols on North Hill. LaDonna needs to call them for the contract so she will ask for more patrols on North Hill when she talks to them. Jacques thought she could also ask them about the speed ordinance wording. When it is updated the town will get money from tickets given for the village portion of Route 100 (35MPH speed zone) even if the State Police pull someone over.

18. Request from Troy Volunteer Fire Department, Inc. for Use of ARPA Funds (emailed in advance): Troy Fire Department is requesting ARPA funds to purchase a new Thermal Image Camera. Jacques believes this is a good idea but wondered if they are also asking Troy for ARPA funds. Dennis called Bobby Jacobs to inquire about the cost of the camera and who else is allocating money towards it. Bobby let the board know that they currently have two of these cameras and they are both 18 years old. The fire department asked Troy and Westfield to each allocate funds to cover the cost of one camera. The cameras are \$6,500 each. Lisa believes the ARPA funds are going to go quickly and the board should figure out what they most want to use the funds for before deciding. Richard thought it would be a good idea to wait another month and see how the board wants to spend the ARPA funds first. Jacques wondered if LaDonna could get another quote on digitizing the town books. Jacques noted that the board also wanted to use ARPA funds re-do the library roof. Richard has reached out regarding the quote for the library roof but he has not received it yet. He believes it will come in around \$20,000. LaDonna asked Lisa if she could create a worksheet/ balance sheet for the ARPA funds. Lisa will get one made. Richard would like to get the price for digitizing the books and then just get it done. LaDonna will bring a price quote and contract to the next meeting. Richard motioned to wait until the next meeting to decide on whether to honor this request by the Troy Fire Department or not; Dennis seconded.

19. Executive Session (if necessary): No Executive Session needed.

20. Other Business: No other business.

21. Adjourn: Dennis motioned to adjourn at 6:37pm, Richard seconded.

X

Jacques Couture
Westfield Selectboard, Chair

X

Richard Degre
Westfield Selectboard

X

Dennis Vincent
Westfield Selectboard