

Westfield Selectboard Minutes
April 17, 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, Chair; Richard Degre, Selectboard, Vice Chair; Dennis Vincent, Selectboard; LaDonna Dunn, Town Clerk; Eric Kennison, Road Commissioner (Partial Attendance); Niki Dunn, Selectboard Clerk; and Jenn Stelma, Library Board of Trustees Chair (Partial Attendance)

Others Present: Daniel Pellerin, Edward Jones (Partial Attendance); Jennifer Harlow, Sheriff (Partial Attendance)

1. Call Meeting to Order-Jacques Couture, Chair: Jacques called the meeting to order at 4:59 p.m.

2. Public Comment – 5 Minutes: None

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

4. Approve 3/20/23 Minutes: Dennis motioned to approve the minutes from March 20, 2023, as printed, Richard seconded.

5. Sign Sheriff’s Contract & Review February/March Reports:

February Report: 3 Tickets, 3 Warnings, \$590 Fines, 0 Arrests

March Report: 1 Ticket, 3 Warnings, \$250 Fines, 0 Arrests

Sheriff Jennifer Harlow brought the contract for the board to sign. Richard motioned to approve and sign the contract which noted an average of 22.5 patrol hours per month for the duration of the contract with a \$58 fee per hour for any hours over these and fees of \$3,900.50 per 3-month period (April-June 2023, July-September 2023, October-December 2023 & January-March 2024) for a total of \$15,602.00; Dennis seconded. Sheriff Harlow let the board know that the department will be adding two new members in June who can do investigations into all crimes. Sheriff Harlow also let the board know that they will be putting the speed cart back on North Hill and they have been doing more patrols there. The speed cart lets them know what time of day people are speeding more so they know when to patrol the area. Jacques wondered if the town received any money last year from fines. LaDonna was not sure if any was received. The traffic ordinance needs to be completed to start getting funds from the Route 100 portion of town.

6. Discussion about Edward Jones Investments – Daniel Pellerin, Edward Jones: Daniel Pellerin went over the information he brought showing the current accounts and the value of the accounts. Jacques would like to separate the grader fund, the library fund and the cemetery fund to get a better idea of how much money each one is making and how much money is in each account when money is needed for a specific purpose. Lisa wanted to put grader fund 1 and 2 together. The board agreed to merge them together. Daniel explained CD rates and how they work through Edward Jones. He also let the board know that money markets are currently paying

4.4%. Jacques questioned whether any of the funds are currently in CD's. Daniel let the board know that around \$52,000 was put into CD's and they have been paying out around \$600 each year since the CD's were started. They will reach maturity in April and February of 2024. Daniel also explained that there is money sitting there as cash, and that it only pays 1%, so he recommended putting that amount in the money market. It does take about 1 day to withdraw funds from the money market. Richard motioned to combine the two grader funds together and then separate the grader fund, library fund and the cemetery fund into their own accounts and move the cash (\$39,449) into the money market; Dennis seconded.

7. Treasurer's Report – Lisa Deslandes:

A. Approve Warrants for Expenditures Dated 3/7/23 \$29,570.34 (bills) & \$5,660.90 (payroll); 3/15 \$3,063.61 (bills) & \$5,139.78 (payroll); 3/21 \$4,394.34 (bills); and 3/28 \$38,611.14 (bills) & \$7,794.24 (payroll): Dennis motioned to approve the warrants; Richard seconded.

B. Review Budget Reports and Balance Sheet (emailed in advance): There were no questions on the balance sheet this month.

8. Update from Library Trustee Board – Jenn Stelma, Chair: Jenn Stelma came to update the Selectboard on what the Library Board of Trustees has been working on and to introduce herself. A needs assessment was filled out and sent in recently and Jenn will email that to the selectboard. There was over \$114,000 worth of repairs and building upgrades that were put on the needs assessment. Jacques wondered what the board is looking to work on in the near future. Jenn explained that they will be working on developing a mission statement, trustee bylaws, code of conduct, and making sure all the trustees are aware of how their roles work and how their roles may evolve. She explained that there is a lot of information on the Vermont Department of Libraries website that they can pull from to work on these things. She also talked about looking to hire a new librarian within the next two months and that the trustees will need to figure out how to do that together with the Selectboard. Richard noted that grant money calls for the library to be open at least 14 hours a week and currently the library is only open 10 hours a week. Jenn noted that they would like to be open 14 hours a week to get up to standards anyway. Jacques read an article in the paper recently and it seemed like there are a lot of grants available for libraries right now. Jenn said she is happy to start looking into the grants. Jacques questioned whether there is a lot of work that needs to be done to get the library up to standard. Jenn explained that it's basically just the hours they are open. They need some hours after 6p.m. during the week and some hours on the weekend and a total of 14 hours minimum per week. Jacques let Jenn know that there is money coming available for energy efficiency for town buildings and that LaDonna will be getting more information on this. Jenn also let the Selectboard know that she spoke with someone at Fairbanks Museum regarding the collection of taxidermy, and the person would like to come train someone on how to clean them.

9. Highway Update – Eric Kennison, Road Commissioner:

A. Update on Payment for Better Roads Grant (#BR017)-Buck Hill: LaDonna spoke with someone at AOT regarding the payment for the Better Roads Grant (Buck Hill,

\$20,000) payment. He said it was already paid, so LaDonna thinks it may have gone into the wrong account. They will need to go back and find the payment and then Lisa will have to make an adjustment to the accounts.

B. Discuss Posting 35 MPH Sign on Reservoir Road: There are currently no speed limit signs on Reservoir Road and the ATVs are going above 35 MPH on the road. Jacques noted that there should be one on each end of the road. Jacques also noted that the town needs to find a new place to get signs. LaDonna found a couple of places and she will also try to find out where the state gets their signs made. Jacques also believes that once the speed ordinance is updated the roads may all need to be assessed to make sure the speed limit signs are all posted where they need to be to comply with the ordinance.

When Eric arrived, the board updated him on putting the new signs on Reservoir Road as well as repairing all the signs knocked down over the winter. Eric will look at all the roads and will let the board know if any signs need to be ordered. LaDonna let Eric know that the Better Roads Grant was accepted. Eric let the board know that he would like to put barriers up on the Notch Road (Route 58) for the winter months. The town spends a lot of money on that road to fix it every spring and he believes the barriers would stop the need for that. They currently are used on Reservoir Road from December 1st to May 1st. Jacques thought Eric should talk to the Montgomery Road foreman or Selectboard to see if they would also be willing to close the road on their end. Eric will talk to their selectmen about it.

10. Digitizing Vault with ARPA Funds – LaDonna Dunn: LaDonna does not currently feel ready to move forward with this. The monthly fee is \$300, and she does not feel like the town would sell enough copies to pay for that. She would like to investigate some other options. Her and Karen will be going to Troy soon to look at the program they are using. She also is concerned that the cost for the original digitizing is very high, and it only goes back 40 years. Jacques wondered how often people need to go back further than that. LaDonna let him know that some financing requires you to go back 100 years.

11. Accept and Sign Mowing Contract with Precision Cut LawnCare/ Ryan Bathalon (emailed in advance): Dennis motioned to accept the contract from Precision Cut LawnCare which totaled \$3,100 for the 2023 mowing as well as spring and fall cleanup, Richard seconded.

12. Recycling Update:

A. Recycling Attendants Schedule for May:

6th – Richard Degre, Mike Piper

13th – Roger Tetreault, Maurice Doyon

20th – Dennis Vincent

27th – Jacques Couture, Dennis Vincent

May 6th is Green Up Day. The attendants that day will need to keep a separate tally for tires from Jay so LaDonna can bill Sally Rivard for the correct amount. Richard thought the tires could be put in a separate spot to keep better track. Jacques wondered if the town should have a scale and weigh tires to charge by weight instead of size as some larger tires are not very heavy and some smaller tires can be quite heavy. After some calculations it was determined that the current prices being charged for tires is enough to cover the towns cost to dispose of them. Richard thought maybe more should be charged for garbage also, especially when people bring heavier trash like sheetrock. Dennis noted that some towns have a compactor truck on site that can handle all the trash right there.

B. Update on Clothing Recycling Program: Jacques called regarding this, they are doing 8x12 buildings now and only want clean clothing and shoes, wearable or not. They recycle what's not wearable. Jay and Troy will not have their own box and will send people to Westfield. Jacques did not feel comfortable with having the box left outdoors and he thought it could be put inside the recycling bay. Richard agreed that the box needs to be inside and that the attendants should look in bags and see if the donations are dirty before allowing them to be dropped off. LaDonna will let them know that the town is still interested in having the drop off box here.

13. Review Local Emergency Management Plan (LEMP) – Due May 1, 2023 (emailed in advance): Jacques noted a couple names missing from the list of elderly people in town. LaDonna noted the changes. Richard motioned to approve the plan; Dennis seconded. LaDonna let the board know that Dan Backus would like to have someone else replace his position as the Emergency Management Coordinator. It was approved with him on there for now.

14. Discuss Recent Church Tour: After the board toured the church, they all thought that it may make more sense for the church members to sell it themselves. Dennis questioned if there are any restrictions on the deed and Richard noted that there are none. Dennis believes that the town can't afford to keep the building, it needs too much work. Richard wondered if the study is really necessary at this point and that if a study is done it will take a couple of years. Jacques thought there may be lead paint in the building and things like that would severely limit what the building could be used for. At this time there may be 2-3 buyers who want it. Jacques thought the board should speak with the study committee members and let them know there might be a buyer and to hold off on working towards a grant for the study. Jacques will call Pat Sagui and speak with her regarding this.

15. Ambulance Report – Status of New Bay for Troy Rescue: The new bay is complete and looks great. The response time has been averaging 8 minutes. It has been a very smooth transition. LaDonna noted that the town has not yet received a bill from Missisquoi Ambulance.

16. Discuss Quote from D & D Electric to Upgrade to Energy Efficient Lighting at Town Office/Community Center/Town Garage: LaDonna thought it would be best to not move forward until after the energy efficiency grant conference as some of this work may be able to be covered through grants. This item was tabled until next month when more information will be available.

17. Discuss Renewal of Lease for Canon Copier – LaDonna Dunn (emailed in advance):

The lease cost per month for a color copier is less than for the black and white copier, so LaDonna would like to go with the color copier. The cost per month for a 60-month lease is \$91, which includes bringing in the new copier and removing the old copier as well as maintenance and toner. A meter is attached to the copier to keep track of how many copies are made per month. Those would be billed at a rate of \$0.0077 per black and white copy and \$0.055 per color copy. LaDonna noted that the office averages about 2,623 copies per month currently. Dennis motioned to accept the 60-month lease for the Canon color copier; Richard seconded.

18. Update on Dog Licensing – LaDonna Dunn: LaDonna updated the board on the number of outstanding dog licenses (43) and let them know that notices will be sent out this week. There is a charge of \$25 each time the constable must be sent out and these fees need to be paid before you can receive your dog license.

19. Update on Speed Ordinance – LaDonna Dunn (emailed in advance): LaDonna is still working on this and has spoken to a Sergeant at the Sheriff's Office to have some questions answered regarding setting this up.

20. Revisit Request from Troy Volunteer Fire Department, Inc. for Use of ARPA Funds (emailed in advance): At this time Troy has not taken any action on this. Dennis had an idea of offering to pay for half of one unit, instead of paying for one full unit if Troy was willing to pay for the other half of the unit. Jacques thought there was probably grant money available to them to obtain this equipment. While the board does think it is a worthwhile use of funds they decided to hold off until next month and to see what if any action Troy takes at their next meeting. LaDonna will speak with the Troy Town Clerk and update her on the board's thoughts.

21. Executive Session (if necessary): Richard motioned to enter Executive Session for a personnel issue, Dennis seconded. Motion by Richard and second by Dennis to exit Executive Session.

22. Other Business:

A. Next Meeting Date: May 15th, 2023 at 5 p.m.

B. Informational Letter from Sandy Snyder Received 4/6/23 (emailed in advance):
The board read and acknowledged Sandy's letter.

C. Richard will reach out to McAllister's about the concrete at the Community Center.

D. Mike Piper let LaDonna know that other towns charge \$50 per constable visit for unregistered dogs, currently in Westfield it is \$25. Mike would like to increase this fee. LaDonna noted that delinquent letters are going out Thursday (20th), and they do note the charge for the constable to visit. All subsequent visits are also \$25, and these fees need to be paid before the dog license can be received. The board decided to keep the fee at \$25 at this time.

23. Adjourn: Motion by Jacques and second by Dennis to adjourn the meeting at 7:50 p.m.

Westfield Selectboard Approval Date: _____ with _____ change(s)

WESTFIELD SELECTBOARD

X

Jacques Couture
Selectboard Chair

X

Richard Degre
Selectboard

X

Dennis Vincent
Selectboard

Minutes Submitted by: Niki Dunn, Selectboard Clerk