

WESTFIELD SELECTBOARD MEETING
Minutes
December 6th, 2024 @ 12:30 p.m.
Westfield Town Office, 38 School Street, With Zoom Option

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

1. **Call Meeting to Order – Jacques Couture, Chair:** Jacques called the meeting to order at 12:30pm.
2. **Public Comment – 5 Minutes:** There were no public comments.
3. **Additions and/or Deletions to the Agenda:** There were no additions or deletions to the agenda.
4. **Approve Minutes of the 11-18-24 Selectboard Meeting: (emailed in advance)** Richard motioned to approve the minutes of the November 18th, 2024 meeting. Dennis seconded. Motion passed.
 - A. **Business from the Minutes:** None needed.
5. **Approve Annual Report Printing Cost: (emailed in advance)** Richard motioned to approve the three-year rate, which is \$890 per year for 230 copies, Dennis seconded. Motion passed.
6. **Approve and Sign Ambulance Services Agreement: (emailed in advance)** Dennis motioned to approve the Ambulance Service Agreement, Richard seconded. Motion passed. Jacques signed the document.
7. **Review Sheriff's Report and Contract Amount: (emailed in advance)** The increase for the new contract goes from \$61 an hour to \$65 an hour which is a 6.5% increase. The total contract amount will go up for vote at town meeting as an appropriation. The October report included 0 tickets, 0 Warnings, 0 Fines and 0 Arrests.
8. **Update on ARPA Funds:**
 - A. **Current List of Anticipated ARPA Projects – Incomplete Work Needs Contracts:** Projects still not completed include D&D installation of cameras for town office at a cost of \$4,600, \$5,000 set aside for concrete work for the sign at the Recycling Center, \$1,000 set aside for chairs at the Community Center, wiring for the sign at the Recycling Center which D&D believes will be less than \$1,000. After those projects there will be \$6,463.44. The rest of the funds will be used to finish digitizing the vault, which includes payroll cost for land record scanning as well as hosting and startup fees. The MERP Energy Grant money is more flexible and could be used for a generator at the Recycling Center. Lisa would like to get a quote on the generator cost. LaDonna noted that all the ARPA funds need to be committed under contract by the end of 2024. She recommends paying the invoice now for the cameras and holding the check until the cameras get installed. Since the concrete work cannot be done this year, it will need to be under contract. Lisa emailed Tracy Degre to get a quote on the concrete, Richard will call Richard McAllister to see about getting a quote also.
9. **Update on Digital Sign Installation:** Concrete will not be able to get done until spring at this point. LaDonna and Lisa will work on getting a contract from D&D for the electrical work.
10. **Sign Affirmation of Use of Funds (AUF) for MERP Grant:** Jacques signed the Affirmation of Use of Funds Grant Agreement. Richard got new quotes for windows from Poulin. \$23,900 for Harvey windows with installation at the library, with a lift rental cost of \$2,500. For the Town Office it would be \$15,000 for Anderson windows, all installed. This cost could be less if we go with Harvey windows. For the Town Garage/ Recycling Center \$9,500 for 4 windows, the 2 big windows will be crank-outs, cost includes installation. For the Community Center upstairs windows, it would cost \$18,425 for Harvey windows all installed. The wait time will be about 6-8 weeks to get all the windows in after they are

ordered. Carter Finegan will be meeting with the board at a upcoming meeting to answer questions about when the work can begin.

11. Begin Discussion on Policy/Ordinance for Class 4 and Legal Trails: LaDonna sent a sample policy from another Vermont town to the board members. The board liked the sample policy and thinks it's a good starting point. The board will think about the way they want to go forward with a policy and who will be responsible for the any work done on the roads. It may be a good idea to have someone who knows about water and runoff on roads to help with this policy.

12. Treasurers Report – Lisa Deslandes:

A. Review Library Proposed Budget for FY25:

Lisa added book sale income of \$50, and copies income of \$50 as new line items. Postage of \$50 was also added and the maintenance budget was upped to \$5,200 as they would like to have a deep clean done after the new windows are put in.

B. Review Listers Proposed Budget for FY25: The listers requested funds for another filing cabinet but Richard thinks he has one they can use. They also requested more funds toward training. LaDonna will get exact numbers from Danny prior to next week's meeting.

C. Review Proposed General Budget for FY25:

- Cemetery lots: Lisa felt it would be better to put any money from sales of lots into the cemetery fund instead of adding the revenue into the general budget as the number of sales in a given year is always unknown and can vary greatly from year to year. The cemetery landscaping would still be a town expense. Jacques would like to think about using interest from cemetery CDs for the perpetual care down the road.

- Playground Donation: The rest of the money from the church donation went into a special account to be used for playground equipment, there is \$1,550 left.

- Lisa added a new line for computer services for Dennis Beloin's contracted services.

- NEMRC cloud expense now goes into the annual support account. This account increased because it will cost \$1,200 a year to have land records hosted online.

- Lisa is still waiting for a quote from the auditor.

- Troy Fire Department increased their request by \$5,000 this year, they haven't asked for an increase for 3 years prior.

- Montgomery Fire Department will have an increase because they are doing EMS services now, LaDonna is still waiting for that number.

- North Hill Cemetery: This was increased to \$1,500, and the board feels they need to look at getting a better mowing service next year. They will put the mowing services out to bid in the spring and will separate the cemetery and the town office/ library mowing into two separate bids.

- Advertising budget has gone over this year due to the number of DRB hearings that were held. LaDonna has spoken to Will Young about raising the permit price for hearings to help cover this expense in the future.

- The transfer out appraisal amount was increased by one thousand to \$5,000 to help offset any large increase the year the appraisal takes place.

- Playground budget went over this year due to adding mulch. The board would like to add more mulch in the spring.

- Telephones: Dennis Beloin mentioned switching to a telephone service like Jay's to save money. LaDonna will talk to Dennis about this next time she sees him.

- Community Center Maintenance: The board would like the walkway shoveled after its plowed. The town office walkway gets shoveled after its plowed, however it is a different person who does the plowing at each building.

- NEKWMD Budget will be voted on Tuesday, if theres an increase Jacques will let LaDonna know.

- Jay food shelf appropriation: They are asking for \$1,000 which is up from \$750. The food shelf is in a new building, and they now have to pay expenses for the building which is why it went up. Jay's appropriation is not increasing because they are providing the building rent free.

- RCT's appropriation went up from \$600 to \$950.

- Lions Club appropriation went down to \$100, as the meal site is doing well.

Appropriations have until mid January to ask for their money, and they are voted on individually at Town Meeting.

13. Executive Session (if needed): Richard motioned to go into executive session at 2:13pm to discuss payroll, Dennis seconded. Motion passed.

Dennis motioned to exit executive session at 2:47pm, Richard seconded. Motion passed.

Dennis made a motion to calculate payroll increases based on the 2.5% cost of living adjustment for the next meeting, Richard seconded. Motion passed. Lisa estimated that the COLA increase would cost around \$3,000 more for the full year.

Jacques suggested researching salary comparisons for other towns to see how our employees' pay rates compare to others in the area.

Richard motioned to request a visitor log from the library to see how often the library is being used and what purposes it is being used for as well as where visitors are from before they discuss approving more operating hours each week. Dennis seconded. Motion passed.

14. Other Business:

A. Upcoming County Meeting, December 16th @ 8:00 am, 246 Main Street, Newport or Zoom: Informational only.

B. Caroling on Westfield Common, December 12th at 6:00 pm: Informational only.

C. Next Selectboard Meeting December 13 @ 12:30 pm to Draft the Highway Budget: Informational only.

15. Adjourn: Dennis motioned to adjourn at 3:00pm, Richard seconded. Motion passed.

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

X

Jacques Couture
Selectboard Chair

X

Dennis Vincent
Selectboard

X

Richard Degre
Selectboard

