

WESTFIELD SELECTBOARD MEETING
Minutes
December 13th, 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; Eric Kennison, Road Commissioner (Partial Attendance)

Others Present: Matthew Wilson, The Chronicle

1. **Call Meeting to Order – Jacques Couture, Chair:** Jacques called the meeting to order at 12:31pm.
2. **Public Comment – 5 Minutes:** None
3. **Additions and/or Deletions to the Agenda:** LaDonna added 9b – Discussion on rescheduling Caroling on the Common and 5b – NEMRC Land Record Contract.
4. **Approve Minutes of the 12-3-24 Selectboard Meeting: (emailed in advance)** Dennis motioned to approve the minutes from the December 6th selectboard meeting, Richard seconded. Motion passed.
 - A. **Business from the Minutes:** None
5. **Update on ARPA Funds:**
 - A. **Current List of Anticipated ARPA Projects – Incomplete Work Needs Contracts:** Richard is still working on getting a contract for the concrete work for the sign project. D&D submitted a quote for \$1,300 for wiring for the sign and he will get it changed to a contract. Matthew Wilson questioned what projects we have left to use ARPA funds for. Jacques let him know we are working on getting our digital sign installed and the work cannot be done until spring. LaDonna let him know that we are also finishing up digitizing the vault.
 - B. **NEMRC Land Record Contract:** NEMRC sent the contract for hosting land records. It is a one-time setup fee of \$800 and a yearly charge of \$1,200. Dennis motioned to approve the NEMRC Land Record Portal Agreement; Richard seconded. Motion passed. The yearly charge is already worked into next years budget, the first year is paid for using ARPA funds.
6. **Update on Digital Sign Installation:** Covered in #5. Blueprint for base has arrived.
7. **Treasurers Report – Lisa Deslandes:**
 - A. **Approve November Warrants – 11/4/24 \$39,557.29 (bills), \$9,207.82 (payroll); 11/13/24 \$2,607.50 (bills); 11/18/24 \$28,351.74 (bills), \$9,539.91 (payroll); 11/26/24 \$9,835.54 (bills): (emailed in advance)** Richard motioned to approve the warrants for November, Dennis seconded. Motion passed.
 - B. **Draft Highway Budget for FY25:**
 - Payroll for both budgets will be calculated with a 2.5% Cost of Living increase.
 - Richard will have Chris Hammond look at the town garage after the first of the year to go over what improvements will be made there using the MERP funds.
 - Grader needs scheduled maintenance, Lisa is leaving grader expenses at \$5,000 to help cover this next year.
 - Hired Equipment; Eric would like \$20 more an hour for the trucks in the winter. Blades for the plow trucks are costing more which led to this increase. Winter truck rates would therefore

increase to \$140 an hour. Summer truck rates will stay the same at \$105 an hour. The total for 2024 will go over budget a bit this year, so the total was increased by \$10,000 for next year to help accommodate this.

- Salt cost was lowered from \$8,000 to \$6,000 to be more in line with the actual amount spent the past year.

- Paving cost was moved back down to \$40,000, which is the normally budgeted amount. The previous year included more for the paving grant that was received.

- Road Signs were budgeted at \$5,000 as there are many road signs throughout town that need to be replaced. Richard noted that the Sign Depot in Lyndonville makes road signs for towns. Newport Center has been replacing their signs recently, LaDonna may be able to speak with their town clerk to see where they are ordering signs from.

- Road grants for next year include \$10,000 for Wild & Scenic, a Grants In Aid, and a grant to replace a culvert on Corrow Basin Road. Eric does not prefer to do the Better Roads Grant as they require all ditches to be lined with stone, even when they don't need to be, but he will look into them to see what they are offering for grants this year.

- i. **Approve Kennison and Son Equipment Rates:** The board agreed to increase the winter truck rate to \$140 an hour and to keep the summer rates at \$105 an hour.

C. Review Proposed General Budget for FY25: Lisa provided an updated general budget for the board to look at. The listers asked for some more training hours with VTPIE being introduced, so their budget was upped to \$11,000 from \$9,000. The animal license money that goes to the state was increased to \$900. The auditor quote was received, and it was \$12,400, which is a \$400 increase from last year.

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

9. Other Business:

- A. Library Open House December 15th from 11:30am to 1pm:** Informational

- B. Reschedule Caroling on the Common:** The caroling has been rescheduled for Wednesday, December 18th, 2024, at 6:00pm.

- C. Next Selectboard Meeting:** January 3rd at 12:30pm

10. Adjourn: Dennis motioned to adjourn at 2:03pm, Richard seconded. Motion passed.

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

X

Jacques Couture
Selectboard Chair

X

Richard Degre
Selectboard

X

Dennis Vincent
Selectboard

DRAFT