

**Town of Westfield Informational Meeting Minutes**  
**February 25, 2021 @ 6 p.m.**  
**Electronic Meeting Held Via Zoom**

---

Pat Sagui introduced herself as the Moderator. She explained this type of Zoom meeting is a first for the Town of Westfield and it is the first time all town articles will be voted by Australian ballot.

Moderator Sagui stated this meeting is officially a Selectboard meeting. The Selectboard asked Moderator Sagui to lead the meeting. It is the time when voters can ask questions about the Australian ballot articles prior to the election, March 2, 2021.

The Moderator introduced town officials and explained how the public can participate during the Informational Meeting.

Selectboard members present included: Chair, Yves Daigle, Anne Lazor, and Jacques Couture. Also present were: LaDonna Dunn, Town Clerk; Mary Lou Jacobs, Treasurer; and Assistant Town Clerks, Karen Blais and Heather Johnson.

While the School Informational Meeting was held earlier in the week, Schoolboard members Kevin Amyot and Nicole Dunn were present to answer school related questions. Jessica Villeneuve, new Principal of the Jay-Westfield Joint Elementary School, introduced herself and said she is enjoying her new role as Principal.

The Moderator explained the complete list of articles she will be reading from is in the Warning in the Town Report, which can be found on the municipal website at [www.westfield.vt.gov](http://www.westfield.vt.gov).

Moderator Sagui stated she will read each article from the Town Report. Anyone on the call may state their name and ask their question related to the article once they are recognized by the Moderator. There will be no voting during the meeting. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss each article. Questions can be asked with town officers providing answers.

LaDonna Dunn and Karen Blais will be help<sup>ing</sup> manage the technology during the meeting. You may raise your hand to ask a question and you will be called upon. Questions can also be typed in the chat feature.

**School Board:** No questions were asked about the school budget or other school articles. The School Board members and Principal were thanked for attending the meeting.

**Town Articles:**

**Articles 1-11** – are articles for elected town offices. No one wished to speak about the office they were running for except for Selectboard candidates, Yves Daigle and Michael Saloomey. Moderator Sagui explained they would each have two minutes to speak.

- Yves Daigle – “Why I want to be on Selectboard for another term for 3 years – because I care for this town and I want to say thank you to all of you. I will always be here to listen, and I will always try to help each of you. I was brought up that way by my mother and father. I was born here and always lived here besides the two years I was in the Korean War. I had a barber shop, operated the Westfield General Store, operated a dairy farm,

and operated a grain store for the farmers. If elected, I will always put Westfield first and ahead of my own agenda and with all of your help we will continue to make Westfield an affordable place for our families to live. I would appreciate your vote.”

- Michael Saloomey – “Some of you may or may not know me. I wanted to give you some of my background and how it is relevant to the position on the Selectboard. I spent over 30 years as a Senior Engineering Manager in a large corporation managing a budget of 2.5 million dollars. During that time, I also was a small business owner for six years. I was the President of the Smugglers Area Chamber of Commerce in Jeffersonville, served as Vice President of a Christian summer camp, Treasurer of a Christian daycare, currently a church Elder and Treasurer of the Lowell Bible Church and have trained business managers from several states and many countries around the world. I believe at every level of government we can benefit from new and different views on issues that manage our towns, states, and country. With all due respect to the current Selectboard, I'd like to be considered for the position on the Selectboard.”

LaDonna stated the Town of Westfield is looking for an Auditor, a Lister, and a Town Health Officer. If interested in those positions, please talk to your Selectboard members, or come into the Town Office for more information. LaDonna explained, if you want to be elected as an Auditor or Lister, seven people need to write your name in on the ballot and you will be elected. If interested in the Town Health Officer position, submit a letter of interest and the Selectboard will make a recommendation to the State Health Commissioner who fills that position.

Yves Daigle made a complimentary statement about past Auditor, Joe Falworth. Joe has moved out of state, so we need another auditor. We currently have Karen O'Donnell and Kay Courson. Kay has stated this is her last term. Yves stated Kay has been an exceptionally good Auditor. He said when Kay retires, Karen may also. Yves stated the Selectboard is concerned because they are having a hard time finding even one auditor, so how will they find three? Kay suggested in the future the Town may have to go with a professional CPA firm that does audits. Yves said, if we do, we must prepare ourselves for \$30,000 or more for a company to do this work. He is asking the people of Westfield to be prepared for this as it has proven extremely hard to find an auditor.

**The Moderator read through Articles 12-15.** There were no questions or comments.

**Article 16** – \$600 to Green Mountain Farm to School: Rosemary Croizet commented, normally at Town Meeting if we want to change the amount, we make a motion. Can we still do this? Moderator Sagui replied, no, amendments cannot be made to Australian ballot articles. Whatever the amount is printed on the ballot, that is the amount voted yes or no on Election Day.

**Moderator Sagui read through Articles 17-27.** There were no questions or comments.

**Article 28** - \$550 to Old Stone House Museum: Rosemary Croizet commented the Orleans Historical Society has an amazing online presence and a great outside venue for activities.

**Moderator Sagui read Article 29.** There were no questions or comments.

**Article 30** - \$500 to Orleans County Fair: Yves Daigle asked if there was going to be a fair this year. Jacques Couture commented that is one of the reasons fair officials are looking for

support is because fair officials need to maintain the grounds for other events throughout the year. LaDonna referred to the fairs report in the Town Report.

**Moderator Sagui read Articles 31-41.** There were no questions or comments.

The Moderator asked if anyone had anything else they would like to ask questions about?

Yves Daigle made a comment about Article 40. He said the Municipal Budget is down 35% from last year. At a Selectboard Meeting last year, a small group came and were concerned about their taxes in Westfield. Because there were no major repairs, and no construction projects, the budget is lower in 2021. Yves said he would much rather have the budget be down 35% than up 10%. Yves wanted to draw attention to this. He stated that the Selectboard has no control over the school budget or the education tax. The education tax is set by the state. Kevin Amyot said the Jay-Westfield Joint Elementary School budget increased by 3.25% mostly due to benefit increases and negotiated salary increases. He complimented the new Principal, Jessica Villeneuve for doing a great job keeping the budget increase at a minimum.

Pat thanked everyone for participating and for their patience. She encouraged anyone who had feedback about the meeting to contact the Town Clerk's office.

Hearing no further questions, Anne Lazor made a motion to adjourn at 6:45 p.m. Jacques Couture seconded the motion and Yves Daigle agreed. The Selectboard thanked all for participating.

---

**Westfield Selectboard Approval: Date:** 4/19/21 **with** 1 **change(s)**

*Yves Daigle*  
**Yves Daigle, Chair**

*Jacques Couture*  
**Jacques Couture, Co-Chair**

*Anne Lazor*  
**Anne Lazor**

Minutes submitted by: *LaDonna Dunn*  
LaDonna Dunn, Town Clerk & Selectboard Clerk

---

and Heather Johnson, Assistant Town Clerk