

**Windham VT Selectboard Minutes
December 19, 2022 Regular Meeting
at Town Office and on Zoom**

Via Zoom

George Dutton, selectboard
Michael Pelton, selectboard
Mary McCoy (Mac), selectboard clerk

At the Town Office

Kord Scott, selectboard chair
Ellen McDuffie, town clerk
Three men from excavation companies
Esther Fishman, Londonderry Transfer Sta.

Others attending via Zoom:

Maureen Bell	Keith Jungermann
Vance Bell	Sarah Kiefer
Crystal Corriveau	Sarah E.
Tom Widger	David Lewis
Cathy Edgerly Fales	Abby Pelton
Becky Eliastam	Ron Cohen
Gail Wyman	Carrie Tintle
	Bill Dunkel

1. Start Recording and Call to Order

Kord announced the meeting, started the recording, and called the meeting to order at 5:32 PM.

2. Changes to Agenda

It was agreed to move the first two items under New Business to be next on the agenda, so those present at the Meeting House would not have to wait any further.

A) Wheeler Road Culvert Bid Opening – Ellen opened the bids and Kord read them.

- > Adams Trucking and Excavating – \$331,480
- > Bazin Brothers Trucking – \$431,665
- > Isaac’s Excavating and Construction – \$415,000
- > A.S. Clark and Sons – \$337,575
- > Neil H. Daniels – \$312,328

B) Update from Ester Fishman of the Londonderry Transfer Station – Esther said she works to ensure that the state’s many requirements are met regarding solid waste, so she is successful when she reapplies to the state for funding every five years. She also works with other solid waste managers to lobby the legislature to make manufacture’s cover the costs for the disposal of their products. She said that the companies that provide the station’s recycling services say there is too much contamination among the items they receive. The transfer station will need to address this issue with the station’s users. The station needs to purchase a newer backhoe in 2023. Esther reported that the Give and Take stall will be open from 12:00 to 3:00, with more oversight. She did not know as yet what Windham will be charged in ‘23. The Transfer Station will be closed for the holidays on December 24, 25, 31, and January 1. **Next Step:** Ester will send a list of places plastic bags can be recycled, as the Transfer Station does not accept them.

3. Announcements/Reminders

Kord asked that residents tell their plow people to not leave any snow piles in the road, as these can create hazardous conditions.

4. Act on Minutes from the Previous Meeting

There were no changes to the minutes from the meeting of December 5, 2022.

Motion: To approve the December 5, 2022 minutes. Kord moved, and all agreed.

There were no changes to the minutes from the emergency meeting of December 8, 2022. Kord explained that the meeting was held to award the contract for the installation of the ventilation system. Some work under that contract needed to occur before the installation of the insulation, which was scheduled for December 14-16. Michael said he supported having a ventilation system, but he voted against this, because the selectboard had not determined where the funds would come from for the expense beyond what had been budgeted. He also objected to the need for an emergency meeting.

Motion: To approve the December 8, 2022 minutes. George moved, and all agreed.

5. Public Comment

Bill Dunkel announced that the Energy Committee and others made 164 storm window inserts in mid-November, including 10 large storm windows for the sanctuary in the Meeting House. He thanked everyone who helped, including Kathy Jungermann and the WCO who provided delicious lunches for the crew.

6. Correspondence

Three thank you letters have been received from organizations that the town gave donations, Valley Cares, SEVCA, and the Humane Society.

Next Step: Gail will scan these and send them to Mac.

7. Payroll/Bills

Michael questioned the \$650 charge from Uline Office Supplies. Gail said it was for new office chairs. Michael asked that the treasurer provide a report that showed how expenditures compared to the budget.

Motion: To approve the pay orders received from the town treasurer, and to have future pay orders include a report that red-flags any expenses that are or may be over their budgeted amount. Michael moved, and Kord agreed. George abstained, as he had not had time to review the pay orders. (He agreed with the idea of a report.)

Motion: To have Kord sign for the payments presented. George moved, and all agreed.

8. Staff Reports and Discussion

There were no reports given.

9. New Business

C) Discuss 11/14 email from Tom Widger about Meeting House heating and domestic hot water system upgrades – Tom reported that there are two furnaces at the Meeting House, requiring a lot of oil to be used. One furnace has been turned off as a quick fix. The building is cold. Tom wants the entire heating system to be considered, possibly replacing the current system with cold climate heat pumps. An estimate has been received for a generator, which was around \$14,000-\$15,000. Tom is focused on getting better heat, hot water, and a generator for the Meeting House, and these needs are being considered by the ARPA

Committee. He is working with the others to get definite cost estimates and to determine the priorities for the building. Kord suggested asking engineer John Penny for his assessment of the building's needs. Michael said there should be a long-term plan.

There are funds for improvements. Michael suggested applying for available grants. Bill said Efficiency Vermont is offering up to \$6,000 in rebates for air-to-water heat pumps. Tom said the town budgeted \$5,000 for Meeting House upgrades in 2022, and the same will be proposed for 2023. He also said that Imme and the WCO have raised \$3,000 with tag sales and a bike event. Crystal said she thought more money could be raised. The ARPA Committee is also looking at recommending funds for the Meeting House.

Additional bids are needed for the generator to meet town policy on bids. George said we should revisit that policy on bidding.

Next Steps: Kord will contact John Penny for an engineer's assessment of the Meeting House's needs. Consider changing the policy on bidding.

D) Update on process and schedule for determining 2023 town budget – This work has been delayed by Treasurer Kathy Scott's health challenges. The selectboard can begin by looking at the budget for roads. Additional meetings will be needed to prepare the budget, which is true every year. George asked for actual vs. budgeted figures. Michael suggested going with the easiest process possible, which might be having Kathy and Gail (her assistant) prepare and explain a budget for 2023 that the selectboard could then amend.

Next Step: Start working on the budget as soon as figures are received from the treasurer.

E) Renew Vermont Diesel Tax Exemption (due 12/31) – Kord said this is a formality which only requires updating a form.

Next Step: Kord will complete the necessary paperwork before the deadline.

F) Sarah Kiefer Mountain Towns Recreation Director Proposal – Sarah said the draft proposal (attached) she sent to the selectboard was to hire a recreational director to oversee recreational activities in Londonderry and other towns, which could include Windham. Currently, there are several volunteer organizations that provide recreational services. An administrator could coordinate these and expand what is offered. A time study was conducted on what is currently offered. Of funds raised, 20% would go to the four parks in Londonderry and the 80% to a director's salary. That person would work with all of the volunteers. The position would be budgeted for 2023, with hiring starting July 1. Windham and other towns will be asked to vote at town meeting on funding this director's position. She anticipates that Windham will be asked to contribute \$6,000 to \$10,000. She could not state any certain benefits this would provide for Windham. If we join this project, we will have a seat on the advisory board.

Next Steps: Sarah will provide an overview of the possible benefits for Windham. The town will consider this as an article at town meeting.

G) Review of Auditor's 12/12 scheduling request – We received a list of items needed from the selectboard by the auditors as they prepare their report for town meeting. Everything has to be to them by January 20.

Next Steps: Decide who will write the selectboard's annual report.

H) Discuss Cathy Edgerly's State ARPA fund opportunity (12/7 email) – Cathy reported that she attended a webinar on funding opportunities, which included information on the

Municipal Energy Resiliency Program (MERP), the grant from the state's department of Buildings and General Services (BGS) for energy improvements for municipal buildings, previously mentioned in ARPA Committee reports. The BGS is behind schedule on its application process, due to changes in the legislation for created this grant opportunity. In three to six months, support up to \$4,000 is possible for help in planning and implementing the application. In 12 to 18 months, we can apply for up to \$500,000 for municipal energy improvements. The ARPA Committee has discussed that this would be a way to fund the solar panels on the Town Office roof. The Windham Regional Commission will provide support to town to acquire and implement this funding.

Next Step: Bill will find out who our contact person will be at WRC.

D) Review MRGP renewal requirement (Jeff Nugent 12/16 email) – This Municipal Roads General Permit is a statutory requirement for road work, costing about \$450-\$500.

Next Step: Kord will do what is needed to get this permit.

10. Old Business

A) Report on Town Office insulation and air exchange system – The insulation work began on Wednesday the 14th, as scheduled, but was not finished on Friday, due to the storm. It is already warmer in the Town Office. Initial work for the ventilation system was completed prior to that, which included cutting holes in the floor for vents. Jeffers will be back after the holidays to finish the ventilation work. George noted that some of the ARPA funds can be used to pay the cost of the ventilation system that went over the budgeted amount. The actual cost of this will be known soon.

B) Update on Town Office Water Testing – The samples have been submitted, and we are waiting for the results.

C) Update on Town Office NAS data backup system for Vance's remote access – As yet Vance is not connected, due to scheduling issues. Michael thanked Vance for his work in getting the website back up and running.

Next Step: Get Vance connected to the NAS system.

D) Report on VTrans FY24 Better Roads Grant Program due 12/16 – This was submitted on time. We will receive the results in the spring or summer.

E) Update on FEMA project and easement requirements – The bids that were opened tonight will be reviewed and one chosen. These were for the Wheeler Road culvert project. Meetings have taken place with the two adjacent property owners, and they seem to accept the need for heavy equipment to come onto their property. As soon as surveyors finish their work, the easement agreements can be prepared, and the winning bid can be awarded.

Next Step: Finalize the easement agreements and award the work to the chosen contractor.

F) Discussion about Owl AV System mentioned by Tom Widger – Michael has received no responses from other towns that use the Owl. This revolving camera seems impressive, but Becky's company had problems with theirs. The Owl is voice-activated, and if people don't speak one at a time, the Owl bounces around trying to focus on a speaker.

Next Step: Michael will ask others about their experience with the Owl.

G) Update re Wheeler Road property related to ZBA decision – The owners have put the property up for sale. We did not learn this from the owners. They have not completed the work required by the Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA), but their market listing acknowledges the work that the town requires and says the work must be completed before a sale is finalized. Legally, the ZBA decision is attached to the property, not the owner. Bill explained that both the original ZBA decision and the waiver to address storm water run-off applies to whomever owns the land. Even though the foundation is too close to the road, the new owners could build there as long as the other requirements are met. George raised concerns about this setting a precedent, but Bill said the ZBA decisions state that this situation does not apply to any other similar situation.

H) FY22 Grants in Aid #GA0236 reimbursement request due 12/31 – Kord will complete this request by its deadline. This is for the MRGP work on ditches and culverts on Route 121.

11. Adjourn regular meeting and stop recording.

Motion: To adjourn the meeting at 7:24 PM. George moved and all agreed.

The next selectboard meeting is scheduled for Monday, January 2, 2023 at 5:30 PM

Attachments:

Letters from Valley Cares, SEVCA, and Humane Society

Email from Sarah Keifer re Mt. Town Recreation Director

Info via Cathy Edgerly Fales re Municipal Energy Resiliency Program (MERP)

Respectfully submitted,
Mary McCoy (Mac), selectboard clerk
Approved January 3, 2023