

Town of Woodbury Select Board

December 10, 2018

Meeting Minutes

Select Board Members : Thomas "Skip" Lindsay-Chair; Brian Shatney; Michael Gray

Town Officers : Diana Peduzzi-Town Clerk; Brandy Smith –Town Treasurer; Laura Dailey-Select Board Secretary/Assistant Town Clerk; Cacky Peltz, School Board; Phoebe Slater, School Board

Members of the Public: Brett Stanciu, Town Librarian; Stephen Murphy; Peter Peltz, Vermont State Board of Education member

Media: Griffin Lussier- Hardwick Community Television

Skip called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

Adjustments to Agenda- Town employee insurance compensation; update from State Police on Bliss Road homicides

Public Comment: none

Approve the Bills to the Town- Bills approved

Approve the Minutes from the November 26, 2018 Select Board Meeting- Minutes approved

Bliss Road Homicides: Skip read an e-mail from Lt. Todd Baxter of the Vermont State Police responding to his inquiry for updates on the fire and killings at two residences on Bliss Road. The police have no new information they can make public but wished to inform residents in Woodbury that this homicide was deliberate and not a random act. They stressed residents should not worry and requested if anyone has any information to please contact them.

Town Treasurer's Report: The town has \$584,610.18 left in its money market fund. \$12,716.25 of delinquent taxes has been collected since 11/26 with \$115,910.61 remaining in delinquent taxes. The town has taken in \$8,860.18 in revenue since 11/26. \$5,000 was transferred from the money market fund to cover accounts payable. Planning for the fiscal year 2020 (FY2020) was discussed briefly. The select board and treasurer will begin developing a budget at the next SB meeting on 12/19.

Town Audit Bid Award: Skip contacted Sullivan & Powers, the accounting firm selected for the proposed town audit, to notify them of the select board's decision to award the audit contract to them and to explain the circumstances of approval for the audit at town meeting.

Town Clerk's Report: Diana presented a letter of certification from the school district and a letter from Washington County Court inviting someone from the town to its budget meeting. Work on the 2018 Town Report has begun.

Woodbury Country Store/ Hazard Mitigation Grant (HMG):

- **Woodbury Country Store Demolition RFP-** Eleven Request for Proposals (RFP) have been sent out to various contractors and a few contractors have responded to ads in local papers and the town website requesting an RFP. There will be a mandatory site visit on 12/19 for contractors intending to bid on the project. Don Marsh, the engineer for the project will be present at this site visit to answer contractor's questions. Chris Wright, abutting property owner to the old store, will also be invited to attend the site visit.
- **BRELLA/ Certificate of Completion (COC) Letter:** Linda Elliot from the Waste Management Division of the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) requires a legal description/ survey of the old store property for the COC letter, otherwise known as a

Clean Site letter. The town does not have a survey and a new survey would be expensive. Diana will see if a fairly recent survey, done in the 1990s when the gas tanks were removed, will meet Linda's request or if other past documents related to the property the town does have will be accepted. The expense of a survey would not be reimbursed by FEMA in the Hazard Mitigation Grant.

Town Highway Report:

- **Road Crew Work Reporting-** Consistent precipitation has kept the road crew busy with plowing and sanding. Tim Neil, third person on the winter crew, has been getting plenty of on hand experience. Peter Dailey has been worked into the schedule and is training with Greg Parkhurst for his CDL license and assisting with maintenance work. The road crew has also been out cutting brush/branches that heavy wet snow has bent into the roadsides.
- **LoPro Truck Delivery Update-** Due to arrive 12/10 but postponed one day for some minor adjustments to the truck by Patriot, the dealer from whom the truck was purchased. The LoPro should arrive tomorrow and will require a few days of work by the road crew before it is ready to be used.
- **Insurance Compensation-** The select board agreed at its last meeting to provide \$315 per month in insurance compensation to Greg Parkhurst. The actual amount will be determined by Brandy so that after taxes are taken out the amount paid to Greg for the insurance compensation will be \$315; this will be paid to Greg in a separate check. Sections concerning health insurance benefits in the Personnel Policy are reviewed. It is suggested that the dollar amounts in the health insurance benefits section be deleted as these rates change from year to year.
- **Hourly Wage for Peter Dailey:** The select board sets an hourly wage of \$15.45/hour to start for Peter Dailey, new part time employee, with a commitment to bump his hourly wage to \$15.95 when he obtains his CDL license.
- **Trees on Ainsworth Road town right of way-** Skip has negotiated an agreement with Mike McGlynn, whose property the trees are located on. The town will finance the dropping of the trees as they are in the town's right of way for Ainsworth Road; the town is ultimately liable if there is any damage/injury caused by their falling. Mike McGlynn will be responsible for the removal of the trees once they are dropped as the trees are, by state statute, his property.

Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) - A first draft of the LHMP has been completed and sent to Stephanie Smith of Vermont Emergency Management (VEM) for review. The LHMP has also been posted on Woodbury's website for town resident's to review. VEM will send recommended changes to Ashley Andrews of the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission (CVRPC); she will incorporate the changes and then send the plan back to the LHMP committee for their review. From there the LHMP will go back to VEM and then to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for review.

Act 46 Discussion: Several residents, including school board members and our town librarian, met with the select board to discuss the mandated merger of Woodbury's elementary school into a new union district with Hardwick, Greensboro and Stannard. Skip addressed concerns about Articles 5-Finances and Article 6 -Real and Personal Property in the State Board of Education's default Articles of Agreement (AofA) for this merger. Skip's concerns center around Article 5 and its implications of Woodbury incurring school debts from the other towns in the new union district and Article 6, Section A that states the town must sell the school and its property to the new union district for \$1. (Section B of Article 6 states... If the new union district were to close one of the schools in the future, the town could buy back the school and property for \$1.)

There is the feeling by some that this merger will take away local town control for the education of Woodbury children and that the merger could lead to the eventual closing of Woodbury's school. Cacky Peltz shares that the school board wants to keep the school open. There is much discussion about the mandated merger with its very short timelines to organize new boards, revise policies in the AofA and develop a budget for FY2020. Also discussed are implications for changes to Woodbury's school and how our children will be educated. The AofA as they now stand are a "default" version developed by the State Board of Education that can be changed to some degree by a transitional board made up of 2 representatives from each of the 4 towns. A majority of the board would have to approve any changes. Stephen Murphy, working with the Woodbury School District Board (WSDB), shares some ideas for changes that he has suggested for the decision making process for closing a school. As stated now in the AofA, after 2 years, the new union school board would make that decision. The make-up of this board, again as stated in the AofA, would be based on the number of students each town is sending to the new union district. Woodbury would likely have only one representative. Hardwick, having the most students, would most likely dominate the other 3 smaller towns. Stephen proposes a revision of that article in the AofA stating that a school could only be closed by a vote of the residents in the town the school is located. (Stephen also shares other suggested changes not in these minutes) The town library is also discussed. Brett Stanciu explains that the library has a good relationship with the WSDB and the school administration. The library also functions under a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the WSDB that would disappear when the WSDB no longer exists. The WSDB presently pays for the maintenance of the building. She wonders what the status of the library would be once the WSDB is dissolved. Who owns the building? Skip states the town does. Peter Peltz, speaking as a town resident and also as a member of the state's education board (he recused himself from the state board's debate and decision on this particular merger) emphasized that there is also the real possibility of improved educational opportunities for Woodbury's children with this merger. He agrees that revisions need to be made to the AofA and urges that the town work with the other towns to make positive changes in the AofA. As it stands now, Woodbury Elementary School (WES) has low enrollment and is in jeopardy of losing some state funding. Peter feels this mandated merger has the possibility to save WES and increase its effectiveness within the new-union. He feels the school has a lot going for it with good community involvement. This was a good discussion of a complicated issue that cannot be adequately covered in these minutes. For the full discussion please watch the Hardwick Community Television (hctv.us) video recording of this meeting, click on Woodbury Select Board, December 10, 2018.

Central Vermont Fiber: Michael shares information about Central Vermont Fiber (CVF), a fairly new municipal body, known as a "communications union district", dedicated to bringing high speed internet service to all parts of the central Vermont region. Many towns in the region, including neighboring Cabot, Elmore, Calais and Marshfield....16 towns in all, have become a part of CVF. The select board will invite CVF's founder and director, Jeremy Hansen, to its January 14 meeting to discuss this further and consider joining.

Select Board Adjourns at 8:21 pm

Minutes approved on JANUARY 14, 2019 by:

Thomas J. Lindsay, Jr. *Thomas J. Lindsay, Jr.*
 Select Board Chair

Michael Gray *Michael Gray*

Brian Shatney *Brian Shatney*