

WEST WINDSOR SELECTBOARD

Minutes

February 8, 2010

Present: Bruce Boedtke, Tom Kenyon, Phil Arvidson, Cathy Boedtke, Ashley Pakenham, Deb Donahue, Bob French, Ralph Johnson, Jim Kenyon, Merle & Leone Bushkin, Mike Spackman, Hal Pyke, Sue Greenall, Cathy Archibald, Martha Harrison

- 1) Call to Order – Selectboard Chair Phil Arvidson called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.
- 2) Changes or Additions – None
- 3) Public Comment – None
- 4) Ancient Roads update – Phil said he didn't see anything in the minutes of the Conservation Commission's most recent meeting that warrants a public update at this time. Cathy Boedtke said the Commission will come before the Selectboard in the next couple of months.
- 5) Corinne Niles trail agreement letter (Rena Lustberg property) – **Tom made a motion to authorize the Chair to sign the agreement concerning the Corinne Niles trail on behalf of the Selectboard. Bruce seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**
- 6) Conservation Commission appointment – **Tom made a motion to appoint Laura Stillson to fill the vacancy on the Conservation Commission. Bruce seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**
- 7) Tax map update – Hal said three mapping firms have been interviewed: Avitar, Cartographic Associates, and Information & Visualization Services. Hal said one firm has submitted a quote and the other two are expected to submit quotes in the next two weeks. Hal said there is plenty of money for mapping in the Listers Fund. Hal said the mapping will probably cost in the \$10,000 to \$12,000 range depending on the services we want. Hal described some of the services available. Phil said the Selectboard will await a recommendation from the Listers. Bruce asked if the three firms are all bidding on the same services. Hal said yes.
- 8) Town Constable/Delinquent Tax Collector's Report – Delinquent Tax Collector Ralph Johnson said the tax sale on Friday did not go well. Ralph said the options are to have another tax sale or foreclose but he doesn't think the town should foreclose. Phil said he thought the bank was going to pay the outstanding taxes but that didn't happen. Phil said he tried, unsuccessfully, to contact Town Attorney Matt Birmingham today to see what he recommends. Phil said he doesn't see any advantage to the town in buying the property. Ralph suggested putting a lien on the company. Phil said he will talk to Matt about that. Phil said the outstanding tax liability is approximately \$19,100. Phil said he thinks anyone who buys the property buys it subject to the mortgage and, for one year, the owner can buy the property back at 12% interest. Cathy said the mortgage was \$280,000 a few years ago. Reporting as Constable, Ralph said there's a dog that keeps running loose and has been taken to the humane society twice.
- 9) Letter to Rep. Donna Sweaney – Phil said the legislature has passed legislation requiring a substantial increase in training for constables, effective July 1, 2010. Phil noted that Ralph has indicated that he does not want to take on the physical training at his age. Phil summarized the negative impacts of the legislation on West Windsor. Phil read a letter that he drafted on behalf of the Selectboard to House Committee Chair Donna Sweaney in support of H. 492, which would grandfather constables with more than 15 years of experience. There was discussion about the implications of this legislation. Ashley asked if it would be helpful to have a petition. Phil said another possible approach is requesting a

waiver from the training requirements, but he's not optimistic about that option. Ralph said the town may have to rely on the State Police. Phil said their response time and their lack of familiarity with the community would be a disadvantage. Phil suggested providing tax abatement for a State Trooper to live in town. Cathy Boedtger said she supports the idea of a citizens' petition in support of Ralph. Cathy asked if there will be public hearings on H. 492, at which West Windsor residents could testify. Phil said before there can be hearings, the committee has to agree to take up the legislation but it's questionable whether it will get to that stage. Tom suggested making Donna Sweaney's contact information available at Town Meeting. Phil agreed. Ralph said certified law enforcement officers are reluctant to have trainees ride along with them because of the potential liability. Bruce suggested pursuing the waiver option sooner rather than later. Phil said he thinks that's a reasonable suggestion. Bruce said he thinks the Selectboard should make this a priority. Phil said the Selectboard will draft a petition and make it available for the public to sign. Bruce said anyone completing the required training is going to want a full-time job, not a part-time job. Bruce said a small town could pool with other towns and hire a full-time constable. Phil said West Windsor raised that possibility with Reading but they were not interested. Phil noted that the sheriff's department handles speed control for Reading. Hal said the State Police won't come unless we have a major crime. Phil agreed that the State Police are overstressed already. Bruce noted the importance of a quick response time in diffusing situations before they escalate. Bob French expressed concern about the response time of the State Police. Ashley spoke favorably about Ralph's response to a situation in her neighborhood.

- 10) Town Clerk/Treasurer's Report – Cathy had orders for the Selectboard to sign at the end of the meeting.
- 11) Silver Hill Road intersection – Phil said the Selectboard has a site visit on February 22nd at 3:00 PM to consider the realignment of the intersection of Silver Hill Road and Brownsville-Hartland Road. Phil said there will be a public hearing at the town hall following the site visit. Merle Bushkin asked who would pay for the realignment of the intersection and how much it would cost. Phil said that hasn't been determined yet.
- 12) Overweight vehicle permits – Mike said the Selectboard has to fill out the same form they fill out every year. Mike said the weight limits on town roads are the same as they are on state roads, 24,000 lbs., and anyone who has a heavier load has to get a permit. There was brief discussion about the requirements for vehicles that are over-length or over-width. Tom said he thinks the state changed the statute on length. Mike agreed.
- 13) Certificate of Highway Mileage – Tom suggested moving this item to "Other Business." Phil and Bruce agreed.
- 14) Highway Foreman's Report – Mike said last year's salt just ran out, so he ordered more. Mike said the price is \$63 for regular salt and \$73.75 for "ice-be-gone." Mike said he thinks the town paid \$61 and \$69 last year. Mike said the town salts all the paved town roads. Mike said its time to request sand and gravel bids, and one supplier has already submitted a bid. Mike said the chloride trailer is almost done being refurbished. Mike said Martha sent in the town's certification of our underground storage tank. Mike said the state inspected the tank last September and there was only one minor issue that needed correcting.
- 15) Status of Grange Hall lift – Tom said the project is finished and it came in a few hundred dollars under budget. Tom said the project was funded with community development grant funds. Leone Bushkin said the Historical Society is planning a ribbon cutting ceremony for after Town Meeting.

- 16) Boundary validation for Census Bureau – Martha said she already sent the Census Bureau a form confirming the accuracy of the town’s boundaries but now they want the Selectboard Chair to confirm the boundaries as well.
- 17) Town Meeting discussion – Phil said Town Meeting is on March 2nd at 9:00 AM at the Town Hall. Phil said his term as Selectman will expire at Town Meeting and he will not be a candidate for re-election. Phil said it has been an honor and privilege to serve on the Selectboard, as a member and as Chair, and he was particularly honored to have the 2009 Annual Report dedicated to him. Those present applauded in appreciation of Phil’s service to the town.
- 18) Schedule next meeting – Tom said the Selectboard sometimes has a quick organizational meeting following town meeting. Phil thought that was a good idea.
- 19) Other Business – Certificate of Highway Mileage: Tom said the Selectboard has to certify the West Windsor highway map annually. Tom presented a summary (attached) of proposed corrections and clarifications to the Town Highway map. Phil asked about the net effect on mileage. Tom said Class 3 mileage goes from 41.17 to 40.98 miles, and Class 4 mileage goes from 4.53 to 4.18 miles. Sue asked if the middle section of Duling Road is listed as a Legal Trail. Tom said it’s not a Legal Trail, it’s an easement. Sue asked if the end of Blood Hill Road is a Legal Trail. Tom said yes. Martha asked about the Selectboard’s availability to sign the Certificate once all Tom’s information is on it. The board asked Martha to email them when it’s ready to sign. **Tom made a motion to accept the changes to the highway map of West Windsor. Bruce seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**
- 20) Approve Minutes - December 23, 2009: **Tom made a motion to approve the minutes of December 23, 2009, as amended. Bruce seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.** December 30, 2009: **Bruce made a motion to approve the minutes of December 30, 2009, as amended. Tom seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.** January 5, 2010: **Tom made a motion to approve the minutes of January 5, 2010, as amended. Bruce seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.** January 11, 2010: **Bruce made a motion to approve the minutes of January 11, 2010, as amended. Tom seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.** January 18, 2010: **Bruce made a motion to approve the minutes of January 18, 2010, as amended. Tom seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**
- 21) Executive Session: Personnel matters – Phil said he had been planning to discuss the constable situation in Executive Session but it was already covered in open session with the discussion on the letter to Rep. Donna Sweaney. The Selectboard agreed that an Executive Session is not necessary.
- 22) Sign Town Clerk’s Orders – The Selectboard signed the Town Clerk’s orders and the Certificate of No Appeal or Suit Pending on the 2009 Grand List.
- 23) Adjourn - **Bruce made a motion to adjourn at 7:45 PM. Tom seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,

Martha Harrison