

**Town of West Windsor
Selectboard Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, April 9, 2024 @ 6:30pm
Town Hall and Zoom**

Present in Person: Mark Higgins, Mark Harley, Amy Yates, Matt Frederick, Shelley Seward, Gertrude Suokko, Mike Spackman

Present via Zoom: John Brodie, Gary Shapiro & Gaya Erlandson, Deb Shearer, Jonathan Nichols, Susan Yost

1. Call to Order

A quorum being present, Mark Higgins called the meeting to order at 6:34pm.

2. Changes or Additions to Agenda

None.

3. Announcements/Public Comment

None.

4. Approve Minutes of 3/18

Mark Harley motioned to approve the minutes of the March 18th Selectboard Meeting. John Brodie seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

5. Town Clerk's Report

Amy Yates spoke about the Town Clerk and Town Treasurer activities. Among the items discussed were property reappraisals, accounting line-items for stormwater operating permits, and remedies for delinquent water and wastewater accounts. There was a discussion about event permits and the plan in the works to streamline the process. Matt F will be presenting an updated event permit and outlining the proposed process at a future Selectboard meeting.

6. Event Permit – Vermont Overland Trail Run (5/9-5/12)

Gertrude Suokko spoke about the 2024 edition of the Vermont Overland Trail Run, which will be catered by Brownsville Butcher and Pantry. She stated that the event plans are the same as in previous years. Shelley Seward spoke about the event as it relates to Ascutney Outdoors, stating that AO “really supports the running events.”

Deb Shearer praised the event and noted that, as a property owner on the event's path, the trails may need to be adjusted to avoid some wet areas.

There was a brief discussion regarding the start time for the race and emergency services signoffs.

Mark Harley motioned to approve the event permit for the Vermont Overland Trail Run from May 9th to May 12th, with the race itself to be held on May 11th. John Brodie seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

7. DLL Permit Requests – BB&P (4/14 & 5/11)

There was a discussion regarding the Butcher and Pantry DLL permit requests. The April 14th permit is for a trivia night fundraiser for Ukraine, and the May 11th permit is for the Vermont Overland Trail Race. Both events will be held at Ascutney Outdoors.

Mark Harley motioned to approve the BB&P DLL permit for the April 14th Ukraine fundraiser event. John Brodie seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

John Brodie motioned to approve the BB&P DLL permit for the Vermont Overland Trail Run on May 11th. Mark Harley seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

8. Liquor License Renewals – Orange Lakes (1st/2nd/3rd Class)

There was a brief discussion regarding the annual liquor license renewal requests for Orange Lakes, which operates the Holiday Inn Resort on Hotel Rd.

Mark Harley motioned to approve the Orange Lakes liquor license renewals. John Brodie seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

9. Gary Shapiro Request

Gary Shapiro stated that he has lived at 1643 Hammond Hill Rd in West Windsor for the past 17 years.

Mr. Shapiro read from a prepared statement requesting that the Selectboard act “to facilitate more effective communication and collaborate problem solving” between himself and the West Windsor Planning Commission, and that the Selectboard should “encourage and ensure greater transparency, accountability, and responsiveness by the Planning Commission in terms of how it evaluates proposals and makes decisions about those proposals.”

Mr. Shapiro spoke at length regarding the specifics behind his proposal to the Planning Commission, as well as issues he has faced during this process. There was a discussion on the Planning Commission's decision regarding Mr. Shapiro's proposal, and Deb Shearer suggested that Mr. Shapiro bring his proposal to the Selectboard and Planning Commission when the Zoning bylaw changes are discussed at a forthcoming Public Hearing.

Mark Higgins stated that, as there has not been a documented pattern of poor communication or a noted lack of transparency regarding the Planning Commission, it would be difficult for the Selectboard to act on this specific incident, but that they will pay attention to these areas going forward. Mark noted that one way for a concerned member of the public to have more insight into the process would be to get involved with the public bodies in question. He reiterated Deb's suggestion that Mr. Shapiro put forth his proposal for consideration at the Public Hearing regarding Zoning bylaw changes.

10. Sustainability Committee Appointment – Suzanne Wirak (3-Year Term)

Susan Yost spoke about the request to appoint Suzanne Wirak to fill a vacant seat on the board of the Sustainability Committee. There was a discussion regarding term lengths and appointments to fill vacancies.

Mark Harley motioned to appoint Suzanne Wirak as a voting member to complete the remainder of the term for the vacant seat, which ends in 2026. John Brodie seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

11. Solid Waste Management District Appointments (Rep & Alternate Rep)

There was a discussion regarding this appointment, for which there was no interested candidate. Matt F will continue to follow up with the Sustainability Committee to see if they know of any potential candidates.

Barring other interested parties becoming known, the Selectboard will appoint Selectboard members to these roles prior to the Solid Waste Management District's quarterly meeting.

12. Transfer Station Joint Committee Appointment

There was a discussion regarding this appointment, with Mark Higgins expressing an interest in taking on this role, which must be filled by a Selectboard member.

Mark Harley motioned to appoint Mark Higgins to serve as West Windsor's representative to the Transfer Station Joint Committee. John Brodie seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

13. Review March Windsor Police Log

There was a conversation regarding the process of disseminating the report to the Selectboard. The Town Administrator will continue to forward the report to Selectboard members each month.

There was a discussion regarding the March Windsor police log, with comments on the continued 911 hangups from the Hotel (likely due to misdialing from guests) and the frequency and consistency of Saturday night patrols in the village. Mark Higgins will follow up with Chief Frank regarding these patrols.

14. FEMA Update

Matt F spoke about the state of the current FEMA projects and reimbursements. Matt noted that the footbridge behind the Fire Station and the Mountain Access Road have been removed as projects as discussed at the previous meeting, and the project for permanent road repairs is in the last stages of FEMA review. The paperwork for the culverts and bridges project is progressing, and an RFP to solicit bids for repairs to the Churchill Covered Bridge will be sent out soon.

Matt noted that at the conclusion of this process, FEMA reimbursements are likely to be higher than original expectations, mostly owing to excellent documentation from our highway department, and Erik Boedtger in particular. To date, all reported road damages have been corroborated and are on track for reimbursement.

15. AOT Compliance Certifications

Matt F spoke about the AOT Compliance Certifications, which is annual paperwork to certify that each town meets a specific spending threshold for roadway maintenance to qualify for additional state funding. Matt and Mike Spackman will be meeting with the state representative for our district next week to clarify some paperwork questions prior to submission, and the forms will be ready for Selectboard discussion and signatures at the April 22nd meeting. The deadline for this paperwork is 60 days after the Town Meeting.

Additionally, Matt and Mike S will complete and submit the paperwork for the Fiscal Year 2025 road grants prior to the April 15th deadline.

16. 1st Quarter Budget Review

There was a line-item discussion regarding the budget status for each department for the first quarter. Matt F and Amy will work together to update some entries into different accounts, and Matt will investigate several entries to ensure accuracy.

There will be continued discussion of the 1st Quarter Budget Review at the next Selectboard meeting to follow up on any outstanding questions.

There was a brief discussion regarding the installation of the well pump generator at Albert Bridge School. Prior to installation, there will be a measurement and sketch plan done to ensure that the generator is properly placed. Matt F will follow up with Brook Field Services to get a timeline for installation.

17. Review Contractor Bids (Sand & Gravel/Equipment Rates)

Mike S spoke about the bids received from vendors for sand and gravel rates for the upcoming year. Mike recommended accepting the Twin State Sand & Gravel bid for gravel and splitting sand costs between Twin State and D&D, as each supplier provides a different type of sand, which the highway department then mixes in their pile for better results on the roadways.

Bids for contractor equipment rates will be considered at the April 22nd Selectboard Meeting.

Mark Harley motioned to approve the purchase of ¾" gravel (Twin-Pak) from Twin State Sand & Gravel for \$9.80 per ton. John Brodie seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

John Brodie motioned to approve the purchase of winter sand from Twin State Sand & Gravel for \$11.50 per ton, in a quantity to be determined by Mike Spackman. Mark Harley seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

Mark Harley motioned to approve the purchase of winter sand from D&D for \$11.00 per cubic yard, in a quantity to be determined by Mike Spackman. John Brodie seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

18. Highway Foreman's Report

Mike S noted that Chip Craig will be leaving the highway department at the conclusion of his two weeks' notice. Chip accepted a position as the Road Foreman in Barnstead, NH. Matt F will post a help wanted ad to fill this upcoming vacancy.

Spring scraping of dirt roadways to repair winter damage began today, and Mike noted that gravel hauling is mostly done since mud season is nearly finished.

Mike mentioned that he got stuck in a ditch on Skyhawk Lane while plowing in the most recent storm and noted that the only damage to the truck was to the aluminum step which the highway department repaired. Mike praised Dan Lesnick for his aid in getting the truck out of the ditch at the end of the storm.

Mike apologized on behalf of the highway department for the damage caused from plowing over this past season. It was a difficult winter for plowing considering the unfrozen ground most of the winter and frequent ruts from muddy roads.

The Selectboard praised the highway department for their good work, noting that there was often a noticeable difference in the quality of roadway maintenance between West Windsor and some neighboring towns.

Mike stated that the highway department is continuing to work on tree cleanups from recent storms, and that they are aiming to have that task completed by the end of next week.

19. Other Business

None.

20. Upcoming Meeting Schedule

The next Selectboard meeting will be held on April 22nd at 6:30pm.

21. Adjourn

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Selectboard unanimously voted to adjourn at 9:06pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Matt Frederick
Town Administrator