

**Town of West Windsor
Selectboard Meeting Minutes
Monday, August 12, 2024 @ 6:30pm
Town Hall and Zoom**

Present in Person: Mark Higgins, Mark Harley, John Brodie, Amy Yates, Mike Spackman, Matt Frederick, Deb Shearer, Jonathan Nichols (AO), Peter Varkonyi, Logan Nicoll (MARC)

Present via Zoom: Tess Hunter (Vermont Standard), Anne Valentine, CC Pelletier (Ragnar), Larry Denham

1. Call to Order

A quorum being present, Mark Higgins called the meeting to order at 6:30pm.

2. Changes or Additions to Agenda

The ARPA Fund discussion was moved from Item #12 to Item #15.

3. Announcements/Public Comment

None.

4. Approve Minutes of 7/22 and 8/8

Mark Harley motioned to approve the Selectboard meeting minutes of July 22nd and August 8th. John Brodie seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

5. Town Clerk's Report

Town Clerk Amy Yates stated that property tax bills were mailed on Monday, August 12th, and that the Town Clerk's office will be closed on Tuesday, August 13th due to the primary election being held in the Town Hall auditorium requiring her attendance.

Amy noted that there are still 24 outstanding unregistered dogs in West Windsor for 2024 despite Vermont state law requiring annual registration by April 1st of each year. The list of unregistered dogs has been given to the constables so they can begin contacting delinquent dog owners.

There are 4 unpaid sewer bills which have been delinquent for three or more quarters. There was a discussion of the sewer ordinance and the enforcement process regarding delinquent payments.

Additionally, there are a few delinquent water bills and two delinquent property tax bills from 2023. Amy and Town Administrator Matt Frederick will review the ordinances to ensure the procedures are followed for collecting the delinquent fees owed.

Amy praised the West Windsor Volunteer Fire Department for their attentiveness and care in maintaining the flags in the village. This public service does not go unnoticed and demonstrates the patriotism of our community.

6. Initial Highway Access Permit – Weeden Hill, Parcel #06-135

Highway Foreman Mike Spackman inspected the proposed location for the highway access for parcel #06-135 on Weeden Hill Road, which was requested by property owner Larry Denham. Mike recommended that, as a condition of approval, the small existing culvert be upgraded to a 15” culvert and that brush clearing is performed to allow for further sight distances.

John Brodie motioned to approve the Initial Highway Access Permit for parcel #06-135 with the conditions specified by Highway Foreman Mike Spackman. Mark Harley seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

7. Event App & DLL Permit – Ragnar Trail Vermont (9/5-9/7)

Jonathan Nichols of Ascutney Outdoors spoke about the Ragnar Trail Vermont event, stating that the event setup would begin on September 1st and would conclude on September 9th, with the actual race to be held from September 5th through September 7th.

There was a discussion regarding the event details and safety signoffs. Jonathan noted that the event has received approvals from both Chief Boedtke of the West Windsor Volunteer Fire Department and Chief Frank of the Windsor Police Department.

Peter Varkonyi of Brownsville Butcher and Pantry spoke to the catering details, which includes food service alongside the sale of beer, wine, and ready to drink cocktails from 4:00pm to 10:00pm on Thursday, September 5th and from 9:00am until 3:00pm on Saturday, September 7th.

Mark Harley motioned to approve the event application for Ragnar Trail Vermont race from September 5th to September 7th. John Brodie seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

John Brodie motioned to approve the Brownsville Butcher and Pantry DLL permit on September 5th and September 7th for the duration of the service windows outlined above by Peter Varkonyi. Mark Harley seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

8. DLL Permit – BB&P Pizza Mountain (8/31)

Peter Varkonyi spoke about the details of the approved Pizza Mountain event on August 31st at Ascutney Outdoors. Peter noted that the total attendance for the previous Pizza Mountain event was 390 people, with around 240 concurrent attendees at the peak of the event.

Mark Harley motioned to approve the BB&P DLL permit for the Pizza Mountain event to be held at Ascutney Outdoors on August 31st. John Brodie seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

9. BB&P Sewer Easement

This item will be tabled pending the review of the necessary legal documents.

10. FY24 Grants-in-Aid MOU for MARC Assistance

Logan Nicoll of Mount Ascutney Regional Commission (MARC) spoke about the Fiscal Year 2024 Grants-in-Aid Memorandum of Understanding allowing MARC to assist the Town of West Windsor with Municipal Roads General Permit (MRGP) grant work. This assistance is provided each year to help the town identify, plan, and track work performed on local roads to meet state requirements to reduce stormwater-related erosion.

John Brodie motioned to approve the execution of the Fiscal Year 2024 Grants-in-Aid Memorandum of Understanding allowing Mount Ascutney Regional Commission to assist the Town of West Windsor with Municipal Roads General Permit grant work. Mark Harley seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

11. FY25 Better Roads Grant Letter of Intent

Logan Nicoll spoke about the Better Roads grant program, which focuses on road erosion inventories to help identify and prioritize the roadways most in need of erosion control and drainage improvements.

There was a discussion relating to the road erosion inventories, with Highway Foreman Mike Spackman stating that when this inventory was previously performed several years ago, approximately 75% of West Windsor roads failed the compliance inspection. Mike noted that the Highway Department has made many improvements to local roads in recent years, both via grants and with local funds, and he is expecting a significant increase in compliance percentage when the next inventory is complete.

Mark Harley motioned to approve the execution of the Letter of Intent to participate in the Fiscal Year 2025 Better Roads grant program. John Brodie seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

12. Highway Foreman's Report

Mike Spackman stated the Churchill Covered Bridge repair project is progressing. Mike noted that the bridge may need to be closed temporarily while the repair is being completed.

There was more rain and wind damage on Friday, August 9th. Mike noted that Hammond Hill and Farm Rd were particularly hard hit. Mike praised Green Mountain Power for their prompt service repairing power lines, and stated that all roads were open by Saturday, August 10th.

As we near the end of summer, fall scraping of roadways will soon begin.

The second round of roadside mowing will begin in the near future.

The Highway Department participated in a Touch-a-Truck event in Windsor on Wednesday, August 7th. This event was held at Windsor High School, and featured dump trucks, excavators and cranes, fire trucks and ambulances, hearses, wreckers, buses, and other vehicles.

There was a brief discussion regarding an unauthorized highway access on Ski Tow Rd. Matt F will work with Deb Shearer to identify and follow up with the property owner.

13. Windsor PD Log Review

There was a brief discussion regarding the review of the July Windsor PD log, including one noise complaint.

14. Blood Hill Tower Update

There has been no change to the Blood Hill Tower site since the last meeting.

15. Discussion: ARPA Funds

Mark Higgins spoke about the current state of the ARPA Fund, and the need to obligate the remaining funds by the end of 2024. Former ARPA Committee Chair Anne Valentine noted that the ARPA Committee originally recommended \$200,000.00 be used for the relocation of the Fire Station, with the remainder of the funds to be spent on emergency preparedness projects.

The Fire Department is no longer actively considering relocation due both to the difficulty in finding a suitable new location and the potential overall cost involved with the construction of a new station. Considering this information, Mark Higgins noted that the Selectboard's goal in the allocation of the ARPA funds has been to "adhere as closely as possible to the ARPA Committee's original intent."

Anne stated that the ARPA Committee's evaluation criteria included:

- The highest number of residents affected
- The funds would have a lasting impact
- Align with the Town Plan
- Consideration given to tax implications

There was a discussion regarding the ongoing approved ARPA projects and potential uses for the remaining ARPA funds, including the repair of the Town Hall's emergency exit steps and the possible installation of a shower in the building, which would allow it to better suit the needs of an emergency shelter.

This conversation will continue at future Selectboard meetings until all available ARPA funds have been obligated. Bearing in mind the ARPA Committee's evaluation criteria, project ideas may be submitted to the [Town Administrator](#) or to any [Selectboard member](#).

There was a brief discussion regarding the Vermont Alert program operated by the Vermont Department of Public Safety, which allows interested parties to receive text messages, automated phone calls, or email alerts for local or statewide emergencies, weather advisories, and public information notifications. The Town of West Windsor has signed up to send notifications to aid in the public dissemination of important local information. Please visit the [Vermont Alert](#) website for more information or to sign up for alerts.

16. Other Business

Zoning Administrator Deb Shearer noted that VLCT's Town Fair conference is on Wednesday, October 2nd. Deb encouraged Selectboard attendance, if possible, as there are many exhibits, along with networking and training opportunities.

17. Schedule Special Meetings for Fiscal Year Change Discussion, Zoning Bylaw Review, Flood Hazard Area & River Corridor Bylaw Review, and Personnel Policy Review

There was a discussion regarding how to organize and hold the above meetings. There will be a joint meeting with the Planning Commission and the Selectboard to discuss the Zoning Bylaws plus the Flood Hazard Area and River Corridor Bylaws. Following this meeting, public hearings will be set up for full public reviews of these bylaws.

The fiscal year change discussion and the personnel policy review will be agenda items at the August 26th Selectboard meeting.

18. Upcoming Meeting Schedule

The next two regular Selectboard meetings will be on August 26th and September 9th.

There will be a special joint meeting with the Planning Commission on August 29th to discuss the Flood Hazard Area and River Corridor Bylaws.

19. Adjourn

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Selectboard unanimously voted to adjourn at 7:44pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Matt Frederick
Town Administrator