

West Windsor Selectboard
Draft Minutes
December 27, 2018

Present: Win Johnson, Matt Kantola, Brett Myers, Mike Spackman, Martha Harrison, Cathy Archibald, Tom Kenyon, Jeff Epstein (Eagle Times)

- 1) Call to Order – Selectboard Chair Win Johnson called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.
- 2) Changes or additions to the agenda – None
- 3) Announcements/Public Comment – Tom announced the resignation of Library Trustee Mary-Anne Boyce and noted that she has not recommended someone to replace her so the remaining trustees will consider a replacement.
- 4) Town Clerk's Orders – **Brett moved to sign orders. Matt seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**
- 5) Sign Lustberg Trail Agreement – **Brett moved to authorize the Chair to sign the agreement for calendar year 2019. Matt seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**
- 6) Status of Mary Blood Library – Win said there are two conflicting legal opinions about who actually owns the library. Town Attorney Matt Birmingham's opinion is that the Library Trustees own it. The Library Trustees got another opinion from Attorney Paul Gillies, who said that the town owns it. Tom said some of the writings about the library talk about Mr. Blood presenting the deed to the trustees. Tom said the wording is not right; Mr. Blood didn't present the property to the trustees, he just handed them a copy of the deed. Tom said the Board of Trustees of the Library is adamant that they do not own the library building or the land; it is their opinion that it belongs to the Town of West Windsor. Win said this will have to be clarified with the Town Attorney. Win noted that the town does include the library on its insurance policy. Win said Library Trustee Dick Beatty sent an email with his thoughts on resolving the issue. Win asked Tom if the Library Trustees agree with Dick. Tom said the only thing the Library Trustees are in charge of is maintaining the building. Tom said the Library Trustees do not hire the Librarian. Win said the Trustees did hire the current Librarian and they have hired the Librarian in the past. Tom said as of December 31, we no longer have a Librarian. Win said he doesn't think it's that simple. Win said the Selectboard needs to get something from the Library Trustees, as a group, that addresses Dick's letter. Brett said there are some logistical and legal things that need to be clarified. Matt suggested a joint meeting. Everyone agreed. Matt asked if this has to be resolved by December 31st. Win said we have to resolve the employment problem, and added that he does not accept that the Librarian is a town employee.
- 7) Highway Foreman's report – Mike noted the bad weather forecast for tonight and tomorrow. Mike asked about the excavator. Win suggested approving it in connection with the capital budget. Mike said the tractor's transmission is getting fixed. Mike said there's a problem with the Route 44 bridge west of the town garage; a huge tree got jammed in the brook and now the brook is running behind the tree out into the field. Mike said he will notify the state. Mike said there was a motor vehicle accident in August that caused \$3,500 in damage to a culvert. According to the police, Mike said, the repair costs would be added to the other costs charged to the driver but then the state's attorney settled the matter and West Windsor didn't get anything. Mike said the driver's insurance company only agreed to pay \$400, so he and Cathy filed an accident report and sent all the information to our insurance company. The Selectboard agreed that Mike and Cathy did the right thing.

- 8) Water & Sewer update – Martha noted the preliminary draft budgets for the water and sewer systems and asked about the timeline for finalizing them. Win said we'll review the drafts when we have final numbers for 2018, prior to the Utility Committee meeting. Win asked if Windsor is going to take care of the blockage in the sewer line. Martha said Mike Reynolds said they would take care of it but she doesn't know if he has done it yet; she agreed to check. Win asked Martha to check on the speed cart as well and noted that we haven't been billed for our share yet. Mike said he'd like the two towns to agree on a schedule and who's in charge of setting it up.
- 9) Approve Minutes – **Brett moved to approve the minutes of December 10th and December 17th. Matt seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**
- 10) Other Business – None
- 11) Discuss employee insurance benefits – Short-term disability: Win said the VLCT quote was for a group policy, which is much less expensive than the individual policy estimate the town got from Amy Yates. Win said he would be in favor of proceeding with the VLCT policy as soon as possible. Matt asked about the cost. Cathy said it would cost \$905 per year for short-term disability for the highway department, and \$1,778 per year for dental. For herself and Martha, Cathy said, it would cost \$452 per year for short-term disability and \$889 per year for dental.
- 12) FY 2019 Budget Preparation – Win provided excel sheets comparing the 2019 draft budget numbers with this year's budget, this year's actual year-to-date numbers, and actual year-to-date numbers for 2016 and 2017. Highway: Win noted a 2.26% increase in the 2019 highway budget. There was discussion about whether there's enough money allocated for winter maintenance. The Selectboard asked Mike to look carefully at the winter maintenance items. Win reviewed the purchases made with the Equipment Fund in 2018 and said Mike has made a good case for buying an excavator. After discussion, **Win moved to authorize Mike to negotiate the purchase of an excavator. Brett seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.** General: Win said, at this point, taxes would increase by 1.5% based on these numbers. Win said he doesn't think we need to have a separate article to vote on an annual contribution to the Listers Fund; we should just include it in the budget, like we do the contribution to the Conservation Fund. Win noted that the Listers Fund is used to cover reappraisal costs. Tom asked how much is in the Listers Fund. Cathy said approximately \$151,000. Win said someone will have to address the increase in the allocations for the Library and the FAST Squad. After some additional discussion on Town Hall maintenance and improvements, the Selectboard agreed to finalize the budget at their next meeting at 6:30 PM on January 3rd.
- 13) Joint meeting with Library Trustees – The Selectboard agreed to meet with the Library Trustees on Sunday at 4:00 PM at the Town Hall.
- 14) Adjourn – **Brett moved to adjourn at 7:15 PM. Matt seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,

Martha Harrison