

West Windsor Selectboard  
Draft Minutes  
July 13, 2020

Present in person: Win Johnson, Matt Kantola, Brett Myers, Mike Spackman, Tom Kenyon, Cathy Archibald

Present via zoom/phone: Martha Harrison, Deb Shearer

- 1) Call to Order – Selectboard Chair Win Johnson called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.
- 2) Changes or additions to the agenda – 2020 Census, Rush Meadow Road speed limit, state project reimbursements, frame for BB&P resolution, grant to digitize records
- 3) Announcements/Public Comment – None
- 4) Coronavirus Updates – Brett said she talked to Nancy yesterday and Nancy said things have been quiet. If there's anything to report in the future, Nancy will call in to the Selectboard meeting. Win said he hasn't heard anything about the school opening.
- 5) Town Clerk's orders – Matt and Brett did not have questions about the orders. Win noted that we paid \$47,000 for one concrete box culvert and we're going to have three such projects this summer.
- 6) Sign cemetery deeds – **Brett moved to sign three cemetery deeds. Matt seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**
- 7) Set tax rate – Win said Cathy calculated the combined education and municipal tax rate at \$2.0425 for homesteads. Without the stonewall for the cemetery, it would be \$2.0379. Cathy said she thinks the financial situation is going to be more difficult next year than it is this year, so we might want to consider raising the money for the stonewall this year and putting it into the cemetery's reserve fund. Matt and Brett agreed. Matt noted that the voters approved the money. Tom said he's been discouraged from using one of the stonewall contractors he consulted and the other is too expensive. Regarding the allocation for the use of Windsor's Recreation Center, Win said he's not sure the rec center is even open. It was noted that people are using the rec center now that the fitness center on the mountain is closed. Win said with all appropriations, including the stonewall and the rec center, the non-residential tax rate would be \$2.1569. **Matt moved to approve a homestead tax rate of \$2.0425 and a non-residential tax rate of \$2.1569. Brett seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**
- 8) Consider waiving interest & penalties on 2020 delinquent taxes – Win said he spoke with someone this weekend who suggested that people who are experiencing difficulties request abatement, which would allow the town to target relief for those who are really in need. Brett said we would need to set some guidelines. Matt said it sounds like there is already a process in place. Win asked if we need further discussion on waiving interest and penalties, or if we want to leave our existing tax abatement policy in place. Martha asked if abatement means you don't have to pay your taxes, or is it just for interest and penalties. Win said you can request that your interest and penalties be eliminated or reduced, and you can request a reduction in your taxes. Cathy said there are statutory requirements and she can't remember exactly what they all are. Win suggested deferring a decision until we have done some more research. Cathy said she can't send out tax bills until the Selectboard decides about penalties and interest. With the primary election coming up, Cathy said, she'll have to wait until late August to send tax bills. Win asked Martha to ask Jim Barlow to provide a memo on tax abatement. Cathy said she can look it up in the statutes. Win agreed that we can look at the statutes as well.
- 9) Highway Foreman's report – Mike said the Churchill Road project is done and mowing is  $\frac{3}{4}$  done. The Harrington Road culvert replacement was started today. Mike said they're working on water quality projects, including Bible Hill Road, which was stone-lined and hydro-seeded today, and they're going to work on Shattuck Hill tomorrow. Mike said this is only the second time in 20 years that they've had to clean out the ditch on Shattuck Hill, which is pretty good. Mike said they're also going to do some more work on the Cemetery Road ditch. Brett said the culvert near Karen Lavoie's driveway on Village Lane is filling up again. Brett also asked Mike if he knows about the tree on

Sheddsville Road. Mike said yes; he has contacted Ted Knox about removing it. Regarding reimbursements for major projects, Win asked Martha if the state does not reimburse the town until the project is finished. Martha said that's usually how it's done but she can check to see if we can get an interim reimbursement. Win asked if we get reimbursed pretty quickly. Martha said she'd have to go back and look. Win said Cathy is having to borrow, so we're basically subsidizing the state for delay of payment, which is a hardship for us. Win said it would be good if we could get interim payments. Martha said she would need a copy of the bill and the check. Cathy said she will send copies.

- 10) Request to move section of Hammond Hill Road – Win said the town has received a request from Anne Valentine and Alessandro Iuppa to relocate approximately 600' of Hammond Hill Road. Matt asked if they're going to pay for it. Win said they're still getting estimates so they haven't made a formal application yet. Win asked if it would require an Act 250 permit. Mike said no; they've already checked on that. Deb said she got an inquiry about this from a concerned neighbor. Win said we'll have to have at least one public hearing and asked Martha to check on the process. Matt asked about the effect on abutting properties. Win said they would buy an easement over the White's property. Mike said he has also had inquiries from neighboring property owners. Martha asked if it changes any setbacks. Win said it would improve the setback for the Valentine/Iuppa property.
- 11) Town Plan review – Martha said she sent the latest draft to the Selectboard for review, along with a suggested schedule for finalizing it and holding a hearing. Ideally the Selectboard would approve the draft at their next meeting and schedule a hearing for August 24<sup>th</sup>. Win asked if it can be deferred further. Martha said no; the grant period ends September 20<sup>th</sup>.
- 12) Extend deadline for Selectboard public hearing on Town Plan – Martha said a few months ago, the Selectboard decided not to hold a public hearing on the Town Plan until the end of July but there is no longer enough time to do that given the warning requirements. Martha said before the Selectboard can schedule a hearing, they have to review the plan and agree that they're okay with it. Martha said it's all done except for the energy chapter, which she reviewed with Otis Munroe on Friday and now she has to make some final changes. The Selectboard agreed to review the plan before their next meeting so they are prepared to discuss it, make any final changes, and schedule a hearing.
- 13) Town Hall windows – Matt said he'd like to replace the large windows in the upstairs part of the Town Hall to keep more heat in the building and make it a more comfortable space. Matt said each window would cost \$946 and it would cost about \$200 each to install them. Brett said she is okay with proceeding provided we have enough funds in the budget. **Win moved to spend up to \$7,000 for new windows upstairs in the Town Hall. Brett seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.** Win asked Matt when the back door will be done. Matt said LaValley's sent us the wrong door, but he's hoping to get the replacement this week.
- 14) Sewer and Water – Sewer line sag: Matt said he was there when the Windsor crew flushed the line and removed some big chunks of grease, broken beer bottles, and mini shampoo bottles. Matt said there's definitely a sag there but if there's a leak, it's small. Matt said there was discussion on site about whether it makes sense to replace the pipe, or just clean it out on a regular basis. Martha said Jason is going to talk to Green Mountain Pipe to see if they could clean it out well enough to get a good look at the bottom part of the pipe and assess its condition. Win asked how much Jason included in his project cost estimate for the sag. Martha said about \$20,000. Sewer project: Martha said Avery is done, and he lowered the manhole on Ski Tow Road. There is some other manhole work that needs to be done that was not included in the project, but Avery is not interested in doing it and A+E is not interested in having him do it, so we need Jason to get back to us with a plan for that. Water project: Martha said the vent and fan for the well house have come in, but they're still waiting for the door; and they're planning to do the generator start-up on Wednesday but they need some information from Dead River. Martha said the project meeting that was scheduled for Wednesday morning is probably going to be postponed. Water operations: Martha said there have been some issues with the water system, probably having to do with the transducer being faulty and not sending accurate signals to the

Mission system, so Dennis has been running the booster pumps by hand for quite a while. Hopefully, that will be fixed soon.

- 15) June Police Report – Matt noted a lot of fireworks lately.
- 16) Other Business – 2020 Census: Win said West Windsor is lagging behind on our census count and recommended putting up signs with census contact information. Martha said she posted the information on the town website and will post something on Front Porch Forum as well. Rush Meadow Road speed limit: Win said the speed limit is 35 MPH and the speed study we did last year showed that most people are abiding by the limit. Win suggested moving the speed cart to Rush Meadow. Brett said the person who contacted her was concerned about the narrow windy section of Rush Meadow where there are a lot of walkers, bike riders and horses, and the horses can't get off the road because of the ditches. Matt said you can say that about any of the dirt roads in town; ten percent of the people are responsible for 90 percent of the problems. Mike said most of the people who are speeding on Rush Meadow Road are the people who live on that road. Brett said she's just the messenger. Win asked Martha to contact Windsor about doing some patrolling in the area. Digitizing records: Win said there may be grant funding available to digitize records and asked Cathy for her thoughts. Cathy said there are over 85,000 records from 1960 to 2020 and she doesn't have the time to digitize them. Martha said the only information she has about the grant funding is what she emailed to the Selectboard from the VLCT weekly legislative report. Deb said it would be great to have all the zoning permits digitized and available online. Win asked Martha to check and see if the legislation has passed. Frame for BB&P resolution: Win asked Matt and Brett if they want the town to pay for the frame. Matt suggested splitting the cost. Win said he'll call the people who had it framed.
- 17) Approve Minutes – **Brett moved to approve the minutes of June 22<sup>nd</sup>. Matt seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**
- 18) Adjourn – **Brett moved to adjourn at 7:48 PM. Matt seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,

Martha Harrison