

**Town of West Windsor  
Selectboard Meeting Minutes  
Monday, July 22, 2024 @ 6:30pm  
Town Hall and Zoom**

**Present in Person:** Mark Higgins, Mark Harley, John Brodie, Deb Shearer, Mike Spackman, Matt Frederick, Jenifer Aldrich (ABS), Peter Varkonyi, Ansel Dickey, Tom Whelan, Jill Appel

**Present via Zoom:** Steve Wood (AO), Lauren Dorsey (Vermont Standard)

**1. Call to Order**

A quorum being present, Mark Higgins called the meeting to order at 6:31pm.

**2. Changes or Additions to Agenda**

None.

**3. Announcements/Public Comment**

Mark Higgins stated that the Planning Commission has submitted to the Selectboard the proposed Flood Hazard Area & River Corridor Bylaws. The current plan is for the Selectboard to review these bylaws, along with the updated Zoning Bylaws, at the August 12<sup>th</sup> Selectboard meeting. Following the Selectboard review, each bylaw will be presented at a public hearing.

Mark Higgins noted a successful Vermont 100 over the weekend. John Brodie congratulated the participants, both human and equine, on the accomplishment.

**4. Approve Minutes of 7/8**

*Mark Harley motioned to approve the minutes of the July 8<sup>th</sup> Selectboard meeting. John Brodie seconded the motion, and all were in favor.*

**5. Event App/DLL Permit Request – Vermont Overland Bike**

Ansel Dickey presented the application for the Vermont Overland Bike Race, which, in its 10<sup>th</sup> year of operation, is expecting approximately 1,000 riders. There was a discussion on the event details, including police and emergency services signoffs, race routing, event timing, and previous races. Mark Higgins noted this is a “tried and true event, which is always run well.”

Peter Varkonyi presented the DLL permit request for catering the Vermont Overland Bike Race event. Peter noted that Butcher and Pantry will be using the Pizza Mountain model for this catering event, including live music, a designated area for alcohol and a Windsor Police detail. The catered events will be open to the public, with alcohol being served in the evening on

Friday, August 23<sup>rd</sup>, and food and beverages being served on Saturday, August 24<sup>th</sup>, from 11:00am until approximately 5:00pm.

*John Brodie motioned to approve the event application for the Vermont Overland Bike Race on August 23<sup>rd</sup> and August 24<sup>th</sup> at Ascutney Outdoors and on designated Town lands and roadways. Mark Harley seconded the motion, and all were in favor.*

*Mark Harley motioned to approve the DLL permit for Brownsville Butcher and Pantry for the Vermont Overland Bike Race event to take place on August 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> at Ascutney Outdoors. John Brodie seconded the motion, and all were in favor.*

## **6. Butcher and Pantry Sewer Easement**

There was a discussion relating to the ownership of the underground sewer infrastructure at Brownsville Butcher and Pantry. Town Administrator Matt Frederick noted that BB&P has been working with the Development Review Board to allow for a backup generator on the premises to ensure the safety of temperature-controlled products and to allow the business to continue to operate during prolonged power outages.

Due to the existing sewer easement area over the underground sewer pipes, as well as other on-site limitations, finding a permanent location for this generator has been complicated. One potential solution discussed would be for the Town to transfer ownership, including all maintenance and repair responsibilities, of the underground sewer infrastructure to Butcher and Pantry and to then terminate the easement currently in place. This solution would allow for the generator to be placed without concern for the Town's sewer ordinance.

Matt presented documents to the Selectboard which he believes shows that the Town does, in fact, own the underground sewer infrastructure, as was discussed at the May 28<sup>th</sup> Selectboard meeting. There was further discussion relating to this topic, with Mark Higgins noting that the attorney for Butcher and Pantry has drawn up the necessary documents for the transfer of the sewer infrastructure and relinquishment of the easement area in anticipation of this result. Mark stated that he will review these documents, which, when finalized, would remove one obstacle from the DRB's review of the generator application. This item will appear on the agenda for finalization at a future meeting.

There was a discussion relating to the other properties along Route 44 that are connected to the Brownsville Sewer Collection System, and whether they could also ask the Town about taking ownership of the sewer infrastructure and removing the easements on their properties. Interested parties may contact the Town Administrator at 802-484-3520 or via email at [townadmin@westwindsorvt.org](mailto:townadmin@westwindsorvt.org).

## **7. Discussion: Composting at ABS**

Albert Bridge School Principal Jenifer Aldrich gave a [presentation](#) on a proposed composting system at ABS, which would include new grant-funded infrastructure. There was a discussion regarding the details of the proposed system, the potential Zoning requirements for the

installation of the composting structure, and the impact of a new structure on snow removal operations.

*John Brodie motioned to approve Selectboard support for the Albert Bridge School's grant-funded on-site composting project, on the condition that the project complies with Zoning regulations and that any structure placement is coordinated with the Highway Department for snow removal purposes. Mark Harley seconded the motion, and all were in favor.*

## **8. Sheddsville Cemetery Rules & Regulations**

Mark Higgins thanked Tom Whelan for his exemplary work as the Sheddsville Cemetery Sexton.

Tom Whelan spoke about the current Sheddsville Cemetery Regulations, which he noted are very outdated. Tom gave an overview of the proposed new Rules and Regulations that he has drafted. There was a discussion on the current cemetery operations, site maintenance, and future costs for cemetery management.

Tom asked that this topic be tabled for now to allow for more time to review the proposed Sheddsville Cemetery Rules and Regulations. Mark Higgins and Tom Whelan will meet to discuss cemetery operations and will work together to further the proposed draft regulations, which will return to the Selectboard for review when ready.

## **9. Discussion: Fiscal Year Change**

Mark Higgins stated that West Windsor's budget is based on the calendar year, from January to December. Mark noted that because of this current model, when the voters address the annual budget at Town Meeting in March each year, the Town has already been operating on the proposed budget for the first quarter of the year in anticipation of the budget passing.

Mark further noted that under the current model, if the voters were to reject a proposed budget, it could lead to complications with adjusted spending to ensure that the budget could be managed. There was a discussion on the advantages and disadvantages of switching to the July to June fiscal year used by most Vermont municipalities, as well as by the State of Vermont.

Mark stated that he plans to present a letter at the August 12<sup>th</sup> Selectboard meeting for public dissemination, which will outline the fiscal year benefits and drawbacks versus the current calendar year model. Any change to the municipal fiscal year would need to be approved by voters at Town Meeting.

## **10. Discussion: ARPA Funds**

There was a lengthy discussion on the remaining ARPA funds, which total approximately one hundred thousand dollars. Mark Higgins noted that the Selectboard had been withholding those funds for a local match for flood mitigation grants. However, that grant opportunity has been amended to no longer require a local match, meaning that the remaining ARPA funds are now able to be utilized on other projects.

Mark encouraged interested parties to submit ARPA fund suggestions to the Selectboard so they can weigh priorities, as the remaining funds must be “obligated” by the end of 2024, which requires that signed contracts are in place for all funds. There will be an item on the agenda for the August 12<sup>th</sup> Selectboard meeting to continue this discussion.

### **11. Transfer Station Punch Card Price Increase**

According to a letter from the Weathersfield Town Manager, following a Transfer Station Study, the Weathersfield Selectboard voted to raise Transfer Station fees. As of September 1<sup>st</sup>, individual punch cards will increase in cost from \$4.25 to \$5.00 each, with 5 cards costing \$25.00 and 10 cards costing \$50.00.

The West Windsor Selectboard encourages residents to purchase their Transfer Station punch cards prior to the increase on September 1<sup>st</sup>.

### **12. Highway Foreman’s Report**

The first round of roadside mowing is completed.

Jim Burke is moving forward with the approved repair of the Churchill Covered Bridge. Materials for this repair will be stored in the Burke Garage while the repair is ongoing.

The chloride trailer has been repaired and is again operational.

Mike noted that the Highway Department has been repairing the roads from the recent heavy rains. All roads are passable, but numerous roads sustained various amounts of scouring and damage.

### **13. Blood Hill Tower Update**

Mark Harley noted that there has been no new work done to secure this site.

### **14. Other Business**

None.

### **15. Upcoming Meeting Schedule**

The next regularly scheduled Selectboard meetings will be held on August 12<sup>th</sup> and August 26<sup>th</sup>.

### **16. Executive Session**

*Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Selectboard unanimously voted to enter executive session at 7:40pm for the reasons set forth in 1 V.S.A. § 313(3).*

The Selectboard came out of executive session at 7:55pm.

**17. Final Decisions**

*Mark Biathrow of Reading was hired to fill the vacant full-time Highway Department position at \$27.00 per hour, effective August 5<sup>th</sup>, with an initial probationary period of 6 months.*

**18. Adjourn**

*Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Selectboard unanimously voted to adjourn at 7:56pm.*

Respectfully submitted,

Matt Frederick  
Town Administrator