

**Town of West Windsor
Selectboard Meeting Minutes
Monday, June 10, 2024 @ 6:30pm
Town Hall and Zoom**

Present in Person: Mark Harley, John Brodie, Amy Yates, Mike Spackman, Matt Frederick, Joel Schreiber, Peter Varkonyi, Mark Isenberg, Erik Schutz, Shelley Seward, Win Johnson, Michael Epstein

Present via Zoom: Mark Higgins, Deb Shearer, Steve Wood, Debbie Livingston, Steve Collopy, Sandi Brown

1. Call to Order

A quorum being present, Mark Higgins called the meeting to order at 6:32pm.

2. Changes or Additions to Agenda

None.

3. Announcements/Public Comment

None.

4. Approve Minutes of 5/28

John Brodie motioned to approve the minutes of the May 28th Selectboard meeting. Mark Harley seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

5. Town Clerk's Report

Amy Yates spoke about the recent activity in the Town Clerk's office, including two days of coverage from Assistant Town Clerk Clyde Jenne, work on accounts payable, and the nearly completed transfer of Town funds from M&T Bank to Mascoma Bank.

6. Initial Highway Access Permit – 1114 Bible Hill Rd (Parcel #02-144)

Debbie Livingston spoke about her request for an Initial Highway Access Permit for Parcel #02-144. Highway Foreman Mike Spackman noted that due to the proposed location, there is no need for a culvert and the sight distance is adequate in both directions.

Mark Harley motioned to approve the Initial Highway Access Permit for Parcel #02-144. John Brodie seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

7. DLL Permit Request: BB&P Pizza Mountain (6/28)

Peter Varkonyi spoke about the previously approved June 28th Pizza Mountain event at Ascutney Outdoors. There was a brief discussion on the previous Pizza Mountain event on June 1st, which Peter noted had a total of 393 guests.

John Brodie motioned to approve the DLL permit for the June 28th Pizza Mountain event at Ascutney Outdoors. Mark Harley seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

8. Event App/DLL Permit Request: Celebration of Life at Ascutney Outdoors (6/30)

Shelley Seward spoke about the upcoming Celebration of Life event at Ascutney Outdoors to honor former West Windsor Selectboard Chair and Mary L. Blood Memorial Library Trustee Dick Beatty, who passed away in December 2023. There was a brief discussion of the event, which will be catered by Brownsville Butcher and Pantry.

Mark Harley motioned to approve the event application and DLL permit request for Dick Beatty's Celebration of Life at Ascutney Outdoors. John Brodie seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

9. Event Application/DLL Permit Request: BB&P July 3rd Cookout (7/3)

Peter Varkonyi spoke about the proposed July 3rd Cookout at Brownsville Butcher and Pantry from 4:00pm until 8:00pm, which will feature a pig roast, alcohol, soft serve ice cream, and live music. The event has a cover fee of \$15.00 for adults and \$10.00 for children and offers free ice cream for children under 10 years old.

Peter stated that this is a one-time summer event to be held in the Butcher and Pantry parking lot, with off-site parking available at the Leland property next door. There was a discussion regarding the event details, including a contract with the Windsor Police Department for one officer on site.

There was further discussion regarding the potential conflict with the annual IDC Fireworks event on July 3rd at Ascutney Outdoors, which is used as a fundraiser for some local organizations. Peter and Shelley Seward noted that, every Saturday in June, Butcher and Pantry will be hosting a table where customers can purchase 50/50 raffle tickets to benefit the IDC Committee and Ascutney Outdoors.

John Brodie motioned to approve the event application and DLL permit for the Brownsville Butcher and Pantry July 3rd Cookout. Mark Harley seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

10. Event Application: IDC Fireworks at Ascutney Outdoors (7/3)

Mark Isenberg presented for the IDC Committee and spoke about the proposed plans for the fireworks event at Ascutney Outdoors on July 3rd, including event schedule, on-site vendors, and police coverage from Windsor Police Department. There was a discussion on the event details.

John Brodie motioned to approve the expenditure of an amount not to exceed \$200.00 for Windsor Police Department coverage of the IDC July 3rd Fireworks event at Ascutney Outdoors, with the IDC covering any additional expenses for police coverage. Mark Harley seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

Mark Harley motioned to approve the IDC Fireworks event at Ascutney Outdoors on July 3rd. John Brodie seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

11. Event Application: Fourth of July Parade (7/4)

Mark Isenberg presented for the IDC Committee and spoke about the proposed event details for the Fourth of July Parade, which begins at 1:30pm and takes place along Brownsville Hartland Road above the cemetery down to the intersection with Route 44.

The community gathering runs from 8:30am until 3:00pm, featuring music, food and craft vendors, and an ice cream social, as well as a book sale at the Town Hall. Bathroom facilities will be available at the Albert Bridge School, the Brownsville Community Church, and the Mary Blood Library, along with portable restrooms.

Anyone with an interest in having a float in the parade should contact Mark Isenberg at markndogs@aol.com.

John Brodie motioned to approve the event application for the IDC Fourth of July Parade. Mark Harley seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

12. Event Application/DLL Permit Request: Flow State at Ascutney Outdoors (7/26-7/28)

Erik Schutz of Ascutney Trails Association spoke about the event details for the proposed Flow State Mountain Bike Festival at Ascutney Outdoors, including event schedule, layout, activities, and vendors. This event will be catered by Brownsville Butcher and Pantry.

Erik noted that overflow parking will be available at the Leland property beside Butcher and Pantry, as well as at the Cunningham lot at the Holiday Inn Resort. Erik mentioned that Flow State is seeking to employ a shuttle bus to move participants from the event to the town forest to reduce the number of vehicles making that trip.

There was a discussion regarding ticket sales, onsite RV and tent camping, public safety signoffs, and campfires. Matt F noted that Chief Boedtger of the West Windsor Fire Department and Nancy Gaynor of the West Windsor FAST Squad have reviewed the event application. Flow State will obtain a burn permit from the Fire Warden prior to any open burning.

Mark Harley motioned to approve the event application and DLL permit for the Flow State Mountain Bike Festival at Ascutney Outdoors from July 26th to July 28th. John Brodie seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

13. NEMRC Assessor Contract Proposal

Win Johnson spoke about the proposed contract submitted by NEMRC for assessor services. There was a discussion regarding contract length and the need for a better understanding of expected contracted costs, as the proposal only contained hourly rates.

Matt F will coordinate a meeting with NEMRC officials, the Listers, and a representative of the Selectboard to put together a new proposal featuring an initial 6-month assessor contract with a clearer outlining of expected contract expenditures. This updated proposal will be reviewed at the June 24th Selectboard meeting.

Listers Win Johnson and Joel Schreibman talked about the ongoing reappraisal process and mentioned the generally positive responses from the pre-grievance meetings with residents. Win praised the NEMRC assessors for their work in these meetings to satisfy the questions of concerned residents. The next step of the reappraisal process is to hold grievance hearings for those residents still seeking remediation following their pre-grievance meetings.

Reappraisal grievance hearings will be held at the Town Office/Story Memorial Hall (22 Brownsville Hartland Rd) on June 19th, June 20th, and June 21st from 9:00am to 3:00pm. All hearings are by appointment only, and **all appeals must be in writing** (email is acceptable). To make an appointment for a reappraisal grievance hearing, please contact the West Windsor Listers at 802-484-3113 or via email at lister@westwindsorvt.org.

14. Highway Foreman's Report

Mike Spackman noted that Erik Boedtke is on vacation this week, so there will only be two Highway employees available each day, and that roadside mowing and weed whacking are continuing.

Mike and Chris Yurek of MARC met to discuss yearly Municipal Roads General Permit (MRGP) projects. Mike stated that there are 8 road segment projects planned for this year, and the Highway Department is expecting to begin work on these projects next week. Mike stated that Chris has mentioned reevaluating West Windsor roadways for MRGP standards since the Highway Department is working ahead of schedule in the planned improvements.

Mike stated that Todd Eaton of the Vermont Department of Transportation visited last week and will be using West Windsor as a model of being proactive in using stone-lined ditching and seeding of steeper slopes as preventative maintenance for flood resiliency.

Erik Boedtke and Eric Cooper will be taking a course next week for certification in grader operation, which will allow all current members of the Highway Department to operate the grader.

There have been no new applications for the vacant highway position, but Mike mentioned that he is communicating with one potential new hire. If that doesn't work out, Matt F will update the Town's help wanted ads at the beginning of next week.

Mark Higgins praised the Highway Department, and Mike Spackman in particular, for his care in maintaining the West Windsor roadways, and John Brodie and Mark Harley agreed, with Mark Harley making specific note of the efficiency of the West Windsor Highway Department. Mike stated that he appreciates the support of the Selectboards over the years, and how much that helps in being able to do the job of Highway Foreman.

15. May Windsor PD Log Review

There was a brief discussion on the May Windsor Police Log.

Mark Harley noted the passing of Brownsville resident Guy Roberts on May 26th. The Selectboard expressed their condolences to Guy's wife, Judy, and their family.

16. Zoning Bylaw Review

This discussion will be tabled until the June 24th Selectboard meeting to allow all Selectboard members to attend in person.

17. Insurance Discussion

Mark Higgins stated that Ted Siegler has discussed with him ways to increase revenue sources for organizations utilizing the town land on Mount Ascutney, which could include the possibility of charging visitors a fee for parking and certain uses of the mountain. Adding usage fees may trigger liability issues, and Mark stated that he was told that Ascutney Outdoors' insurance would not extend to cover these mountain uses.

There was a discussion relating to how these ideas would affect the Town's insurance policy if implemented. Mark Higgins stated that he will look into similar operational setups around the state, while John Brodie will investigate the insurance angle. Discussion of this topic will continue at a future Selectboard meeting when more information has been gathered.

18. Late Fee Waiver - Income Sensitivity Property Tax Credit

Vermont State Representative and West Windsor resident Elizabeth Burrows has been seeking to bring increased attention to the household income portion of Vermont's Property Tax Credit system, which allows for a reduction in property taxes based on overall household income. For 2023/2024, households with a total income of \$128,000.00 and below are eligible for this credit. Submissions were due by April 15th, but residents may file until October 15th with a \$15.00 late fee due to the state.

The Selectboard will invite Representative Burrows to its June 24th meeting to talk more about the income sensitivity program.

For more information on the Vermont Property Tax Credit, please click [here](#).

19. Other Business

Mark Harley noted there has been no change in security measures to the American Tower site at the top of Blood Hill. Mark Higgins will follow up with American Tower via email.

20. Upcoming Meeting Schedule

The next Selectboard meetings will be held on June 24th and July 8th at 6:30pm.

21. Executive Session

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Selectboard unanimously voted to enter executive session at 8:16pm for the reasons set forth in 1 V.S.A. § 313(3).

The Selectboard came out of executive session at 8:37pm.

22. Final Decisions

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Selectboard congratulated Liz Frederick on her completion and achievement of the Vermont Certificate of Public Librarianship and awarded her a one-time cash award in recognition of her hard work on behalf of and dedication to the Mary L. Blood Memorial Library and the people of West Windsor.

23. Adjourn

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Selectboard unanimously voted to adjourn at 8:37pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Matt Frederick
Town Administrator