

**Town of West Windsor  
Selectboard Meeting Minutes  
Monday, March 18, 2024 @ 6:30pm  
Town Hall and Zoom**

**Present in Person:** Mark Higgins, Mark Harley, John Brodie, Amy Yates, Mike Spackman, Matt Frederick, Jake Marguiles (Gnar Weasels)

**Present via Zoom:** Erik Boedtke, Linda & Bill Ley (Independence Day Committee)

**1. Call to Order**

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

**2. Changes or Additions to Agenda**

Mark Higgins noted that there will be a discussion regarding the 2024 Highway Mileage Certificate during the agenda item for Other Business.

**3. Announcements/Public Comment**

Town Administrator Matt Frederick stated that he had followed up with transit provider The Moover regarding the public question from the Pre-Town Meeting about their services provided to West Windsor.

The Moover does not have a fixed route to West Windsor, but does provide pre-planned rides for:

- Medicaid transportation to qualified members for medical appointments,
- Elderly and Disabled transportation to medical appointments, adult day care, congregate meals and shopping, and a limited number of personal trips,
- Recovery and Job Access rides for recovering riders to job interviews and training.

Residents interested in these services should contact Southeast Vermont Transit (SEVT), a.k.a. The Moover, at 1-888-869-6287 to inquire about eligibility and signup options.

Residents of West Windsor voted to appropriate \$125.00 to The Moover for Fiscal Year 2024, which was unchanged from previous years.

**4. Approve Minutes of 3/2, 3/5, 3/8**

*Mark Harley motioned to approve the minutes of the March 2<sup>nd</sup>, March 5<sup>th</sup>, and March 8<sup>th</sup> Selectboard Meetings. John Brodie seconded the motion, and all were in favor.*

## **5. Town Clerk's Report**

Amy Yates gave an overview of her recent duties, and there was a brief discussion regarding Sheddsville Cemetery mowing, annual Stormwater Operating Permit costs, and overweight vehicle permits.

It was noted that the vote for the Mount Ascutney School District budget will be held on Tuesday, April 2<sup>nd</sup>. Polls will be open at the Town Hall from 9:00am until 7:00pm.

## **6. IDC Request for Additional July 3<sup>rd</sup> Police Coverage**

Bill Ley of the Independence Day Committee spoke to the history of the annual Fourth of July fireworks celebration and noted that for many years Windsor Police Department would have 2 patrol officers present for the event. Two years ago, resulting from several concurrent emergency calls, both officers were needed elsewhere, which resulted in heavy traffic congestion exiting the fireworks display. To prevent this scenario from recurring, beginning last year, West Windsor contracted with Windsor PD to guarantee police coverage, with the Independence Day Committee covering the cost for one officer and the Town of West Windsor covering the cost for the other.

There was a discussion regarding the contract between the Town of West Windsor and the Windsor Police Department, including options for specific staffing for this event. Mark Higgins suggested a structure of one contracted officer to cover the event and one patrol officer who may be called away in an emergency, with the town covering the cost of the initial paid detail and the IDC covering the cost an additional contracted officer if needed.

Matt F will follow up with Chief Frank of the Windsor Police Department regarding police coverage options and cost structures. This topic will be revisited at a future meeting for a final determination once costs and officer availability are formalized.

## **7. Event Application: Gnar Weasels Mountain Bike Race (5/25)**

Jake Marguiles spoke to the history of the Gnar Weasels Mountain Bike Race, which will take place in West Windsor for the seventh time. There was a discussion regarding the event details, which have a structure mostly mirroring previous years. Jake mentioned they are expecting to have a food truck, but no alcohol is currently planned for the event this year. A liquor permit will be considered separately if it is needed.

*Mark Harley motioned to approve the Gnar Weasels Mountain Bike Race for May 25<sup>th</sup>. John Brodie seconded the motion, and all were in favor.*

## **8. Better Connections Project Update**

Matt F spoke about the Better Connections project and its committee, which hosted an introductory meeting on Monday, March 18<sup>th</sup> at 9:00am, and included a walk around the village's downtown area, as well as a trek up the Trail to Town to visit the Ascutney Outdoors

location. The study project is being conducted by DuBois & King. Initial steering committee members include Jenifer Aldrich, Erik Boedtke, Liz Frederick, David Jaacks, Stu Markowitz, Lee Monro, and Natalie Starr, with additional input from other interested parties when available, and will be led by Martha Harrison of the Mount Ascutney Regional Commission.

The committee will hold monthly meetings for the duration of the project to discuss progress and ideas, with the first public discussion to be held in early summer. The study is expected to conclude in the spring of 2025. Matt F will continue to provide updates to the Selectboard as needed throughout the process.

## **9. BB&P Liquor License Renewals**

There was a brief discussion regarding the annual liquor license renewals for Brownsville Butcher & Pantry, and it was noted that Peter Varkonyi has submitted all required paperwork and payments.

*John Brodie motioned to approve Brownsville Butcher & Pantry's liquor license renewals as submitted. Mark Harley seconded the motion, and all were in favor.*

## **10. Review February Windsor Police Log**

There was a discussion about the Windsor Police Log for February, focused mostly on a panic alarm at the Town Hall on February 27<sup>th</sup>, which was a false alarm accidentally initiated by Matt F. It was noted that there are several panic alarms located in the Town Hall which trigger responses from Windsor PD, along with motion detectors in the offices. Successful communication was made by Windsor PD after the alarm was triggered to allow for the termination of their officer response, and it was a good learning exercise for Town Hall staff.

## **11. HMGP Pre-Application – Yale Heights Rd**

Matt F and Erik Boedtke spoke about grant opportunities for alterations to Yale Heights Road to prevent future flood events from stranding residents of that road while flood waters recede. Mike Spackman spoke about his involvement with the state process and prior flood conditions on the lower portion of Yale Heights Road along the fields.

Mike stated that he would propose raising the roadway and installing additional culverts to allow for the transfer of flood waters from one field to the other without covering the roadway. Mike also stated that there were other options considered to address the recurring problem, and that this current plan is the most cost-effective. Mark Higgins noted that this would be the first step towards potential long-term mitigation, with further steps possible based on the results of this work.

## **12. Highway Foreman's Report**

Mike S noted that the Highway Department has completed their annual culvert inventory project.

Requests for sand and gravel bids and contractor equipment pricing have been sent out to local contractors. Several bids have already been returned, with bids to be considered by the Selectboard at a future meeting.

Mike stated the Highway Department has continued to haul gravel and that the grading is still taking place. He noted that, relative to other area towns, there hasn't been much severe mud. Mark Higgins praised the Highway Department for their continued efforts on our roadways.

There was a discussion relating to quotes for new overhead doors for the Burke garage, which came in at \$6,800.00, which is \$3,400.00 each for 2 doors. There was no action undertaken, and this will appear as part of a broader ARPA discussion at a future meeting.

The windows have been serviced, including repairs to some broken panes, at the Highway Garage to address poor heat retention and to improve energy efficiency.

Mike noted that work is scheduled to begin on the approved Highway Garage office and break room construction in the coming week.

There was a discussion relating to the cameras to be installed to inhibit continued sign theft, with an emphasis on costs and effectiveness, and a discussion on the benefits of involving the Town Administrator in radio communications and documentation efforts during future natural disasters and emergency responses.

*Mark Higgins motioned to approve the purchase of a tablet and portable radio for the Town Administrator to allow for better communication and participation from that position in natural disaster and emergency response situations, in an amount not to exceed \$1,500.00 from the ARPA Funds. Mark Harley seconded the motion, and all were in favor.*

### **13. FEMA Update**

Matt F spoke about the work done on the FEMA projects from the July flooding. There was a discussion on the projects involving the footbridge behind the fire station and the Mountain Access Road, as they relate to ownership and maintenance documentation. Matt noted that, from the information he's gathered, the footbridge belongs to the resort, which would make the town ineligible to apply for reimbursements for repairs to it. Additionally, although he believes that there is adequate documentation regarding the ownership and maintenance requirements of the Mountain Access Road, there is no documentation showing the prior condition of the road, or of any repairs or maintenance to the road itself. Given these circumstances, it is uncertain that any funds spent on this project will be reimbursable.

The Selectboard indicated that due to these concerns, repairs to the footbridge and the Mountain Access Road will no longer be pursued as viable projects. As no funds have yet been spent on these projects, no reimbursements will be sought.

There was further discussion relating to best practices going forward for documentation of future natural disasters and emergency situations, which will be aided by the Town Administrators increased role in handling such events, given the upcoming access to a portable radio and tablet.

There was additional conversation regarding the grant opportunities available for the Yale Heights Road project, with Mark Higgins praising the teamwork between town departments.

#### **14. Other Business**

There was a discussion relating to the request for a private road upgrade on Brownsville Hartland Road, which was originally discussed at the November 13<sup>th</sup> Selectboard Meeting. Mike S noted that planning efforts to meet the required road standards and sight lines are ongoing.

Regarding the completion of the annual Highway Mileage Certification process, Mark Higgins noted that he had sent the Exhibit A map documenting the transition from public to private road status marking the end of Jewett Road to the Town Administrator. This should allow for the successful completion of the annual Highway Mileage Certificate submitted to the state in February. Matt F will follow up with the Vermont Agency of Transportation with this last piece of information clarifying the end of the public section of Jewett Rd.

There was a discussion about the public and private road sections of Yale Heights Road, and the history of that road and dwellings.

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

Mark Higgins noted that the next two scheduled Selectboard Meetings will be held on April 8<sup>th</sup> and April 22<sup>nd</sup>. Due to the solar eclipse on April 8<sup>th</sup>, there is a possibility of an altered meeting structure for that date. Any changes will be noted on the meeting agenda and the town business calendar.

#### **16. Adjourn**

*Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Selectboard unanimously voted to adjourn at 8:13pm.*

Respectfully submitted,

Matt Frederick  
Town Administrator