

**Town of West Windsor  
Selectboard Meeting Minutes  
Monday, November 11, 2024 @ 6:30pm  
Town Hall and Zoom**

**Present in Person:** Mark Higgins, Mark Harley, John Brodie, Amy Yates, Mike Spackman, Matt Frederick, Steve Wood (Ascutney Outdoors), Ansel Dickey (Vermont Overland)

**Present via Zoom:** Deb Shearer, Lauren Dorsey (Vermont Standard), Linda & Bill Ley, Mary-Anne Boyce, Al Iuppa, Jill Crowley

**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**

On behalf of the Selectboard, Mark Higgins thanked all those who have served our country, veterans living in the West Windsor community and beyond.

**4. Approve Minutes of 10/28**

*Mark Harley motioned to approve the minutes of the October 28<sup>th</sup> Selectboard meeting. John Brodie seconded the motion, and all were in favor.*

**5. Town Clerk's Report**

Town Clerk Amy Yates stated that the total West Windsor mail-in and in-person voter participation for the November 5<sup>th</sup> General Election was 888 out of 1104 registered voters. Mark Higgins congratulated Amy on the smooth completion of her first General Election.

There is approximately \$210,000.00 remaining to be collected from the 2024 taxes which were due on October 25<sup>th</sup>, with a current penalty and interest accrual of approximately \$15,000.00. Amy noted that there is still \$11,421.00 to be collected from 2023. There was a brief discussion relating to collection efforts owing to late payments from lenders and escrow companies.

There will be a Special Town Meeting at Story Memorial Hall at 10:00am on Saturday, November 16<sup>th</sup> to vote on a proposed fiscal year change. West Windsor currently operates on a budget year from January 1<sup>st</sup> through December 31<sup>st</sup>. Voters will decide on a proposal to move the budget year to July 1<sup>st</sup> through June 30<sup>th</sup>.

## **6. Facility Use Agreement – Christmas Bazaar at the Town Hall (12/4 – 12/7)**

Mary-Anne Boyce spoke about the annual Christmas Bazaar, which will feature many local crafts vendors, a luncheon, and a bake sale. The Christmas Bazaar is sponsored by the Brownsville Community Church and has been a West Windsor tradition for at least 50 years. It has been held at Story Memorial Hall for the last several years.

There was a discussion regarding the details of the Christmas Bazaar, including event setup and vendors. The proceeds from the event will be donated to local organizations, including the food shelf.

*John Brodie motioned to approve the use of the Town Hall auditorium for the annual Christmas Bazaar from December 4<sup>th</sup> through December 7<sup>th</sup>. Mark Harley seconded the motion, and all were in favor.*

## **7. Final Highway Access – Mongeau (Parcel #04-030)**

There was a brief discussion regarding the request for final highway access for Parcel #04-030. Highway Foreman Mike Spackman noted that the access has been installed and is all set.

*Mark Harley motioned to approve the Final Highway Access for Parcel #04-030. John Brodie seconded the motion, and all were in favor.*

## **8. Discussion: Vermont Overland Event Combination**

Ansel Dickey spoke about a proposal to hold the Vermont Overland Trail Run and the Vermont Overland Bike on one weekend, to be held in August each year. Ansel spoke about the potential cost savings in infrastructure and outreach from hosting the events on one weekend as opposed to having them on separate weekends several months apart.

Steve Wood of Ascutney Outdoors spoke about the potential challenge of organizing the two events back-to-back, particularly as it relates to parking in the Ascutney Outdoors parking lot. There was a discussion regarding the pros and cons of the potential impact on the town from having both events held on one weekend.

Ansel will follow up with the Selectboard as the idea evolves to keep the Town in the loop.

## **9. STR Ordinance Petition**

Mark Higgins acknowledged the receipt on November 6<sup>th</sup> of a petition signed by 60 West Windsor registered voters, asking for the following article to be added to the warning of the Town Meeting on March 4, 2025: “Shall the Town of West Windsor repeal the Ordinance to Regulate the Operation of Short-Term Rentals?”

There was a brief discussion relating to the additional registered voters in West Windsor prior to the General Election and the petition threshold requiring the signature of 5% of registered voters.

West Windsor has 1104 registered voters as of November 5<sup>th</sup>, which means any petition requiring 5% of voters must exceed 55 voters.

Pursuant to the request on the STR Ordinance petition, the above article will be added to the March 4, 2025 Town Meeting warning, and will be up for a public vote at that meeting.

#### **10. Plans for West Windsor's U.S. Semiquincentennial Celebration**

Mark Harley spoke about the upcoming United States Semiquincentennial (250 years) celebration in 2026, and the desire to begin planning for the potential events. There was a discussion relating to the earliest stages of community engagement involving the Helping Unite Brownsville (HUB) group and outreach planning, including the West Windsor Weekly.

#### **11. West Windsor Veterans Memorial**

Mark Harley spoke about a request from a resident regarding Veterans Memorials in West Windsor. There was a discussion regarding the current memorials, including the plaques at the Mary L. Blood Memorial Library and at Tribute Park beside the Brownsville Community Church.

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

Mike Spackman stated that fall scraping, leaf blowing, and culvert clearing are continuing in preparation for the upcoming change of seasons.

The Highway Department is winter-ready. The sanders are all in working order and the plows are out and ready to be put on trucks as needed.

Mike and Town Administrator Matt Frederick will be working on 2025 Highway Department grants in the next couple weeks.

The current 2003 grader is due to be replaced in 2025. The trade-in value for the current grader is approximately \$80,000.00, and the new grader will cost \$432,500.00. There was a discussion regarding financing and the Highway Department's Capital Budget, which has set aside funds to cover the original projected grader cost of \$310,000.00. Mike noted that he will attempt to sell the current grader on the private market prior to trading it in, with the hope of finding a private buyer interested in purchasing it for more than the current trade in value.

*Mark Harley motioned to approve the purchase of a 2025 Caterpillar 140AWDJJOY Motor Grader with the specifications shown on the October 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024 quote from Milton CAT for a total cost of \$432,500.00. John Brodie seconded the motion, and all were in favor.*

#### **13. Discussion: ARPA Funds**

There was a discussion regarding the potential use of some remaining ARPA funds to cover a portion of the difference between the cost of the new grader and the funds available in the

Highway Department Capital Budget set aside for the expense. The exact amount of the difference will depend on the final trade-in value or sale price of the existing grader.

Mark Higgins spoke about the remaining proposed ARPA projects, including the rear step repairs at the Town Hall and requests from the Fire Department for a portable breathing air compressor and a mobile repeater for better radio communications.

Jill Crowley of the Sustainability Committee noted that she has met with representatives of two EV charging companies regarding the potential installation of EV chargers in the Ascutney Outdoors parking lot. The WWSC is currently focused on the potential installation of two to four level 2 chargers.

#### **14. Preventative Maintenance Agreements for Generators**

There was a discussion regarding annual preventative maintenance agreements with Brook Field Service for the generators located at the well pump on Hotel Rd, at the booster pumps near the Ascutney Outdoors Center, and at the Highway Garage.

*Mark Harley motioned to approve the one-year preventative maintenance agreements with Brook Field Service for the well pump generator in the amount of \$707.00, for the booster pump generator in the amount of \$542.00, and for the Highway Garage generator in the amount of \$442.00. John Brodie seconded the motion, and all were in favor.*

#### **15. Personnel Policy Review**

John Brodie will look into additional options for vendors to assist with crafting the West Windsor Personnel Policy and will report back to the Selectboard.

#### **16. October Windsor PD Log Review**

There was a brief discussion on the October Windsor PD Log.

#### **17. Q3 Budget Review**

There were discussions and a lengthy line-item review of the year-to-date budgets of the General Fund, the Highway Fund, the Library Fund, the Cemetery Fund, the Lister Fund, the Water Fund, and the Wastewater Fund.

The Selectboard will begin discussions on the Fiscal Year 2025 budget at the November 25<sup>th</sup> Selectboard meeting.

#### **18. Other Business**

There was a brief discussion regarding the traffic counter currently in place on Weeden Hill Rd. In consultation with the Town Administrator, Logan Nicoll of Mount Ascutney Regional Commission (MARC) placed the counter following the October 28<sup>th</sup> Selectboard meeting

discussion of vehicular traffic in that area. The traffic counter will be removed after approximately 30 days or prior to inclement weather necessitating winter maintenance of the roadways, after which the Selectboard will have access to traffic volume and speeds along that stretch of Weeden Hill.

Linda Ley stated that the Independence Day Committee (IDC) is now recognized as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, which allows donations made to the organization to be tax-deductible.

Linda noted that the annual sale of Christmas wreaths and other holiday items has begun. Please visit the [GiftItForward](#) website and use the fundraising code BROWNSVT001 to support the 2025 IDC celebrations. Online donations to the IDC may be made [here](#).

There was a brief discussion regarding continuing with one annual tax collection date during a potential fiscal year change process, and the legality of tax collections outside of the fiscal year. There was further discussion of the benefits and drawbacks of a six-month tax collection cycle.

## **19. Upcoming Meeting Schedule**

The next regular Selectboard meetings will be held on November 25<sup>th</sup> and December 9<sup>th</sup>. There will be an additional Special Selectboard Meeting on December 2<sup>nd</sup> to work on the FY25 budget.

There will be a Special Town Meeting at Story Memorial Hall at 10:00am on Saturday, November 16<sup>th</sup> to vote on a proposed fiscal year change. West Windsor currently operates on a budget year of January 1<sup>st</sup> through December 31<sup>st</sup>. Voters will decide on a proposal to move the budget year to July 1<sup>st</sup> through June 30<sup>th</sup>.

## **20. Executive Session**

*Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Selectboard unanimously voted to enter executive session at 9:15pm for the reasons set forth in 1 V.S.A. § 313(1)(E).*

The Selectboard came out of executive session at 9:33pm.

## **21. Final Decisions**

No decisions to note.

## **22. Adjourn**

*Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Selectboard unanimously voted to adjourn at 9:33pm.*

Respectfully submitted,

Matt Frederick  
Town Administrator