

West Windsor Selectboard Meeting
Monday, November 27, 2023 @ 6:30pm
Town Hall and Zoom

Present in Person: Matt Kantola, Mark Harley, Mark Higgins, Cathy Archibald, Mike Spackman, Deb Spackman, Tom Whelan, Fred & Linda Busch, Megan Futterleib

Present via Zoom: John Donaghy (Great Bay Tai Chi), Nate Stoddard (NEMRC), Chris Dolan, Lauren Dorsey (Vermont Standard), Rita Rice, Deb Shearer, Matt Frederick

1. Call to Order

Matt Kantola called the meeting to order at 6:30pm.

2. Changes or Additions to Agenda

Mark Harley brought up an email to the Selectboard from a resident on Cowshed Trail about a birch tree on their property that took storm damage from the heavy snow and came down in the town right-of-way. Matt Kantola stated that he had responded to the email. The resident was upset that the highway department removed the damaged birch tree. Mike Spackman gave details of the incident, and there was a brief discussion about the need to keep fallen trees cleared away from town roadways.

3. Announcements/Public Comment

Mark Harley mentioned that Mary Jane Arvidson passed away on November 16th, and noted that her husband, Phil Arvidson, was a former Selectboard member.

4. Approve Minutes of 11/13, 11/20

Mark Higgins motioned to approve the minutes of the November 13th and November 20th Selectboard meetings. Matt Kantola seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

5. Town Clerk's Orders

Matt K stated that he had reviewed the Orders. Mark Higgins mentioned that the Town had paid the state "a lot of money", which Cathy clarified was for the school. There was no further discussion.

6. Facility Use Agreement – Great Bay Tai Chi (w/John Donaghy)

John Donaghy of Great Bay Tai Chi spoke to the details of a proposed Tai Chi class to be held in the Town Hall on Saturday mornings from 9am to 10am for 10 weeks, from January 6th until March 16th. The cost would be \$100 per individual for the 10-week class.

Matt K motioned to approve the Facility Use Agreement with a \$25 fee per session. Mark Higgins seconded the motion. There was discussion about the need for insurance to cover the Town's liability. John stated that Great Bay Tai Chi instructors usually carried their own insurance, and that he would have it in place prior to the classes beginning. The motion passed with all in favor on the condition that the Town of West Windsor be added as an Additional Insured on John Donaghy's insurance policy.

7. Discussion: Sheddsville Cemetery – Tom Whelan

Matt K introduced Tom Whelan, the sexton of the Sheddsville Cemetery. Tom spoke on Cemetery business and operations from 2023. There was discussion of burial options, policies, and cemetery regulations.

There was discussion about the plan for future mowing at the cemetery, and Tom expressed interest in assuming mowing duties as part of his sexton responsibilities using his own equipment. Details of this potential arrangement will be discussed at a future meeting.

Tom mentioned the potential benefit of creating a Cemetery Commission to address cemetery policies. There was discussion regarding the formation of a commission. Tom will reach out to the community and gauge interest in creating a charter for a Cemetery Commission to oversee Sheddsville Cemetery policies and regulations.

8. Late Agenda Addition – Plowing Issue on Duling Rd

A resident on Duling Rd spoke of some recent issues with plowing at the end of Duling Rd. There was discussion about plowing procedures for that section of the town road, and some damage that has resulted from it.

Matt K proposed a meeting with the Selectboard, Mike Spackman, and Matt F next Wednesday, 12/6 at 12pm at 376 Duling Rd to go over plowing procedures and options for that location. Matt F will warn a Special Selectboard Meeting for that time and place.

A separate resident addressed some further plowing concerns regarding late night plow timing, and there was a discussion about the town's Winter Operations Policy.

9. Discussion: New Lister Requirements (w/ Nate Stoddard)

Deb Spackman mentioned a new state law that changes the requirements for Listers and Assessors to include further education. Nate Stoddard of the New England Municipal Resource Center gave an overview of the current vs the upcoming regulations. There was a lengthy discussion regarding how other municipalities handle their Lister and Assessor positions, options available to the town to cover its Lister responsibilities, and whether the West Windsor Lister positions should remain an elected position or become a position which would be appointed by the Selectboard.

At the conclusion of the discussion, and on the advice of one of our currently elected Listers, Deb Spackman, the consensus of the Selectboard is to move to change Lister to an appointed position at the next Town Meeting owing to the increased educational requirements for the position and the increasing difficulty in finding people interested in serving.

10. Highway Foreman's Report

Mike Spackman said the tractor will be heading in for its repairs since the ditches are now full of snow and no more leaves can be blown.

Mike stated that the 2019 1-Ton truck is out of commission for up to 2 weeks for brake line repairs.

Mike mentioned that after this recent storm they will be working to remove hazard trees.

11. Discussion: Zoom Meeting Security

Mark Harley mentioned a “Zoombombing” that occurred during the previous Special Selectboard Meeting and stated that there would be a Zoom “waiting room” for remote meeting participants going forward. This will allow the Zoom hosts to confirm that the participant is a real person and limit the likelihood of future meeting disruptions by individuals with ill-intent. Anyone interested in remotely attending future Selectboard Meetings should have no trouble continuing to do so. If issues arise from this plan, the Selectboard will revisit it as needed.

12. FEMA Update

Matt F gave an update on the current FEMA paperwork. There was no FEMA meeting last Wednesday, and the paperwork process is on hold pending West Windsor’s FEMA Project Manager granting access to the Essential Elements of Information (EEI) on the FEMA Grants Portal for the current project.

13. Other Business

None.

14. Executive Session

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Selectboard unanimously voted to enter executive session at 7:42pm for the reasons set forth in 1 V.S.A. § 313(3).

The Selectboard came out of executive session at 7:58pm.

At the conclusion of the Executive Session, Mark Higgins apologized to Cathy Archibald for an offhand remark he made at the previous Special Selectboard Meeting. Cathy accepted this apology.

15. Final Decisions

Cathy Archibald, in her role as elected Town Clerk/Town Treasurer, appointed Amy Yates to be assistant Town Clerk/Town Treasurer at a salary of \$65,000 per year.

16. Adjourn

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Selectboard unanimously voted to adjourn at 7:59pm.