

West Windsor Selectboard
Draft Minutes
October 28, 2019

Present: Win Johnson, Brett Myers, Matt Kantola, Mike Spackman, Cathy Archibald, Craig Gardner, Ken Parrot, Martha Harrison

- 1) Call to Order – Selectboard Chair Win Johnson called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM and those present observed a moment of silence in memory of Annie Burke and in appreciation for her many years of service to the Town.
- 2) Changes or Additions – Executive session re: employee compensation for 2020
- 3) Public Comment – None
- 4) Town Clerk’s report – Sign orders: **Brett moved to sign orders. Matt seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.** Review financial information: Win noted that some of the Selectboard expenses will be capitalized as part of the acquisition of the Burke property, and the Town Forest expenses are for demolishing some of the deteriorating ski structures on the mountain. Mike said the \$2,500 budgeted for the maintenance garage will be used instead for the garage on the former Burke property. Win said he asked Shawn Donovan to include a deadline of April 30 in the contract for the additional Phase II study work, but has not heard from him. Mike said we budgeted \$20,500 for retreatment on Hotel Road and the additional \$3,095 will come out of the paving fund.
- 5) Highway Foreman’s Report – Mike said major grading is done, and the chloride tank is empty. Next year, Mike said he is planning to use grants-in-aid funding to address MRGP issues on Sheddsville Road from above Banister to Felicity Knight’s house, and is planning to apply for a Better Roads grant for Churchill Road. Win noted that we’ll also be doing three highway structure grant projects in 2020. Mike said the paving on Hotel Road is done, ditches are half done, the sand pile is nearly complete, and the highway crew is about ready to start on the culvert inventory. Mike noted Rad Dike’s letter apologizing for working in the right-of-way. Win asked Mike if the highway employees have concerns about switching to MVP for health insurance. Mike noted that one employee will have to switch to a different doctor, but he hasn’t heard of any other concerns. Win asked about the Harrington Road culvert. Mike said he hasn’t heard anything; if the manufacturer is storing it for the winter, the town won’t be billed until it’s delivered. Mike said we need a new chloride trailer and there’s one available for \$10,500. Win asked Mike if he can wait and order it in January. Mike agreed. Mike said we also need a new loader. Win said he and Mike have been working on the capital budget and will review it with the Selectboard soon.
- 6) ECA Annual Meeting attendance – Win said ECA is the organization that handles the radio tower on the mountain. Win has been attending the meetings but he can’t go this year. Matt volunteered to attend.
- 7) Emerald Ash Borer discussion – Ken Parrot recommended doing an ash tree inventory. Win said he has asked the Conservation Commission (CC) to look at areas in the Town Forest where ash stands overlap with recreational trails and could pose a hazard, and also to consider harvesting ash that has commercial value. Win said the CC has asked Forester Tii McLane for a proposal to do that work next summer. Win said if the CC focuses on ash in the Town Forest, the Selectboard can focus on roadside ash. Ken said he and Craig Gardner are willing to volunteer to work on an inventory but they’d like some additional volunteer help. Win asked Ken how we would go about doing an inventory. Ken said he hasn’t gone through the training yet, but one thing we need to determine is what percentage of the ash trees are in

the utility right-of-way because the power company will address those. Ken described several possible approaches to doing an inventory and asked if the town has any legal liability for trees that may be a hazard. Ken noted that dead ash trees are brittle and may be more expensive to remove. Ken said Hartland recently estimated that it would cost \$1 million to remove the ash trees in their public rights-of-way. Ken said the state has computer applications that can assist with an inventory. Win said he is in favor of doing an inventory to assess our risk, and added that the results of the inventory could affect how we spend our annual tree removal budget even before we have an emerald ash borer (EAB) infestation. Ken said there have been some promising results controlling EAB in Michigan with the introduction of predators. Matt suggested focusing on public areas, such as the school and the Town Hall, where people congregate. Matt also suggested neighborhood focused volunteer groups. Win said the volunteers would need to have some training. Mike said the town can't get money for any live ash trees removed from the right-of-way. Win said he only envisions removing live trees if they're in a location where they could be hazardous. Ken said you can't cut a live tree without a hearing. Mike agreed that you can only cut a live tree if the Tree Warden determines that it's diseased or it's a hazard. Ken suggested that the goals of the inventory be defined in advance to determine the level of detail needed. Martha asked if live trees can be removed with landowner permission. Mike said yes. Ken said one town is using student volunteers. Win asked how we train volunteers. Ken said we could ask Ginger Nickerson, or someone from her program, to do a training here in West Windsor. Martha said we can put a request for volunteers on the town website. Mike said the town can't do anything about the ash trees outside the right-of-way and, when they die, they're going to fall into the right-of-way. Win volunteered to help with the inventory. Ken said he thinks a group of ten volunteers could do the job. Matt suggested that Ken and Craig do one road to see how long it takes. Brett said she can help. Win suggested an initial meeting for interested volunteers. Ken said he will contact Ginger to get more information about training. Mike said diameter should be one of the criteria. Ken said he and Craig are going to Montpelier for training on November 1st.

- 8) FY 2020 Budget development schedule – Health insurance: Win said the rates for BCBS are going way up this year; MVP has the same plan and it's a lot less expensive. Win said Cathy estimated a savings of \$6,800 if we switch to MVP. Win said he and Mike will review the capital budget with Brett and Matt at the November 11th meeting. Matt said he thinks he may miss that meeting.
- 9) Sewer project update – Martha said the contractor hit the water lines a couple of times but they were rapidly repaired. Martha also noted that, when Green Mountain Pipeline flushed and inspected one of the lines scheduled for repair, they didn't see the sags noted in the 2014 inspection so that work may not need to be done. In another section, where cured-in-place patches were called for, the sub-contractor said it would be easier to just line that whole section of pipe at no additional cost. Win said he's very happy with the contractor so far. Martha added that we heard from the state that we're eligible for a slightly higher subsidy. Martha also noted one case of sewage backing up into someone's basement due to a flaw in the design of their service line. Win said the house has a floor drain that goes into the sewer. Win asked Mike to take a look at the condition of Ski Tow Road after the contractor is finished.
- 10) Water project update – Testing: Martha said P2 Environmental has done our PFAS testing but we probably won't get results until mid-November. Bid results: Win said the water project bids were opened today and the low bid, from Daniels Construction, was \$60,000 below the engineer's estimate. Win said they're not going to start the project until spring.

Title certification: Martha said we ran into a snag with the title certification because Jim isn't comfortable with the language in the well isolation zone easement so we need additional easement from Holiday Inn and the Windsor Building.

- 11) Approve Minutes – **Brett moved to approve the minutes of October 15th. Matt seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**
- 12) Other Business – Employee compensation: **Win moved to go into executive session. Brett seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.** After discussion, **the Selectboard came out of executive session by unanimous consent at 7:59 PM, with no action taken.**
- 13) Adjourn – **The meeting was adjourned by consensus at 8:00 PM.**

Respectfully submitted,

Martha Harrison