

West Windsor Selectboard
Draft Minutes
September 23, 2019

Present: Win Johnson, Brett Myers, Matt Kantola, Martha Harrison, Bob French, Nancy Pedrick, Deb Shearer, Tom Kenyon, Mike Spackman, Aaron Gonthier (Windsor on Air)

- 1) Call to Order – Selectboard Chair Win Johnson called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.
- 2) Changes or Additions – Harrington Road culvert project, emerald ash borer presentation, health insurance, STAB bike park project
- 3) Public Comment – None
- 4) Windsor Recreation Center rates – Nancy Pedrick said West Windsor residents pay an upcharge to participate in programs at the Windsor Rec Center and she was hoping, now that the school districts have merged, that West Windsor residents could pay the same fee as Windsor residents. However, Nancy explained, the Rec Center is funded by the town budget not the school budget. Nancy said Tom Marsh had two suggestions: the Town of West Windsor could pay the difference for its residents, or the Town could contribute a set amount of money and when it's all used up, that's it. Win said he thinks both of those options could be administratively difficult, and thinks it might be more pragmatic to negotiate a lump sum payment to Windsor and then ask the voters to approve or disapprove it at Town Meeting. Win said we can ask if they keep track of who participates and which town they're from.
- 5) American Precision Museum presentation – Steve Dalessio was not able to attend tonight.
- 6) Town Clerk's report – Sign orders: **Brett moved to sign orders. Matt seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.** YTD financial information: Win said it's been a tough year for highway equipment maintenance, but we're in pretty good shape with the General Fund. Win noted that the amount of highway grant funding we've received is less than the amount we've spent under "special projects." Martha said we have to request reimbursement for the Better Roads projects, but invoices are still coming in.
- 7) Highway Foreman's Report – Update on Barton Rd: Win said Mike has installed a 3' culvert in the wet section and eliminated the dip that would have been dangerous for snowmobilers. Win said the snowmobile club has agreed to level the road and improve one of the water bars for an amount not to exceed \$800, and they will absorb \$469 of that as their contribution to the project. As a result, GMHA, the Conservation Commission and the snowmobile club will all have contributed equally to the improvement of Barton Road. Harrington Road culvert: Mike said it's not looking like we're going to be able to get it done this year, but he hasn't given up yet. Update on Burke property: Win said we have a survey to submit to the DRB. Mike said Kenny Burke has picked out 15 Norway spruce trees and the highway department is going to install them next week. Mike said they're also planning to shore up the wall of the building this fall. Equipment rental: Win asked Mike what the \$5,390 was used for. Mike said he'll look into it and report back. Foreman's report: Grading is completed for now. The Wardner Road grants-in-aid project is starting tomorrow. The paving company was supposed to do Hotel Road at the end of August. Mike said he hopes they don't come this week with the Vermont 50 coming up this weekend. Mike is still waiting for parts for the speed cart. Mowing is pretty much done for now, and the sand pile is growing.
- 8) Town Forest parking lot signs – Win said Ascutney Outdoors is willing to put up a couple of "Quiet: residential neighborhood" signs. After discussion about the existing sign, and other potential signs, the Selectboard agreed to keep the existing sign and ask AO to put up a couple of "Quiet" signs. Mike said he hasn't put up the Verdun Hill Trail sign yet.

- 9) Sewer project update – Authorize signature of Assignment of Certain Limited Easement Rights: **Brett moved to authorize Win to sign the Assignment of Certain Limited Easement Rights document when it is received from MFW Associates tomorrow. Matt seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.** Win asked if all the legal costs are going to be paid for by the project. Martha said A+E included \$2,500 for legal fees in the cost estimate for the project under “other costs” and those were approved. Martha said she has asked the state what happens if legal fees are higher than the estimate and Tom Brown said there are a couple of options but suggested that we cross that bridge when we get to it. Martha said the Selectboard initially approved spending \$5,000 on legal fees for both projects but so far all the legal work has been on the sewer project and that is going to be over \$5,000 so the Selectboard approved an additional amount. Martha said it sounds like there’s a way to get it covered down the road. Win said the Selectboard has chosen the low bidder for the sewer project and the water project is going out to bid shortly. Matt asked when the sewer project is going to start. Win said after the Vermont 50 event. Martha said we’ll have a better idea on the schedule after the pre-construction meeting with the contractor on Wednesday.
- 10) Water project update – Martha said we got our Act 250 permit and the categorical exclusion letter for the project. Regarding the loan terms, Martha said we’re currently looking at a 30-year loan at 3% but they expect the rate to go down to 2%. In addition, when we got our Act 250 permit, that locked in our 30% subsidy, which is really good news. Martha said A+E is putting the project out to bid this Wednesday and we’ll be opening bids on October 22nd. Matt asked how the length of the loan is determined. Martha said they don’t offer less than 20 years, but they look at the useful life of what you’re building. Win said the loan can’t be longer than the useful life of the assets. Matt suggested a shorter term than 30 years. Martha said a longer term makes the payments more affordable for the users. Win agreed that we’re trying to keep the water and sewer rates as low as possible.
- 11) Stormwater update – Win said we met with representatives of the state today about the expired stormwater permit at the resort. Win said we’re faced with an administrative requirement that there be a permit for this infrastructure, which has been inspected and maintained and is functioning as designed, but we’ve been struggling with the state about how to renew the permit when there is no longer an umbrella entity. Win noted that the Hotel, Windsor building and Mts. Edge were all represented at the meeting. Win said there are substantial fees, estimated at \$15,000, associated with the permit renewal, which would have to be divvied up among the parties. Win said the town and the other representatives present agreed that, because we are innocent parties, we would like the state to waive those fees. Win said after the permit is renewed, there would be an annual fee and an annual inspection, and every five years the permit would have to be renewed again. Win said the state wanted the parties to create a whole new entity. As an alternative, everyone verbally agreed to sign an MOU outlining our responsibilities for inspection, maintenance and cost-sharing. Win said a related issue is the two deep eroded gullies on the south side of Mill Brook. One of the parties said he is fine with cost sharing for the inspection and maintenance of the existing system and for renewing the permit, but he does not want to share in the cost of dealing with the gullies. Win said repairing those gullies will be dealt with outside of the MOU. Win said the state alleges that every real estate transaction that has occurred since the permit expired has a cloud on it.
- 12) Status of Town Office improvements – Matt said the windows have been ordered and Martha put a notice in Front Porch Forum but he hasn’t had any response yet. Matt said he’s going to

call a few local contractors to make sure they're aware of the project. Matt said he hasn't ordered the door yet because he wants to talk to the contractor about frame options.

13) Next meeting – The Selectboard agreed to hold their next meeting on Tuesday, October 15th at 6:30 PM.

14) Other Business – DRB hearing on Burke property: Mike said he won't be here for the hearing so it's up to Win to represent the town. Emerald Ash Borer: Win said he'd like to get Ted Siegler, Mike, and someone from STAB to come to the October 15th Selectboard meeting to talk about what, if anything, we're going to do to prepare. When the ash borer arrives, we're going to lose a lot of ash trees that are going to be potential dead falls on town roads and recreation trails. Win noted that some towns are doing ash tree inventories on their town roads. Mike said he hasn't heard anything from other road foremen. Mike said many of the trees are taller than the width of the right-of-way. Win said there may be nothing we can do but he'd like to get a group together to talk about it. Win said he got the impression that when the trees start to go, a lot of them are going to go really quickly. Tom said we might budget a little more, but there are so many trees out there. Mike said we could spend the entire highway budget on tree removal and we still wouldn't get them all. Deb said she thinks it's important for people to know there's someone they can contact if they think they have an ash borer infestation. Martha said we should also be aware that, in areas where there are ash trees and invasive plants, the invasives are going to take over when the ash comes down, so we might want to do something about the invasives in advance. Martha also said that if the town wants to harvest some of the ash, it would make sense to do that before it dies. Win said Ken Parrot has done a lot of work on this and he'd like to give him some time to talk to the Selectboard about it. Meanwhile, Win said, he'll talk to Ted Siegler. Health insurance: Win noted a memo indicating a 12% increase in health insurance costs. Win said there's a new plan called Blue Edge that he's going to ask Cathy to get a quote on. Win also said MVP appears to be less expensive than Blue Cross so we may want to consider switching if we can do so without jeopardizing coverage for our employees. STAB project: Win said STAB is planning a bike park project on the mountain so he asked them to bring the plans to a Selectboard meeting and consult with Ascutney Outdoors (AO) to make sure AO is okay with it. Bob asked who is going to pay for it. Matt said STAB is applying for a grant. Win said STAB asked him to sign a letter of support and he told them the letter would have to come from the Selectboard with AO's concurrence. Tom asked whose insurance covers the liability. Win said all three entities – STAB, AO and the Town – have insurance.

15) Approve Minutes – **Brett moved to approve the minutes of September 3rd, September 9th, and September 17th. Matt seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**

16) Adjourn – **Brett moved to adjourn at 7:30 PM. Matt seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,

Martha Harrison