

Town of West Windsor
Selectboard Meeting 6:30 pm

Monday, February 27, 2023

DRAFT Minutes

Present via zoom:

Mark Harley, Mary-Anne Boyce, Glenn and Shelley Seward, Jill Crowley, Jennifer Aldrich, Michael Coughlin [The Vermont Standard] Christine Eggleton, Cathy Boedtke, Dan Preston, Anne Valentine, Ginger Mason

Present in Person: Mike Spackman, Matt Kantola, Brett Myers, Mark Higgins, Chris Dolan, Jess Brodie, Brian Lowe (Council on Rural Development).

1. Call to Order

Matt called the meeting to order at 6:36.

2. Town Clerk's Orders

Nothing of note.

3. Changes or Additions to the Agenda

Matt added an update about a complaint regarding Hammond Hill Rd. and Mark added an administrative matter involving a liquor permit for the Butcher and Pantry

4. Brian Lowe, Executive Director Vermont Council on Rural Development

The Selectboard last month invited Brian to come to West Windsor and speak about the Community Visits Program run by the Council on Rural Development (CRD).

The Community Visits program involves the CRD coming to a community if the selectboard sends an invitation. The CRD then works with residents to identify several specific issues that the town would like to address. At the end of that process, the CRD sends in a team of experts in the specific areas identified, and those experts help the town identify and navigate the resources they need to carry out their goals.

Brian said that the CRD doesn't work for the selectboard but it won't come unless the board invites them because they want to make sure that the work they do complements what's already underway in a town. He said that the CRD wants to make sure they have a broad and inclusive

community process that pulls a lot of people in and helps identify community objectives without adding to the selectboard's burden. He continued by saying that the program is nonpartisan and comes without an agenda; they work in any community where they're invited and will support whatever priorities the community identifies.

Mike asked if he had examples of things that have already been done Brian said they've worked in Londonderry and Putney recently and they've worked on things like child care, housing, nurturing community events, creating recreational facilities and programs, and downtown redevelopment.

Chris asked about sustaining community involvement in the face of demands on people's time for volunteering; Brian said that's a challenge they often confront but that the process tends to pull in participation from people who are not normally/regularly involved in community work.

Matt asked about costs Brian said that the program doesn't cost the town anything other than providing one community dinner during the process.

If West Windsor is interested in pursuing the program, the Selectboard simply needs to send a written invitation to the CRD.

The board thanked Brian for visiting.

5. VT-Alert

Erik said that he would like the Selectboard's approval for West Windsor to offer residents the opportunity to sign up for VT-Alert. It is a text and phone alert system created by the state. The service will allow the town to put out alerts on road closures, emergency alerts, weather warnings and other information. Erik said that there is no cost for the service, the town just needs to agree to make it available to residents.

Matt said that people might not want to get a lot of alerts, so it's good that it's voluntary. Chris pointed out that there are a number of filtering options, such as topics you're not interested in and times of day/night you don't want to receive alerts, so people can tailor the service to not be a nuisance but still receive relevant information.

Mark made a motion to approve the town making VT-Alert available to its residents. Brett seconded and the motion passed.

Matt then asked about the Fire Department's fundraiser dinner. Erik said that all members of the community are welcome to come down. He said that it's not really a fundraiser as much as an open house for people to get to know the fire department and what it does. There will be a touch-a-truck for kids and a raffle with many prizes.

6. Event Permit Process

Erik asked for digital signatures to be required from the Fire Department, Windsor Police Department, and WW Fast Squad before event applications can be forwarded to the Selectboard before approval. Shelley expressed concern that the newly developed permit process was being changed again, but Erik replied that this was just formalizing an existing requirement. His concern was that applications should not be eligible for even conditional approval if the organizers have not submitted their maps and event schedules to the relevant emergency services. He hopes that the process can be streamlined and made more transparent and consistent. Matt said that sounded helpful.

7. Historical Society Event Application Process

The Historical Society does have insurance and the Certificate of Insurance is on the way to the Selectboard.

Matt made a motion to approve fundraiser dance at the Town Hall on March 25. The motion carried.

8. Town Hall HVAC Update

Matt said that he has been gathering estimates for putting a heat pump in the Town Hall to provide air conditioning. A 2010 energy audit of the building recommended weatherization efforts be focused on the attic, so Matt is looking at that. There are also some leaks in the roof that should be addressed this spring.

Chris said that the energy audit was accepted by Efficiency Vermont as qualifying for its Building Performance Program, which would re-imburse the cost of weatherization at 75% up to \$5,000.

Matt said that he had also talked to a resident who is a lighting representative and requested an estimate to replace the fluorescent lighting in the Town Hall with more efficient lighting.

9. Transfer Station Update

Matt reported that the representatives of the three towns (Reading, Weathersfield, and West Windsor) met last week and the facility does not currently break even and is losing money. As a result, punch tickets are going up from \$3.50 to \$4.25.

10. Highway Foreman's Report

Mike requested that the Selectboard approve the posting of a weight limit on town roads during mud season. The policy needs to be posted via signage at each road, as well as posted at the Town Hall and the Post Office.

Mark made a motion to approve the road postings recommended by the Highway Department from November through May. The motion carried.

Erik asked when the postings go into effect; Mike said that they are in effect as soon as the signs go up.

Mike said that the salt shed was coming along on schedule and should be done by the end of the month.

11. Ski Area Parking Lot Summer Usage

Matt said that the ski area parking lot is often empty and uninviting when there is not an event taking place, and there is not much shade. He would like the town to see about making it more attractive. He mentioned some possible usages, and adding things like picnic tables with umbrellas to provide shade. Shelley pointed out that the issue is complicated by the AO event schedule and that anything in the parking lot would have to work around that schedule.

Chris said the agenda item was just to see if it was feasible and whether the Selectboard wanted to create a mechanism for going forward with the discussion.

Mark said that it seems to jibe with the Council on Rural Development's process, and we want to get it right. He said he's supportive of creating more of a welcoming vibe in the lot.

Mark moved to appoint the Town Administrator as the head of a subcommittee to determine other participants and first steps, and report back to the Selectboard. The motion was seconded and carried. The committee was subsequently named the "Vibe Committee"

Town Meeting Update

Matt noted that in the warned articles, Article 9 incorrectly describes the proposed \$32,000 allocation to the library as a donation, but the library is a town entity. As a result, Article 5 will be amended to include the library allocation, and Article 9 will be omitted.

Mark Harley asked about the propriety of who could nominate him for Selectboard candidate. Mark Higgins said that he had a legal workshop coming up with VLCT and he would ask about that.

Mark Harley asked about whether masks would be required at Town Meeting and expressed concern that residents may not be able to vote if they don't feel safe attending a large gathering. Matt said that the town could encourage people to wear masks, but that they would not be mandatory.

12. Other Business

Matt said that the town had received a complaint from a resident on Hammond Hill Road regarding blind spots following the completion of the road re-route. Matt said that the town feels that the road is the same, if not better, than it was and the town does not wish to pay for an additional engineering study. Brett said that the town has done its due diligence, and if the resident wants to go further with the issue, it is up to them to do so.

Mark said that there was an administrative matter regarding approval of a liquor license for a Butcher and Pantry event at AO. The store was late in getting its permit request to the DLC and it was not processed in time for this meeting. Chris noted that the permits are supposed to be submitted 15 days prior to an event. Mark said that since the town has already approved the event itself, the Selectboard can approve the liquor license as long as the DLC permit comes through tomorrow. *Mark made a motion to approve the license, it was seconded, and the motion passed.*

13. Approve Minutes of February 13, 2023

Mark motioned, Brett seconded, and the February 13 minutes were approved.

14. Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was seconded and carried at 8:04

Respectfully Submitted,

Chris Dolan