

Wallingford Selectboard Meeting
Minutes
December 3, 2018

Selectboard Members Present: Bill Brooks, Gary Fredette, Rose Regula, Mark Tessier, and Nelson Tift.

Others present: Julie Sharon, Sandi Switzer, Joyce Barbieri, Carol Macleod, Lisa Williams, Lynn Edmunds, Judy Edmunds, Steve Berger, Connie Berger, Curtis Lidstone, Bonnie Gainer, Bastian Auer, Christopher Dunigan, Michael McMahon, Marc Pramuk and Steve Benard.

Chair B. Brooks called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. at Town Hall.

Agenda Amendments. Milton Moore's resignation from the Energy Committee and Keith Hawkin's Intent to Offer to purchase 1631 Route 103 parcel were added to the agenda.

Minutes. M. Tessier made a motion that was seconded by R. Regula to approve the 11/19/18 Minutes. Motion carried (5-0).

Pay Orders. G. Fredette made a motion that was seconded by N. Tift approving the pay order total of \$11,008.93. Motion carried (5-0).

Road Commissioner Report. None. Town Administrator Sandi Switzer submitted Randy Baker's estimate to replace a mailbox on Homerstone Road. The board directed the town administrator to send Mr. Baker a copy of the Mailbox Policy.

Stone Meadow Sign. Conservation Commission member Carol Macleod said the commission would like to install two signs – one at the Waldo Lane entrance and one near the Elfin Lake beach parking area – outlining rules for Stone Meadow as the old signs needed to be replaced. Board members approved by unanimous consent the language for the sign. They directed the town administrator to seek an estimate from the company that provided similar signs and the Board would consider approval of the purchase at the next meeting.

FY'20 Public Safety. Sheriff Steve Benard provided an overview of Rutland County Sheriff Department's coverage since July 1. He estimated a 2.5% increase in expenses for the next fiscal year resulting in 30 hours per week of coverage over 12 months totaling \$56,962.

N. Tift said he preferred dedicated Wallingford patrols rather than an officer covering both Clarendon and Wallingford with drive time included in the coverage. There was some discussion regarding an increase to 40 hours of coverage per week with a dedicated officer. The sheriff offered to return to a future meeting to answer any other questions.

Resignation. By unanimous consent, the Board accepted Milton Moore's letter of resignation from the Energy Committee and directed the town administrator to send him a letter of appreciation.

Intent to Offer. Board members reviewed Keith Hawkin's Letter of Intent to Offer regarding the Town's property at 1631 Route 103. Board members discussed conditions attached to the \$1500 offer. After some discussion, it was agreed the property was being sold "as is" and the Town could not guarantee conditions, including driveway and septic permit approvals and a timeframe for property cleanup.

Board members directed the town administrator to send a written response to Mr. Hawkins indicating the Town accepted the \$1500 offer with no conditions.

FY'20 Recreation. B. Brooks said a Vermont League of Cities and Towns attorney advised the board to schedule a meeting to gather input regarding the hiring of a fulltime recreation director then conduct a Board vote on it. He said the recreation committee had recommended hiring someone for the new position. He added the board considered letting voters decide the matter at Town Meeting. However, he said the VLCT attorney indicated the legislative body had the statutory responsibility for the hiring of employees and a Town Meeting article would be advisory in nature. B. Brooks said if the Board voted to hire a recreation director then the compensation and programming costs could go on the Town Meeting Warning and voters would decide on funding it. B. Brooks recommended setting a special meeting for December 17 to gather feedback and vote on the issue.

Michael McMahon suggested conducting a survey. Lynn Edmunds commented there was not enough work for a recreation director to do in order to justify a fulltime position.

Bastian Auer provided an overview of his years of supervising the Wallingford Little League program and his participation on the Recreation Committee. He said residents wanted programs and events, but he said the volunteers are not available to develop the programs. He said the recreation committee has been exploring the idea of expanded programming over the past few years bringing Little League and Flag Football under the recreation umbrella. He said a recreation director was not a result of the Vermont Council on Rural Development Community Visit program.

Recreation Committee Chair Michelle Kenny explained the purpose of a recreation director was to stabilize existing programming and create new ones. She said volunteerism had declined. She added people were willing to help on an "as needed" bases but there was no one to coordinate and oversee programs for years to come.

Ms. Kenny said the recreation director could undertake grant writing to offset some municipal expenses from supplies to infrastructure improvements, including repairs to the basketball court. She estimated the recreation director would be engaged in grant writing and seeking funds 20 to 25 percent of the time.

Judy Edmunds asked who the recreation director would be accountable to. Ms. Kenny responded the Selectboard.

Joyce Barbieri suggested the Mill River community could utilize a person in that position that would oversee programming and activities throughout the school district towns. Mr. Auer responded at some point the Wallingford Elementary sixth grade would transition to Mill River resulting in the end of 5th and 6th grade basketball programs. He added there would be a need for a recreation basketball program.

Mr. Edmunds asked for a copy of the recreation director job description. Bonnie Gainer said one person would not change the need for volunteers. Mr. McMahon said the Town was responsible for providing facilities and community members were responsible for overseeing programs like Little League. He added the Town ought to consider hiring a part time grant writer rather than a recreation director.

Connie Berger suggested the Town consider hiring a part time recreation director. Lynn Edmunds added a phased in approach with a part time employee would be appropriate. Lisa Williams said Rutland Recreation requires parents to volunteer time.

G. Fredette suggested working with local college sports programs to offer a recreation director internship. Mr. McMahon added the position ought to be an activity director rather than recreation director.

G. Fredette asked Ms. Kenny and Mr. Auer to bring a list to the December 17 meeting showing available grants that could offset the costs of programming, equipment, supplies and infrastructure improvements.

Ms. Gainer said very few grants pay salaries and there were often challenging conditions attached to grants.

In response to a question, Mr. Auer said the recreation director could work at the lake in the summer and possibly in the zoning administrator's office the rest of the year.

By unanimous consent, the Board set a special meeting on Monday, December 17 at 6:30 p.m. to gather input then vote on a fulltime recreation director. The regular budget meeting will take place the same night at 5:30 p.m.

Board members then reviewed the recreation budget. Following Ms. Kenny's recommendations, board members added \$4550 to line 5801 Elfin Lake Salaries for a total of \$12,000, decreased line 5901 Summer Recreation Salaries by \$4550 to \$7450, and doubled line 5806 portable restrooms to \$1800. Line 5804 Electric was increased \$100 to \$500. All other Recreation line items were level-funded.

Public Comments. Mr. McMahon suggested raising Selectboard salaries to \$3000 per person to reflect the amount of work conducted by board members on the Town's behalf.

Ms. Barbieri asked if the Town covered the cost of lifeguard certifications. The town administrator said the Town paid for camp counselors' lifeguard certifications. She said if the Selectboard wanted to pay for Elfin Lake employees to obtain lifeguard certifications then funds would have to be budgeted.

B. Brooks said it was difficult to attract qualified lifeguard applicants when they averaged 12 hours of work a week.

Selectboard Concerns. Board members revisited the Public Safety budget discussion. N. Tift supported an additional 10 hours per week of patrols. Ms. Barbieri suggested directing more patrols during morning and afternoon drive times rather than midday hours. G. Fredette asked if the Town could request a dedicated law enforcement officer for local patrols. The Board by unanimous consent authorized N. Tift to speak to the sheriff on behalf of the Selectboard about patrols and personnel.

The matter of a Town Meeting article asking voters to authorize an appointed rather than elected Constable was briefly discussed.

The town administrator said the dog warden would like a \$50 budget for dog food and supplies. Board members agreed.

Other Business. None.

The meeting adjourned at 8:38 p.m.
Sandi Switzer, Town Administrator

Date Approved: