

Wallingford Selectboard Meeting  
Minutes  
August 18, 2014

Selectboard Present: Nelson Tift, Mark Tessier, Tom Phillips, Rose Regula and Gary Fredette

Others Present: Julie Sharon, Sandi Switzer, Phil Baker, Angela French, Jordan Reed, Mark Pramuk, Keith Shelvey, Amy Shelvey, Lee Perry and Lisa Marchinkoski.

Chair N. Tift called the regular Selectboard meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. at Town Hall.

**Minutes.** The board by consensus approved the minutes of the July 21st meeting.

**Selectboard Orders.** G. Fredette made a motion to approve pay orders totaling \$19,076.54 after adding \$26.87 for short-term disability; R. Regula seconded the motion. Motion carried (5-0).

**Road Commissioner's Report.** Road Commissioner Phil Baker reported to the board the manhole at the fire station would be repaired this week and he would begin work on Hartsboro Road on Wednesday or Thursday. He said one lane of the road would remain open during construction. Mr. Baker noted borings under Bixby Road as part of the VTel fiber optic cable project had created water on the road and had to be addressed. He said the VTel project was nearly complete.

The road commissioner said the underground storage tank at the town garage was removed. He said ESMI's estimate of \$1725 to transport and dispose of 15 tons of contaminated soil was the best way for the town to get rid of it. Mr. Baker said there were no issues with the underground storage tank, but a previous unit or old gas pump had contaminated the soil. He said the town's actions had saved at least \$10,000 if a state site investigation had been conducted.

The board discussed the other additional costs associated with the tank removal, including \$48.80 per ton for additional soils, \$150 for transportation of waste from tank cleaning, \$125 roll of poly for contaminated soils and \$506 for Verterre Group lab analysis.

Mr. Baker said the state had provided him with a set of guidelines for the above ground storage tank. He said it would need to be situated above the flood stage and the tank must be covered.

G. Fredette said Esther Robbins had provided him with photographs documenting

issues with Hillside Drive. The board discussed a remedy with the road commissioner. G. Fredette made a motion directing road foreman Steve Lanfear to remove a section of the pavement and add gravel; M. Tessier seconded the motion. The motion was approved (5-0).

There was some discussion regarding insurance requirements for anyone hired by the town to perform work on behalf of the municipality. M. Tessier asked whether Mr. Baker would provide certificates of insurance with the town listed. Mr. Baker agreed.

T. Phillips questioned Mr. Baker about workers' compensation insurance and Mr. Baker said he did not need it, but he added he was in the process of putting a workers' compensation policy into effect.

N. Tift asked town administrator Sandi Switzer to contact VLCT to request a list of insurance requirements for contractors.

**Tax Sale.** VLCT information was provided to the board regarding municipal bidding at tax sales, including instances when it was not wise for a town to bid on properties. Delinquent tax collector Lee Perry said the town would be responsible for attorney fees, late fees, advertising and other costs if the town bid on a property when there were no other bidders.

Town Clerk and Treasurer Julie Sharon asked what the town would do with the property if it was the only bidder. Mr. Perry said the town could do whatever they wanted with it after the one year waiting period.

T. Phillips said the town would not incur any expenses if it did not bid. Mr. Perry responded he did not want to send a message to taxpayers that if a property did not sell at a tax sale the town would not bid on it and, therefore, the property owner could continue to use it.

Mr. Perry said the listers could reassess the properties making them more attractive to bidders. He said the current property owners would still be liable for back taxes if that were to occur.

T. Phillips said the town would wait until the next meeting to decide whether to bid on properties after the delinquent tax collector provided a list of expenses.

Mr. Perry said he would keep the town updated on the progress of tax sales and return with the requested information at the next meeting. He agreed to hold off on the sale of the Witham property. Mr. Perry was advised the board would be meeting on the second and fourth Mondays of September.

**Recreation Area Vandalism.** There was a lengthy discussion regarding recent vandalism of the basketball courts, backboards, picnic tables, sign, port-a-potty, pavilion, pedestrian bridge and newly planted tree. Mark Pramuk said the issue was escalating beyond the park with signs along Route 7 being spray painted and needles and syringes found near Waldo Lane and the overpass. He said a kiosk at Stone Meadow Park had been damaged.

Lisa Marchinkoski said it was important for the town to consider long term solutions ranging from surveillance cameras to better lighting. Keith Shelvey agreed more lights at the park could be a deterrent and he said the town should increase law enforcement patrols.

Several residents mentioned no more projects should be undertaken until the vandalism issue was resolved.

M. Tessier said he would contact Green Mountain Power to see if additional lighting could be mounted on utility poles near the recreation field. T. Phillips said the town should turn the power on at the recreation field and leave it on year round.

N. Tift noted he had been concerned for several years the town was not spending enough money on law enforcement. He said it was important for citizens to immediately contact the constable, sheriff's department or Vermont State Police when an incident occurs.

M. Tessier agreed to obtain estimates for surveillance cameras.

There was discussion about removing vegetation around the tennis courts to improve street views into the recreation area. Mr. Pramuk expressed concern about using an herbicide near the river. Mr. Shelvey suggested pulling up the fence in order to remove the roots. He noted it would be a good idea to address tennis court maintenance and possibly reducing the area to one court rather than two.

Ms. Marchinkoski said she was concerned the new pavilion being considered for Elfin Lake could be another target for vandals. She said the town needed to take care of the facilities it had before building new ones. Ms. Marchinkoski, who is a member of the recreation committee, said the committee had provided a recommendation for the size of the pavilion and a stone flooring with the project cost at around \$3500. She said she later learned the Selectboard had increased the size of the structure and added a \$9000 concrete floor to the plan.

After further discussion, the Selectboard agreed by consensus to put the pavilion project on hold.

G. Fredette requested the Recreation Committee meet to discuss the pavilion project and make another recommendation to the board.

**Fuel Tank Permit Application.** G. Fredette made a motion authorizing N. Tift to sign the state Division of Fire Safety permit application for the above ground fuel storage tank at the town garage; M. Tessier seconded the motion. Motion carried (5-0).

**Heating Fuel Bids.** The board reviewed #2 heating fuel bids from Gecha, Keyser, Mac's, Champlain Valley, Johnson Energy and Irving Oil. G. Fredette made a motion to accept Champlain Valley's bid of @ cost plus \$ 0.15 capped at \$3.35 budget payment or 30 days from delivery; T. Phillips seconded the motion. Motion carried (5-0). G. Fredette directed S. Switzer to request Champlain Valley match the fixed price of \$3.20 a gallon given to Wallingford Elementary School.

**PACIF Rate Increase.** The board reviewed VLCT's estimate of a \$1775 increase for property insurance in 2015 with an attached outline of the new property valuations. G. Fredette made a motion to approve guaranteed replacement cost; R. Regula seconded the motion. Motion carried (5-0).

**New Website.** S. Switzer gave the board an overview of the town's new website with photographs contributed by several citizens.

**Other Business/Announcements.** M. Tessier said he would get an estimate from Tucker Mulholland to repair the base for the transfer station trash compactor.

G. Fredette made a motion to approve the Wallingford Baptist Church request for a carnival with games, food, music and inflatables at the recreation field on September 27 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. with the church providing its own restroom facilities and a generator for power; R. Regula seconded the motion. Motion carried (5-0).

R. Regula asked what could be done about removing appliances from the transfer station. The board said transfer station attendants could make arrangements to have someone remove the appliances at no cost to the town.

The board briefly discussed Mie Kingsley using the tennis courts for dog obedience classes. The board took no action to cease the practice at this point.

The board extended its appreciation to Sue and Allan Thayer for the donation of a new gas grill for Elfin Lake.

Betty Barrows' second letter to the town regarding reimbursement for her efforts related to the Little Red Schoolhouse property was reviewed. No action taken.

Meeting adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

Date Approved:

Sandi Switzer, Town Administrator

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