

## Wallingford Selectboard Meeting

### Minutes

August 15, 2022

Selectboard Members Present: Carolyn Behrendt, Bruce Duchesne, Justin Jankus and Nelson Tift. Kathy Luzader did not attend.

Others present: Sandi Switzer, Phil Baker, Sumio Seo, Kate Goetz, Mark Barone, Tom Barone, Bruce Dobbins, Jim Bagnall, Maggie Ganguly, David Fox, James Bennick, Steffanie Bourque, Sharon Nimtz, Ralph Nimtz, Shane St. Claire, and Gary Fredette.

Selectboard Chair Nelson Tift called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

**Agenda Amendments.** None.

**Minutes.** B. Duchesne made a motion that was seconded by C. Behrendt to approve the Minutes of the 08/01/22 meeting. Motion carried (3-0). J. Jankus did not vote as he was not in attendance at that meeting.

**Pay Orders.** B. Duchesne made a motion that was seconded by J. Jankus to approve the 08/16/22 pay orders in the amount of \$16,218.53. Motion carried (3-0).

**Honorable Mentions.** Paul and Maria Garland for donating sticks and zip ties for the pinwheel goose deterrents at Elfin Lake public beach; Peg Soule, Kathy Luzader, and Bruce Dobbins for assisting Town Administrator Sandi Switzer and Rutland Reg. Planning Commission's Devon Neary on a grant application that was just awarded to the Town in the amount of \$435,000 to replace School Street sidewalks.

N. Tift announced the local match for the sidewalk grant would come from ARPA funds and not taxpayer dollars.

**Road Commissioner Report.** Road Commissioner Phil Baker said Fuller Sand and Gravel would be paving a portion of Homer Stone Road with the remaining paving budget of about \$30,000. He said paving would take place after the road crew finished a culvert replacement project on Homer Stone. He asked about using a portion of the highway surplus to complete a section of the paving from Al's Furniture parking lot to the bridge if the cost ran over \$30,000. Board members advised Mr. Baker to get a firm estimate from Fuller for that section.

Mr. Baker reported Carrara Camp Road bridge needed to be repaired soon. He said he would apply chloride to Seward Hill Road as requested after he made sure it would not harm the cows in that area. He reported roadside mowing would begin this week and the road crew replaced a culvert on Kent Farm Road.

**Public Comment.** Mark Barone asked about the sidewalk grant awarded to the Town and who was responsible for sidewalk maintenance – the Town or Fire District #1. He said East Wallingford residents paid taxes but had few services. He cited no paved roads,

no sidewalks and residents had to drive seven miles to recreation facilities. B. Duchesne responded a legislative charter made the fire district responsible for plowing the sidewalks in the winter, but did not include other maintenance. He said the Town and fire district had debated the matter for years and the two entities decided to work together on sidewalk projects. J. Jankus encouraged Mr. Barone to propose East Wallingford projects to the Selectboard.

Shane St. Clair distributed a document to the Selectboard sent by the Prudential Committee to district residents in 2001 outlining meter and bond costs as well as service fees. He asked about obtaining loans for water system upgrades or even use of ARPA funds in order to provide financial relief for district residents. Town Administrator Sandi Switzer said she had contacted FD#1 officials about applying for ARPA funds for water/sewer projects and they were exploring options. J. Jankus encouraged Mr. St. Clair to speak to the Prudential Committee about his concerns. B. Duchesne noted he had previously discussed this matter with Mr. St. Clair and explained FD#1 and not the Town operated the water and sewer systems.

**Hot Weather Annex.** Rutland Regional Planning Commission's Steffanie Bourque provided an overview of a partial draft Hot Weather Annex to be incorporated into the Town's Local Emergency Management Plan. She said the state Dept. of Health was working with Emergency Management Director Jim Bagnall and Town Health Officer Trisha Nash on the document. Gary Fredette asked about a generator for emergency shelters in case of power outages. N. Tift suggested using ARPA funds for the purchase. Ms. Bourque said the state was finalizing a new grant program and generators may be an eligible purchase.

Mark Barone asked about use of the fire station as a cooling center and he noted the facility had a generator. Ms. Bourque responded the fire chief could send a letter during the comment period requesting the fire station be added to the annex. Tom Barone asked about extending hours later in the evening during hot weather periods. Ms. Bourque said they tried to set reasonable hours as staffing was required, but she added they could try to extend hours. The next step was to post the annex for a comment period, which would close on September 6 to coordinate with the Selectboard's next meeting. Ms. Bourque said she would meet with the Selectboard in early October to review the completed document.

**Salt/Sand Shed.** Otter Creek Engineering's Brent Rakowski joined the meeting via telephone to provide an overview of his site visit last month to the town garage to discuss options for salt and sand storage and determine whether existing structures were viable or a new facility was a better approach. B. Duchesne said he participated in the site visit and learned it would cost about the same amount to extend the existing sand shed to create space for salt storage as it would to build a new structure, which would be eligible for 80 percent state funding. Mr. Baker noted it would be a three-year process for design, permitting and construction. The town administrator asked about Mr. Rakowski's estimate of up to \$2,000 to assist with a grant application. He responded the fee would cover the

cost of going through the regulation process, identifying hurdles and pulling together grant materials with a rough concept of plan, layout and cost estimates for a new structure and site preparation. He said his work would also give the Town all the information they needed to make a decision on moving forward with a grant application. The application will likely be available in the fall. After further discussion, B. Duchesne made a motion that was seconded by J. Jankus to spend up to \$2,000 to hire Otter Creek Engineering. Motion carried (4-0). Mr. Rakowski said he would work with the town administrator on an agreement.

**Coin Drop Request.** Kate Goetz introduced Rutland County Restorative Justice Executive Director Maggie Ganguly, who provided an overview of the many programs offered throughout the county by the non-profit organization. Ms. Ganguly requested permission to hold a coin drop on Main Street on October 1 as a fundraiser and also to spread awareness of the programs offered. N. Tift said the Town traditionally approved two coin drops a year to the fire department and Rotary, both local organizations. He said coin drops impede traffic on Main Street and divert traffic to side streets. He said Route 7 businesses also experienced a decrease in the number of customers. J. Jankus and C. Behrendt expressed support for the work of Restorative Justice, but agreed traffic was an issue and the timing of the coin drop just one week prior to the fire department coin drop was an issue. J. Jankus suggested holding an alternate event to raise awareness.

**Route 7 Traffic.** N. Tift acknowledged the Front Porch Forum conversations regarding Route 7 village traffic concerns, including speed, noise, jake brakes and more. He said the Town would request the Rutland County Sheriff Department to direct more radar patrols on Route 7, but he explained the Town could not enforce a ban on jake brakes used for safety purposes. Sharon Nimtzt said ticket revenue from increased law enforcement coverage would offset the expense of patrols and help alleviate many of the concerns. She asked about installing digital radar signs at each end of the village. G. Fredette spoke in favor of the digital signs and he suggested the Town could also install signs requesting no use of jake brakes rather than an outright ban. Tom Barone said he lived in East Wallingford with a heavy volume of truck traffic and jake brakes were a functional safety device. Sheriff David Fox reviewed the Town's Noise Ordinance, which allowed tickets to be issued for defective equipment. N. Tift asked the sheriff to recommend language in order to amend the ordinance to address traffic noise issues. Sheriff Fox noted Wallingford had 40 miles of road with 20 hours of weekly coverage. He said his office received a lot of speed complaints in many areas. He said they would spend more time on Main Street, but he noted his officers were spread thin. Lt. James Bennick said the sheriff department responded to other incidences in town and they would do what they could with the time allotted each week.

N. Tift said the Board would consider digital radar signs at budget time as well as an increase in the special police officer budget. A suggestion was made to use ARPA funds for the digital sign purchase.

**Elfin Lake Concession Stand.** Recreation Committee member Sumio Seo said he revised plans to make improvements to the Elfin Lake concession stand following Board comments at the last meeting. He said the latest proposal would not include a separate storage facility. But rather, he said, it would include removing the changing stalls and installing a second bathroom in the current women's bathroom/locker room area; making both facilities unisex; removing the bathroom in the garage area to increase storage space; removing an interior wall in the recreation area to provide more space for the summer program; and making the men's bathroom a dedicated facility for the recreation program and possibly employees. He noted the garage door needed to be replaced and the adjacent wall repaired. He offered to obtain estimates if the Board approved the plan. Mr. Seo thanked the town administrator for her assistance with the revisions. There was discussion about the approaching September 10<sup>th</sup> deadline for a grant application to cover up to \$25,000 of the costs. B. Duchesne said he liked the new layout but questioned the timeframe to gather estimates and necessary permits in order to submit the application. After further discussion, the Board tentatively approved the plan as presented and encouraged Mr. Seo to seek cost estimates and consider applying for the grant next fall.

In a separate matter, the Board by consensus agreed to sell the old raft to Sherry Boudreau for \$25 (delivery not included).

**Amend Traffic Ordinance – Florence Avenue One-Way.** N. Tift noted the Board received correspondence from Jennifer Pascal opposed to making Florence Avenue a one-way street. B. Dobbins said as the Town's representative to the Transportation Alternative Committee he would recommend getting rid of two parking spaces near the intersection of Florence Avenue and Route 7 to improve visibility for motorists entering Route 7. B. Duchesne and Phil Baker said the Town would have to remove all parking spaces back to the bridge to achieve better visibility. After further discussion, B. Duchesne made a motion that was seconded by J. Jankus to amend the municipal Traffic Ordinance to make Florence Avenue a one-way street westbound for the full length. Motion carried (4-0).

**Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Program Grant Commitment Form.** B. Duchesne made a motion that was seconded by C. Behrendt authorizing N. Tift to sign the Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Program grant commitment form to receive \$435,000 in federal funds to replace School Street sidewalks with a required local match estimated at \$108,600 (ARPA Funds). Motion carried (4-0).

B. Duchesne made a motion that was seconded by J. Jankus naming Rutland Regional Planning Commission as grant administrator. Motion carried (4-0).

**ARPA Funds.** N. Tift said the Board reviewed the 18 suggested uses for ARPA funds compiled by Bruce Dobbins following a public forum last fall. There was a discussion regarding whether those who made suggestions should be encouraged to submit applications (available on the municipal website) by the November 1 deadline. The town administrator noted when she received Mr. Dobbins's list, she contacted everyone she

could including Fire District #1, Wallingford Rescue, Cecile Betit and she noted several on the list had submitted applications. The town administrator asked Board members whether they wanted to pursue funds for municipal projects on the list, including cybersecurity, a generator, basement dehumidifier, replenish lost revenue, and upgrades to Town Hall heating and cooling systems. After discussion, the Board by consensus agreed to submit ARPA applications for cybersecurity and a generator (unless a state grant becomes available for this purchase).

**Grants in Aid Agreement.** B. Duchesne made a motion that was seconded by C. Behrendt authorizing N. Tift to sign the VTrans Grants in Aid Agreement awarding the Town \$27,000 to improve hydrologically connected roads as required under the Municipal Roads General Permit. Motion carried (4-0).

**Selectboard Concerns.** N. Tift noted Erika Berner requested use of Town Hall on October 4 for a Rotary Club candidate forum. B. Duchesne made a motion that was seconded by C. Behrendt to approve the request. Motion carried (4-0).

**Other Business.** By consensus, the Board rescheduled the first meeting next month from Labor Day to Tuesday, September 6<sup>th</sup>.

B. Duchesne made a motion that was seconded by J. Jankus to adjourn at 9:37 p.m. Motion carried (4-0).

Submitted By: Sandi Switzer/Town Administrator

APPROVED THIS 6th Day of September, 2022 Wallingford Selectboard

Carolyn Behrendt \_\_\_\_\_

Bruce Duchesne \_\_\_\_\_

Justin Jankus \_\_\_\_\_

Kathy Luzader \_\_\_\_\_

Nelson Tift \_\_\_\_\_