

## Wallingford Selectboard Meeting

### Minutes

November 21, 2022

Selectboard Members Present: Carolyn Behrendt, Bruce Duchesne, Justin Jankus, Kathy Luzader and Mark Tessier.

Others present: Sandi Switzer, Bruce Dobbins, Erika Berner, Phil Baker, Julie Sharon, Jack Loomis, Martina Barnes, Jessie Pruchal, and Sean Langston.

Selectboard Chair Bruce Duchesne called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

**Agenda Amendments.** None.

**Minutes.** K. Luzader made a motion that was seconded by C. Behrendt to approve the Minutes of the 11/07/22 meeting. Motion carried (4-0). M. Tessier did not vote as he was not a Selectboard member at that meeting.

**Pay Orders.** K. Luzader made a motion that was seconded by J. Jankus to approve the 11/22/22 pay order total of \$61,406.17. Motion carried (5-0).

**Honorable Mentions.** Reggie and Lea Ann Denno for contributing to the newsletter; Jim Regula and Bruce Duchesne for repairing the elevator door; and all volunteers who assisted with the November 8 elections.

**Public Comments.** None.

**Road Commissioner's Report.** Road Commissioner Phil Baker reported Bruce Duchesne, Town Administrator Sandi Switzer, VTrans Brian Sanderson, state Agency of Transportation engineer Justin White and two other VTrans representatives met earlier in the day at the Creek Road Bridge to discuss immediate repairs. He said the engineer indicated the latest bridge inspection report would be sent to the Town. Mr. Baker said the Town was advised to shim the plate embedded into the structure so there was no flex, mill the edges, and create gradual slopes for drainage. He added the Town needed to plan for full bridge replacement within the next five years at an estimated cost of \$5 million to \$10 million per VTrans officials. He noted Mr. Sanderson recommended seeking a Structure's grant in the spring for other short-term repairs.

Green Mt. National Forest (GMNF) District Ranger Martina Barnes joined the meeting via telephone along with Jessie Pruchal and Sean Langston to discuss the Bully Brook Timber Harvest near Wallingford Pond Road. Ms. Barnes explained the timber harvest was part of an Early Succession Wildlife Habitat project. Mr. Langston provided an overview of the early succession habitat goal of 5 to 10 percent and noted the current rate was 1 percent. He said the primary drivers of the project, included wildlife habitat, promotion of aspens and birch, and work on wetlands. He said 15,000 acres would be impacted over 15 years with an average of 1,000 acres per year. Ms. Pruchal said the project included 228 acres in Wallingford. Mr. Baker asked about the impact on Town

roads during warmer weather. Ms. Pruchal responded the contractor would only work when the ground was frozen. The town administrator noted the road crew had hauled at least 8 loads of gravel to the area last week to repair roads impacted by the log trucks. K. Luzader asked if there would be restitution. Ms. Pruchal said the Town could request it. Ms. Pruchal agreed to forward a copy of GMNF's agreement to the Town for this project. She furthered agreed to contact the contractor and sub-contractor to encourage communication with the Town.

**Transportation Issues.** Transportation Advisory Council representative Bruce Dobbins informed Board members he brought Rutland Regional Planning Commission's (RRPC) Ethan Pepin for a tour of the Town's Creek Road Bridge in an effort to move that structure up on the state priority list for replacement. He said they also visited the Route 155 bridge owned by the state, which was also in need of substantial repair.

**Zoning Regulation Updates.** Planning Commission Chair Erika Berner provided an overview of the status of draft Zoning Regulations (23<sup>rd</sup> version). She said a copy was forwarded to RRPC for a review at no charge. She noted Vermont Leagues of Cities and Towns assessed a fee for review. She said RRPC was more familiar with the Town and would have a quicker turnaround time. She said the main challenge was to incorporate maps into the document representing the historic district. Ms. Berner said some matters, including issues relative to livestock, would be better suited for municipal ordinances rather than zoning regulations. She said the planning commission was working on language to submit to the Selectboard for review.

**Fiscal Year '24 Capital Budget.** By consensus, the Board agreed to move the \$10,000 previously budgeted for #5710 Route 140W Bridge (paid off in FY'23) to #5712 Bridge Fund and make that line \$40,000; and set #5716 Highway Reserve at \$20,000. Line #5713 Building Fund (the same amount as cell tower income line 4546) was set at \$20,239.

C. Behrendt requested the road commissioner put together a vehicle replacement schedule for budgeting purposes. Mr. Baker agreed and said ideally there should be a 7-year rotation.

There was a discussion about budgeting for the CAT Grader ordered last March. Mr. Baker said he had no idea when to expect delivery. The town administrator said the Revenue Augmentation Trust approved by voters would allow 2/3 of the \$256,982 as of December 2021 to be used for a Capital project. B. Duchesne said the Town may have to secure a short-term loan in the interim.

**Fiscal Year '24 Town Government.** By consensus, the Board agreed to budget #5112 Elections and Town Meeting \$1,300 (down from \$3,000); #5113 Town Report \$3,150 (a 5% increase due to anticipated higher paper and postage costs); #5114 Office Expense \$13,000; #5114a Del Tax Collector Expense \$375; #5115 Legal \$5,000; #5116 Notices \$750; #5117 Ads and Warnings \$1,100; #5118 Seminars \$500; #5123 Memorial Day

Expenses \$300; #5125 VLCT Dues \$3,905; #5126 RRPC Dues \$1,000; #5130 Workplace Safety \$250; #5133 Dog Licenses \$2,500; and #5134 Civil Marriage License fees \$500.

Transfer station operating expenses #5151 were level funded at \$110,000; town hall operating expenses #5151 increased \$500 to \$19,000; cemeteries #5153 at \$500; #5157 Conservation Commission \$2,500 (as requested); and #5158 Energy Committee \$500 (\$250 less than requested as the group only spent \$42 in FY'22).

Line items #5122 and \$5155 will be filled in at a later date.

**Selectboard Concerns.** M. Tessier suggested pruning brush near a picket fence by Florence Avenue would improve the sight line for motorists exiting the street. He also asked about the addition of cross walks on South and North Main Street. The town administrator forwarded an email chain to Mr. Tessier from VTrans officials discussing this topic.

**Other Business.** None.

**Executive Session.** K. Luzader made a motion that was seconded by J. Jankus that premature general public knowledge regarding pending or probable civil litigation or a prosecution, to which the public body is or may be a party would put the Town substantial disadvantage. Motion carried (5-0). K. Luzader made a motion to enter executive session with the town administrator at 8:09 p.m. as allowed under 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(E) to discuss pending or probable civil litigation. Motion carried (5-0).

M. Tessier made a motion that was seconded by K. Luzader to exit executive session at 8:34 p.m. Motion carried (5-0). No action was taken.

K. Luzader made a motion that was seconded by J. Jankus to adjourn at 8:35 p.m. Motion carried (5-0).

APPROVED THIS 5th Day of December, 2022 Wallingford Selectboard

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

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

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

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

Mark Tessier \_\_\_\_\_