

## Wallingford Selectboard

### Meeting Minutes

December 18, 2023

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

**Others present:** Sandi Switzer, Julie Sharon, Phil Baker, Eric Davenport, Michael Luzader and Steffanie Bourque.

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

**Agenda Amendments.** None.

**Minutes.** M. Tessier made a motion that was seconded by C. Behrendt to approve the 12/04/23 Meeting Minutes. Motion carried (4-0). K. Luzader abstained as she was not at the meeting.

**Pay Orders.** K. Luzader made a motion that was seconded by J. Jankus to approve the 12/19/23 pay order total of \$40,940.11. Motion carried (5-0).

**Road Commissioner's Report.** B. Duchesne said he spoke to Road Commissioner Phil Baker about the Milton CAT estimate of \$3,000 to attach the mulcher to the excavator if the Town brought it to their location or over \$5,000 to perform the work at the town garage. He said the Town had spent about \$500,000 at Milton CAT in recent years and he was dismayed with the estimate.

**Honorable Mentions.** Sharon Seaver donated several bags of groceries for the food shelf; Helen Thomas, Jane Altobell, Mary Senecal and Carol Clardy for donating to the Recreation program in Ed Lord's memory;

**Public Comments.** Rep. Art Peterson introduced himself and asked if Board members had any comments/concerns for legislators with the approach of the new session starting January 3, 2024. B. Duchesne expressed concern regarding news circulating the state education tax rate would increase 18 percent. Mr. Peterson said the issue was on the front burner for legislators. M. Tessier spoke about funding for law enforcement coverage to reduce the burden on municipalities struggling to pay it. B. Duchesne said consolidation of law enforcement dispatch/call centers was a mistake with dispatchers unfamiliar with locations being reported during emergencies.

**Road Commissioner's Report.** Mr. Baker reported Hartsboro Road was closed due to flooding concerns and there were several washouts on the same roads impacted by the July flood. He said the road crew had attached the mower to the excavator without seeking Milton CAT assistance. He noted it would be moved to East Street on Wednesday for roadside mowing/mulching.

**School Street Sidewalks.** Rutland Regional Planning Commission's Steffanie Bourque provided a brief overview of the School Street sidewalk alternatives presented on November 9<sup>th</sup> to community leaders and residents. Those alternatives, she said, were then posted to the municipal website for a public comment period and the Town did receive comments/input. Ms. Bourque said the planning team met December 7<sup>th</sup> and have recommended Alternative 2 for the western section of the project and Alternative 1 for the eastern section.

A discussion ensued and then J. Jankus made a motion that was seconded by M. Tessier to approve the planning team's recommendation to accept Alternative 2 for the western section at an estimated cost of \$440,000 and Alternative 1 for the eastern section at an estimated cost of \$270,000 with the potential of negotiating a reduction in length/cost to that section depending on availability of construction funding. Motion carried (5-0).

Ms. Bourque said the next step would be for VHB, Inc. to develop conceptual plans and meet with the Selectboard in March.

**FY'25 Highway.** Following recommendations by the road commissioner, the Board set the following Highway Department line items as follows: 5301 Town Garage Operating Expenses at \$15,400; 5302 Equipment Misc. at \$3,000; 5308 2011 Caterpillar Backhoe \$2,500; 5310 Sanders/plows at \$2,000; 5314 Hired Equipment at \$10,000; 5315 Diesel Fuel at \$34,375; 5316 Gasoline at \$1,200; 5317 Tree Service/Landscaping at \$3,250; 5318 Winter Sand \$35,000; 5319 Winter Salt \$45,000; 5320 Chloride \$975; 5321 Culverts \$9,000; 5322 Oil and Grease \$2,500; 5323 Gravel \$125,000; 5324 Blades, Chains, Shoes \$2,500; 5325 Paving \$85,000; 5327 Traffic Control Devices \$500; 5328 Road Crew Clothing Stipend \$1,500; 5332 Special Projects \$3,500 (to include storm drain cleaning); 5336 2014 Kenworth 6,500; 5337 2016 Kenworth \$6,500; 5338 2006 Chevrolet Truck \$500; 5339 Municipal Roads General Permit (MRGP) \$1,350; 5340 2108 Dodge Ram \$1,500; 5342 Milton CAT Loader \$1,000; 5343 2020 Milton CAT Excavator ( 4 of 4 payments plus maintenance) \$13,000; 5346 Milton CAT Grader (1 of 5 payments plus maintenance) \$67,000; 5347 Trailer \$0.

Mr. Baker said the Town needed to start thinking about purchasing a new dump truck to replace the 2014 Kenworth. Town Administrator said line 5339 MRGP could additionally include a \$240 fee should the Town complete a state required Road Erosion Inventory within FY'25 time period (grant applications will be released in the spring).

**FY'25 Appropriations.** Eric Davenport representing Wallingford Rescue requested \$23,500, an increase of \$2,500. He explained Mt. Holly Rescue dissolved and that annual request was \$2,500. He said Wallingford Rescue would be picking up that coverage area, therefore, they were seeking that appropriation as well. By consensus, the Board agreed to set line 5210 at \$23,500.

Michael Luzader representing Gilbert Hart Library requested \$42,000, an increase of \$2,000. He provided an overview of the many programs offered by the library including the Book Path, Bridge Club, Bone Builders, and support of Wallingford Day. He said the

library was seeking to upgrade lighting to LEDs. B. Duchesne asked about the library's spending on maintenance and Mr. Luzader responded there was a boiler repair and interior painting. By consensus, the Board agreed to set line 5205 Gilbert Hart Library at \$42,000.

While reviewing the list of funding requests from other non-profit groups, B. Duchesne said he thought it should be left to individual taxpayers to make donations to charities/organizations with the exception of the library and the rescue squad.

After discussion, the Board by consensus agreed to level fund all appropriation requests (with the exception of the library and rescue squad) to include: 5203 VNA & Hospice \$250; 5204 Southwestern VT Council on Aging \$250; 5206 Humane Society \$300; 5207 Rutland Mental Health \$250; 5208 BROCC \$250; 5209 RSVP \$250; 5211 Mt. Holly Rescue \$0; 5212 RAS \$750; 5213 NewStory \$250; 5214 VT Center for Independent Living \$100; 5215 VT Adult Learning \$250; 5216 VT Association for the Blind \$90; 5218 Green Up Vermont \$150; 5219 Rutland Natural Resources Conservation District \$250; 5220 Rutland Parent Child Center \$100; 5221 Flags \$150; 5222 Irving Smith Scholarship \$1,000; 5227 ARC \$100; 5228 Preservation Trust \$100; 5231 Red Cross \$100; 5232 VT Rural Fire Protection Task Force \$100; 5233 Child First Advocacy \$100; 5235 Vermont Family Network \$100; 5237 VT Council on Rural Dev \$100; 5238 Restorative Justice \$100; 5239 NeighborWorks \$100; and 5240 Nelson Tift Scholarship \$100.

By consensus, the Board agreed not to budget an appropriation for Front Porch Forum.

**FY'25 Recreation.** The town administrator noted board members were provided copies of the Recreation Committee 12/12/23 Minutes featuring a proposed Recreation budget. M. Tessier said lifeguard coverage was necessary for the Summer Recreation Program but not needed otherwise. He indicated he was not in favor of fulltime lifeguard coverage at the Elfin Lake public beach. He said visitors should swim at their own risk. J. Jankus asked if there was a correlation between lifeguard coverage and higher attendance at the lake resulting in greater revenue. K. Luzader referenced Elfin Lake gate revenue \$6,300 and concessions income \$3,055 from this past summer. After further discussion, the Board agreed to reduce Elfin Lake salaries line 5801 from \$10,400 to \$9,750 and increase Summer Recreation Salaries line 5901 from \$8,600 to \$10,000. Board members set line 5803 Telephone at \$300; line 5804 Electric at \$550; 5805 Maintenance at \$3,500; 5806 Portable Restroom at \$1,500; 5807 at Field Trips at \$2,000; 5808 Lake Supplies at \$525; 5809 Recreation Expenses at \$500; 5810 Lake Concessions at \$1,400; 5812 Mowing at \$3,000; 5814 Youth Sports \$500; 5816 Wallingford Day at \$1,750; 5817 Recreation Programs \$500.

Regarding line 5805 Maintenance, J. Jankus said the Board needed to have a larger discussion with the Recreation Committee with respect to use of the Building Fund. He said an itemized list of needs for projects should be considered and the Maintenance budget line reserved for necessary repairs. Regarding line 5807 Field Trips, C. Behrendt said field trips enriched summer camp experiences for children. She added field trips were a draw for parents choosing camps for their children. J. Jankus said camp co-directors

should ensure they stay within the \$2,000 budget. C. Behrendt suggested co-directors could ask parents to contribute a small amount (\$5 per child) if they know they are over-budget.

**Town Meeting Articles.** By consensus, the Board approved the following articles be added to the Town Meeting Warning in March to ensure ARPA Funds would be obligated and expended timely rather than risk missing federal deadlines and losing the money:

ARTICLE V. Shall the voters of the Town of Wallingford approve the establishment of a Wallingford Asset Fund for the planning, assessment, acquisition or improvement of assets that directly benefit the residents of Wallingford?

ARTICLE VI. Shall the voters of the Town of Wallingford approve transferring Fiscal Year 2024 surplus up to \$XXX,XXX resulting from one-time unanticipated revenue to the Wallingford Asset Fund?

Town Clerk and Treasurer Julie Sharon said she would have the exact dollar amount of Article VI by the second Selectboard meeting in January.

**Transfer Station Substitute Pay Rate.** By consensus, the Board approved \$14.06 an hour for transfer station substitute work.

**Conservation Commission Resignation.** By consensus, the Board accepted with regret Tom Fort's resignation from the Conservation Commission.

**Flashing Radar Signs.** J. Jankus made a motion that was seconded by K. Luzader to purchase three flashing radar signs from Elan City at a cost of \$9,350 using approved ARPA funds. Motion carried (5-0).

M. Tessier asked the town administrator to request a quote for additional batteries.

**Vermont Emergency Management Administration Memorandum.** J. Jankus made a motion that was seconded by C. Behrendt authorizing the board chair to sign the Vermont Emergency Management (VEM) memorandum that would authorize VEM to administer at no cost to the town federal/state grant funds for the Buyout Program involving the Hunter property at 33 Weston Road. Motion carried (5-0).

**Employee Gift Cards.** By consensus, the Board approved the purchase of employee gift cards in the amount of \$50 per card for 9 employees.

**First Meeting in January.** The Board agreed to move the first meeting next month to Tuesday, January 2, 2024 at 6:30 p.m. at Town Hall.

**Town Hall Key/Code Access and Telephone System.** By consensus, the Board approved purchasing a deadbolt/code system for Town Hall at a cost of \$250 with J. Jankus offering to install it and M. Tessier willing to assist.

After further discussion regarding a new telephone system to reduce spam calls at Town Hall, board members agreed by consensus to take no action. C. Behrendt said the system being considered would not necessarily reduce the spam calls and B. Duchesne agreed. B. Duchesne thanked M. Tessier for researching options.

Board members agreed dance instructors starting classes at Town Hall in January may have to pick up keys to the building if the new system is not installed by start dates.

**Selectboard Concerns.** None.

**Other Business.** Board members agreed a volunteer from the Development Review Board and not the Zoning Administrator should complete a RRPC Housing Navigator Program survey so it would not cost the Town any money.

M. Tessier made a motion that was seconded by K. Luzader to adjourn at 8:51 p.m. Motion carried (5-0)

Submitted By: Sandi Switzer/Town Administrator

APPROVED THIS 2nd Day of January, 2024 Wallingford Selectboard

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

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

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

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

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