Wallingford Selectboard

Meeting Minutes

February 27, 2024

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

Others present: Sandi Switzer, Jill Stone Teer, Julie Sharon, Steffanie Bourque, Sandy Tyminski, Erika Berner, Karen Smith, Martina Keeler, Deanna Russell.

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

Agenda Amendments. By consensus, the Board agreed to the following agenda additions - VHB personnel change for School Street sidewalk project; interim zoning administrator appointment. It was decided by consensus Development Review Board alternate discussion would take place at the March 4, 2024 meeting.

Minutes. M. Tessier made a motion that was seconded by K. Luzader to approve the 02/05/24 Meeting Minutes. Motion carried (5-0).

Pay Orders. K. Luzader made a motion that was seconded by J. Jankus to approve the 02/28/24 pay order total of $39,122.22. Motion carried (5-0).

Rutland Regional Planning Commission Plan Update. Rutland Regional Planning Commission's Steffanie Bourque provided an overview of the work being conducted to update the 2018 RRPC Plan for completion by 2026. She noted it was a big undertaking for the RRPC staff with extensive community engagement in 27 Rutland County communities; a survey; pop-up events and open houses were part of the effort to gather public input on economic development in the region. She encouraged citizens to take the online survey or attend one of the public events. She noted the survey covers a broad range of topics that all tie back to economic development. The survey, she said, closed at the end of March. A pop-up event will take place at the Gilbert Hart Library in March. Ms. Bourque thanked the Wallingford Rotary for allowing RRPC staff to meet with Wallingford citizens at the January pot roast dinner.

VHB Personnel Change. K. Luzader made a motion that was seconded by J. Justin to add Environmental Planner Carolyn Black to the VHB team overseeing the design phase of the School Street sidewalk project. Motion carried (5-0).

Proposed Zoning. Zoning Administrator Erika Berner provided an overview of the planning commission's public hearing on proposed zoning. She said a number of changes were incorporated into the document in response to citizens' input, including items related to fences and Agricultural area setbacks. She noted a number of suggestions made by Jeff Biasuzzi were also included. Ms. Berner provided hard copies of the proposed zoning with changes highlighted in red and yellow print. She explained Rutland Regional Planning Commission officials had reviewed the document. J. Jankus said he appreciated notations of the actual state statute whenever it was referenced in the document. Ms. Berner said the next step was for the Selectboard to formally approve of the document then schedule a public hearing.

By consensus, the Board agreed with B. Duchesne's recommendation to table action until board members had time for a thorough review.

Interim Zoning Administrator for the Wallingford Village Market Permit Application. Ms. Berner said she was a vendor for the Wallingford Village Market and would not process the permit application for best practices and conflict of interest reasons. Town Clerk and Treasurer Julie Sharon said she would serve as interim zoning administrator if the application did not require Development Review Board review/approval. After some discussion, K. Luzader made a motion that was seconded by J. Jankus to appoint Julie Sharon as interim zoning administrator for the Wallingford Village Market permit application. Motion carried (5-0).

Road Commissioner's Report. None.

2023 Grader Loan. Town Clerk and Treasurer Julie Sharon said last September the Town secured a Community Bank loan in the amount of $266,500 with an interest rate of 4.93 percent for the purchase of the 2023 CAT Grader. Upon expiration of the Revenue Augmentation Trust in December, the Board voted to use $160,000 to pay down the loan. Vermont Municipal Equipment Loan offered loans capped at $110,000 with an interest rate of 2 percent. Following the pay down of the grader loan, the Town was now eligible. By consensus, the Board approved Ms. Sharon pursuing the Vermont Municipal Equipment Loan for the balance of the grader loan.

Honorable Mentions. Barb Boucher for donating to the food shelf; Phil Baker for volunteering his time to work with a FEMA representative on flood damaged road measurements; and Bruce Duchesne for volunteering to fill in at the transfer station.

Public Comments. None.

Wednesday Town Hall Dance Classes. Jill Stone Teer requested the Board extend Wednesday dance classes at Town Hall beyond the two-month trial period. Deanna Russell added the second floor was a great space and the classes were popular with Wallingford residents and citizens from out of town. Town Administrator Sandi Switzer said she had not received a single complaint regarding the classes. After further discussion, the Board agreed to extend the Wednesday dance classes indefinitely unless an issue arises.

CAI Property Map Maintenance Agreement. K. Luzader made a motion that was seconded by C. Behrendt to approve Cartographic Associates, Inc.'s Property Map Maintenance Agreement at cost of $2,000 (budgeted) for the period of April 1, 2024 through March 31, 2025. Motion carried (5-0).

Efficiency Vermont Rebate Used for Copier Purchase. By consensus, the Board agreed to apply the $5,000 Efficiency Vermont rebate for Town Hall weatherization toward the purchase of a new copier. C. Behrendt noted the price per copy and service plan cost should be considered when evaluating which copier to purchase.

Reorganizational Meeting. The Board by consensus agreed to set April 1, 2024 for the annual Reorganizational Meeting as the town administrator would be unavailable for the regular meeting in mid-March.

VT Senate S.55 Bill. B. Duchesne said the S. 55 Bill being considered in Montpelier would require hybrid meetings (public and online) for all Vermont towns and all committees/boards/commissions within those towns. He said with the Board's approval, he wanted to direct the town administrator to send Rutland County legislators and bill sponsors a letter objecting to the proposal. J. Jankus said he would not object with appropriate training and funding from the state. M. Tessier expressed concern that some groups such as the Conservation Commission occasionally held

offsite meetings that would not be available online. C. Behrendt noted the expensive cost to secure an audio/visual system to comply. B. Duchesne said it should be optional for towns who want it and can afford it. K. Luzader said she would be supportive if all municipal groups were not required to conduct hybrid meetings. J. Jankus suggested the state should operate a pilot program. K. Luzader said the state should not require hybrid meetings until all towns have wifi. By consensus, the Board agreed to oppose S.55. J. Jankus said it was an interesting idea but there were too many logistical concerns.

Selectboard Concerns. By consensus, the Board set a deadline of April 1, 2024 for the road crew to install the flashing radar signs on Route 7 and Route 140W and purchase a battery to alter the Route 140E sign to comply with state requirements (only amber colors and no messaging).

Other Business. B. Duchesne outlined Tree Warden Rob Barker's work on West Hill Road and Haven Hill Road.

B. Duchesne said the Energy Committee offered to use their annual stipend to replace fluorescent light bulbs with LEDs on Town Hall fixtures.

K. Luzader made a motion that was seconded by C. Behrendt to adjourn at 7:43 p.m. Motion carried (5-0)

Submitted By: Sandi Switzer/Town Administrator

APPROVED THIS 4th Day of March in the year 2024:

Wallingford Selectboard

Carolyn Behrendt _____

Bruce Duchesne _____

Justin Jankus _____

Kathy Luzader _____

Mark Tessier_____

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