

**BOARD OF VILLAGE TRUSTEES
WOODSTOCK SELECT BOARD**

November 16, 2017

8:30 AM

**Woodstock Town Hall
SPECIAL JOINT MEETING**

Draft Minutes

Draft subject to approval

Present: Chairman of the Select Board L.D. Sutherland, Mary Riley, John Doten, Jill Davies, Sonya Stover, Chairman of the Village Trustees Jeffrey Kahn, Cary Agin, Keri Cole, Serena Nelson, Philip B. Swanson, Beth Fish, Robbie Blish, Joseph Swanson, Joe Lucot, Elijah Lemieux, Tim Lynds, Wayland Lord, Lynn Beach, Michael Brands, Michelle Sutherland, Charlie Degener, Paul Wildasin, Jennifer Maxham, and Carol Wood.

I. CALL TO ORDER

- a. Select Board Chairman Sutherland called the meeting to order at 8:30am.
- b. Village Trustees Chairman Kahn called the meeting to order at 8:30am.

II. EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

- a. This joint meeting was called to discuss employee wages and benefits and to get the opinion of the employees. Chairman Kahn would like input from the town and village employees before starting the budget cycle.
- b. Mr. Wildasin talked about how the Listers have not received a raise since 2013. Mr. Swanson replied saying that it was decided not to give them a cost of living increase after 2013.
- c. Ms. Maxham explained that the Listers do a lot more than most towns in the area and it is hard to compare them to other towns.
- d. Ms. Stover has done a comparison of wages and benefits vs. VLCT publications. She is working to make this available to the Boards and the employees.
- e. Mr. Lord talked about in the past 5 years his team has taken on more duties in regards to testing and keeping compliant with State regulations.
- f. Ms. Riley talked about an article from a newspaper that discussed salaries increase last year on the rate of inflation. The title of the article is, "*Inflation wipes out us wage increases.*"
- g. According to the Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT) report, 7% of towns use VT CPI, 13% of towns use Federal CPI, and 10% of town NE Urban CPI to determine employee wage increases.
- h. Mr. Lemieux thanked the Boards for allowing the employees to participate in this discussion this year. He also talked about the wages that are currently received are not allowing us to pay to live in this community.
 - i. Woodstock is a generous community, but the feeling is that the generosity was taken away from the employees. Mr. Lemieux went on to talk about how his personal cost of living increase is more than what the CPI was, and how employees want to stay local, but it is hard to afford to live here. Most employees have side jobs or second jobs to maintain or remain within the area.

- ii. Mr. Lemieux asked about getting a 457 Plan. There is no cost to the town, but employees can put money in to contribute towards retirement. It is done through State Treasurer's office.
- i. Mr. Agin thinks that the Town and Village make a very generous contribution to the employee health insurance.
- j. Ms. Stover referred to her research and talked about how senior positions are paid generously, but the people that are newer, they are not overpaid.
 - i. Ms. Stover mentioned that the Board has to pay attention to the fact that employees can go to a nearby town and make more money.
- k. Ms. Davies asked the employees what the Boards can do to help with compensation without having to affect the tax payers.
 - i. A thought was to look into the 457 Plan.
- l. Mr. Lynds has been an employee for 12 years. He has lived in the trailer park and currently resides in Bridgewater. He talked about how surrounding towns and the State of Vermont pay more for an entry level position with no experience than what he is currently making. He stays because he wants to be here, and the benefits package is slightly better than others. He said that there is currently no incentive to work harder, as raise is based on the CPI, not reviews.
- m. Ms. Riley talked about the fact that some positions within the Town and Village of Woodstock require employees to be residents of Woodstock.
- n. Ms. Beach asked the Boards to please keep the employees in the loop with changes that are proposed.
 - i. Mr. Sutherland agreed to do so.

III. OTHER BUSINESS

- a. Full Time Accounting Position
 - i. A year ago the auditors made a recommendation to hire an additional full time employee in the accounting department. A part time employee was approved and was hired, but they left and a new employee wasn't hired until September.
 - ii. A full time employee is needed, not a part time employee. Currently the part time employee is working full time hours as it is available in the budget, but is not receiving any benefits.
- b. Merger of the Town and Village of Woodstock
 - i. Ms. Davies asked about a merger of the Town and Village. This requires more than what there is time for today. It is a lengthy process.
- c. Emergency Services Building Boilers
 - i. The Emergency Services Building has two boilers. One has failed, and the other is limping along. The options for the failed boiler are to fix it or replace it, but it needs to be done. This is a Select Board matter only, and does not involve the Trustees.

Motion: by Ms. Stover to approve a repair of the failed boiler at the Emergency Services Building.

Seconded: by Ms. Davies

Discussion: None

Vote: 5-0-0, passed.

d. Full Time Fire Chief

- i. Mr. Sutherland thought that a decision needed to be made on whether to table the discussion on this or move forward and have Mr. Swanson and Fire Chief Green come up with a job description and potential salary. It was agreed that this should move forward and Mr. Swanson and Fire Chief Green should get together to discuss this.

IV. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion: by Mr. Agin to enter into an executive session to discuss personnel at 9:16am.

Seconded: by Ms. Cole

Discussion: None

Vote: 4-0-0, passed.

Motion: by Ms. Riley to enter into an executive session to discuss personnel at 9:16am.

Seconded: by Mr. Doten

Discussion: None

Vote: 5-0-0, passed.

Motion: by Ms. Cole to adjourn the executive session at 9:40am.

Seconded: by Mr. Agin

Discussion: None

Vote: 4-0-0, passed.

Motion: by Ms. Riley to adjourn the executive session at 9:40am.

Seconded: by Ms. Stover

Discussion: None

Vote: 5-0-0, passed.

V. ADJOURNMENT

Motion: by Mr. Agin to adjourn the Trustees portion of the Joint Meeting at 9:40am.

Seconded: by Ms. Nelson

Discussion: None

Vote: 4-0-0, passed.

Motion: by Ms. Riley to adjourn the Select Board portion of the Joint Meeting at 9:57am.

Seconded: by Ms. Stover

Discussion: None

Vote: 5-0-0, passed.

Respectfully Submitted,

Beth Fish