

**TOWN OF WOODSTOCK
SELECT BOARD
OCTOBER 20, 2020
6:00 PM
MEETING
CONFERENCE CALL
MINUTES**

Draft minutes subject to approval.

Present: Chair Mary Riley, Jill Davies, L.D. Sutherland, Keri Cole, William Kerbin, Nikki Nourse, Beth Fish, Mary Margaret Sloan, Kathy Avellino, Les Berge, Ray Bourgeois, Allan Stein, Beth Finlayson, Bill Corson, Ellen Lefever, Geoff Martin, Jeffrey Kahn, Marne Perreault, Max Comins, Patrick Fultz, Robin Pendleton, Sandy Gilmour, Karen Gilmour, Wendy Marrinan, Zoie Parent, Karen DePrizio, Alita Wilson

A. CALL TO ORDER

1. Chair Riley called the Select Board meeting of October 20, 2020 at 6:00pm.

B. PUBLIC HEARING

- 1. Amended Woodstock Town/Village Plan which includes the Education Chapter which has been rewritten.**

- a. Chair Riley stated that the Education Chapter has been rewritten by the Planning Commission. The Select Board will review it at their next meeting.

C. ADDITIONS TO AND DELETIONS FROM THE POSTED AGENDA

1. Planning Commission Interview – Patrick Fultz
2. Sewer Requests for Abatement
 - a. Karen DePrizio
 - b. Owen Shindler
3. Record Digitization

D. PLANNING COMMISSION INTERVIEW

- 1. Mary Margaret Sloan**

- a. Ms. Sloan stated that she has lived in Woodstock for the past four years. Before that she lived in Windsor and worked on the Planning Commission there. She had considered joining when she moved here but there were many projects on the farm. She has been involved in the community and has partaken in projects in the Upper Valley. She wants to bring an agricultural perspective to the board. She owns a farm. Being a former attorney, she can understand laws and regulations. She has been interested, but before just did not have the time. She has also been involved in WARF.

- 2. Patrick Fultz**

- a. Mr. Fultz stated that he owns Sleep Woodstock Motel. He has been involved in the town in a lot of different ways. He is very interested in the changes the town is looking to do. He has marketing and advertising experience. He could bring a unique perspective. He runs a small business in Woodstock. He has built a strong brand. He learns things fast. He knows how to properly market to people.

E. LISTERS INTERVIEW

1. Kathy Avellino

- a. Ms. Avellino stated that she is very interested in real estate and has good customer service skills. Most realtors in town know her. She works on the Woodstock Area Chamber of Commerce. She is good with the schedule the Lister's have and has visited the listers as a realtor.
- b. Chair Riley stated that the appointment would be until March, and if Ms. Avellino were still interested, she would need to run for reelection. It is a three-year term. There are three listers. Listers have online classes. They have 2-3 seminars a year they need to attend. These are mostly on Zoom now.
- c. Ms. Avellino is very interested in the training aspect of this job. She has read a lot of information on the job. She likes to pay attention to detail.
- d. Ms. Davies stated that the listers job requires a lot of computer time.
- e. Ms. Avellino stated that she is proficient in Word. She could use more training in Excel. She is good at learning new things. She has good math skills.
- f. Ms. Parent stated that there are only three people in the listers office. Everyone has different skill sets. You work with the same two people every day.
- g. Ms. Avellino stated that she works with only one person currently. She has worked in many small offices.

F. MANAGER REPORT

1. Mr. Kerbin stated that the tennis court project at Vail Field is moving along.
2. Mr. Sutherland stated that the second coat of black top went on the tennis court yesterday.
3. Mr. Kerbin stated that TRORC has done a traffic study. He will use the study to prepare a recommendation for what roads should be paved first. He will present it at a coming Select Board meeting. The timeline has been set for bids for the Emergency Services Building. He and Fire Chief David Green have been working on local Government Express Report Grant amendments. They were able to find the \$75,000 that was owed to the School Board. They have paid back \$45,000 at this point. For future meetings, he would like to have a different department head give an update at meetings on their projects. Agenda information will now be available on the websites.
4. Ms. Davies asked about the paving fund.
5. Mr. Kerbin stated that \$20,368 has been used of the \$150,000 in the paving fund. He can send a list of which roads have been worked on. \$5,000 has come out if it for curbing. He is thinking in April they will start paving but he will talk to Ken Vandenburg and the contractors. The EMS pre-bid will be Thursday.
6. Ms. Davies would like a presentation on what is happening at the EMS building.
7. Mr. Kerbin stated that he could present something at the next joint meeting. The pre-bid will be on Thursday at the ESB at 9:30am.
8. Mr. Sutherland stated that this is a meeting for the contractors. Anyone can attend. It is an informational meeting on what the project will consist of.
9. Ms. Davies stated that they might want to create a budget line for the town website. She suggested creating specifications on what they would like to see on it.

10. Financial Report

- a. Mr. Kerbin stated that he, Mr. Spector, Ms. Fish, Ms. Parent, Ms. Davies, and Chair Riley have been meeting the last couple of weeks. They are looking at the financials and how everything is reported.
- b. Ms. Davies stated that she likes to look at the percentage of the budget that has been spent. She is looking at the Public Works building at \$80,000 and the Emergency Services Building is way over budget.
- c. Ms. Parent stated that she gave the Select Board three financial reports. One of them is more detailed and what she would normally give Ken Vandenburg to look at expenditures. \$70,000 of the \$80,000 is a bond payment.
- d. Ms. Fish stated that regarding the ESB, the Select Board voted to spend the money and they will draw down on the bond and that will cover what has been spent.
- e. Ms. Parent stated that the reports take a lot of time to put together. She would love to hear from the Board on if it is okay to provide the general report which is three pages long monthly. She can provide the more extensive report quarterly, so they can see exactly where the money goes.
- f. Ms. Davies stated that she does not need to see the detailed reports. She is fine with the general report but if there are questions, would like clarification.
- g. Ms. Parent stated that they have been having weekly meetings. They are looking at financials and long-term planning. The way the capital reserve is set up now is not ideal according to the auditors. They would like to take the capital reserves that are unassigned to be reassigned. Department heads have been putting money in the capital reserve for things like trucks or cruisers. They need to be careful on what can be touched and what cannot. For example, she is unsure on what can be touched in the Highway capital reserve. They need to come up with a better capital reserve plan. The auditors will be here next month. The whole thing can be reworked.
- h. Ms. Fish stated that she is helping with reworking the capital reserve. They need to break it out into different buckets. There needs to be a bucket for highway for example. This money can be used for all their trucks. If something happens like a frame goes, they can use this money. There would be more fluidity to use the money when needed. There is nothing for keeping up with buildings for improvements or emergencies like when the boiler failed. The capital reserve would also be easier to read and more comprehensive.
- i. Ms. Parent stated that there would be these buckets of money, but there would be a master plan for when things need to be replaced. It would just be separate.
- j. Mr. Kerbin thanked Ms. Parent and Ms. Fish for their hard work.

G. PERMITS

1. Right of Way Permit – Ellen Lefever – 31 Academy Circle

- a. Chair Riley stated that Academy Circle is in South Woodstock. Ms. Lefever is looking to relocate part of the road so she can extend her garage.
- b. Ms. Lefever stated that Ken Vandenburg has been plowing this road for many years. It is an ancient road that crosses her property. She is just looking to move it away from the building.

- c. Mr. Vandenburg stated that he has been there many times. He has no opposition to their plans. The Academy can still access the road for emergency vehicles. Currently, it is difficult to plow. A fire truck would have great difficulty maneuvering on the road. Moving the road would be beneficial.

Motion: by Mr. Sutherland to approve the right of way permit for 31 Academy Circle as submitted by Ellen Lefever to relocate the road as presented.

Seconded: by Ms. Davies.

Discussion: none.

Vote: 4-0-0, passed.

2. Overweight Truck Permits

- a. Messier House Moving & Construction Inc

- I. Chair Riley stated that this company is based out of Montpelier. They have had permits in the past. The Certificate of Insurance is attached.

- b. Jason Carrara

- I. This is a fleet permit from Chester, Vermont. The Certificate of Insurance is attached. Overweight truck permits expire annually at the end of March. There are conditions that are sent to applicants. The permits are not approved for class IV roads or bridges on class III roads. John Doten has always reviewed all these permits. They can contingent upon Mr. Doten's approval.

Motion: by Ms. Davies to approve the overweight truck permits for Messier House Moving & Construction Inc and Jason Carrara as submitted contingent upon John Doten's approval.

Seconded: by Ms. Cole.

Discussion: none.

Vote: 4-0-0, passed.

3. Liquor License Renewal – Melaza LLC

- a. Chair Riley stated that this is for a six-month license for serving beer, wine, and spirits.

Motion: by Ms. Cole to approve the liquor license renewal application as submitted by Melazza LLC.

Seconded: by Mr. Sutherland.

Discussion: none.

Vote: 4-0-0, passed.

H. OLD BUSINESS

1. Faulkner Park Update

- a. Chair Riley stated that they had a Public Informational Meeting last Thursday. An 11-person committee was formed. They may hire a facilitator to lead the first few meetings.

I. NEW BUSINESS

1. Regional Energy Coordinator Updates & Project Proposal

- a. Mr. Martin shared a presentation (included in the minutes). He needs to look at the heating system of the Public Works building but the high rate could be due to the doors having to open and close all the time for the trucks.

Motion: by Ms. Davies to authorize the Regional Energy Coordinator to issue a request for qualifications from ESCOs to work with participating towns.

Seconded: by Ms. Cole.

Discussion: none.

Vote: 4-0-0, passed.

2. Town Hall Rejuvenation Report

- a. Ms. Davies stated that back in 2018, the Select Board looked at different infrastructures within the town. The big issues were with the Emergency Services Building and the Town Hall. They have had several meetings throughout that time. They have some directions on where they can go now. They have a team with a lot of different skills.
- b. Mr. Spector shared a presentation (included in the minutes). They would like to get the approval to hire the architectural firm Black River Design (BRD) to complete the next phase of work, to be paid for with private funds.
- c. Ms. Parent stated that she appreciates that they are going after financial funding and donations. It is good that they are not taking out a huge bond for this project.
- d. Ms. Marrinan stated that donations were used for the 1986 Town Hall renovations. She has had a guided tour of the third floor, and it has some amazing features.
- e. Ms. Davies stated that they are looking at the whole building including the third floor. She loves the third floor as well. However, to use that floor they would have to build much more access to it which would be quite expensive. Black River will look at it but most likely they will not be able to do much with it due to the expense.
- f. Mr. Houry stated that he thinks it is something that needs to get done. It is important to find other funding, so they do not have to affect taxes too much.
- g. Ms. Spector stated that they have a funding committee starting right away. They are looking for donations and grants.
- h. Mr. Kahn stated that he is impressed by the example of Mr. Comins for stepping forward with his generous donation for this project.
- i. Mr. Comins stated that theater is a passion of his. He has lived in Woodstock for 35 years. Since then he has done many shows on the stage of Pentangle. It is the right time to do this because the theater is closed due to COVID-19. There are a lot of things he would like to see and is willing to back it. It is important for the community. It is a place for people to come together.
- j. Mr. Sutherland thanked Mr. Comins.
- k. Mr. Comins stated that he intends to be there for the theater. He is willing to come up with half of what is needed.

Motion: by Ms. Cole to approve the hiring for the architectural firm Black River Design to complete the next phase of work, to be paid for with private funds.

Seconded: by Mr. Sutherland.

Discussion: none.

Vote: 4-0-0, passed.

3. Digitization Project

- a. Ms. Davies stated that there is a lot of paper stored in the Town Hall and they are adding to it every day. They cannot just clean it out. There are legal obligations on what needs to be kept and for how long. There is a project here to see how they should process and file paper. They need to go through the boxes that they have.
- b. Mr. Sutherland stated that he would like to see a proposal from the Manager's Office on how they should proceed.
- c. Ms. Parent loves the idea. There is direction from the State of Vermont. They have a retention policy. She would love to help. They can shred what is not needed.
- d. Ms. Fish stated that the town does not have a formal retention policy in place.
- e. Chair Riley stated that they do not have a policy to adopt tonight.

Motion: by Mr. Sutherland to have the Manager's Office come up with a plan related to record retention and present it to the Select Board.

Seconded: by Ms. Davies.

Discussion: none.

Vote: 4-0-0, passed.

4. Brick Work at Town Hall

- a. Ms. Davies stated that they originally approved \$9,800 for the brick work on the West side of Town Hall. They originally approved \$5,000 to be put aside for additional work that may be needed. The total proposal now is \$26,000. There is a difference there. There is a donor who will pay that difference. Mike Eramo has not taken on another job so he can do some of this work now.
- b. Mr. Sutherland stated that it is fine for him to do it now, but he needs to be required to protect the work from freezing. It will be his responsibility.

Motion: by Mr. Sutherland to move ahead with the masonry work on the West side of Town Hall, with the understanding that Mr. Eramo must protect the work from freezing.

Seconded: by Ms. Cole.

Discussion: none.

Vote: 4-0-0, passed.

5. EDC Purchasing Policy

- a. Chair Riley stated that the Economic Development Commission has created a purchasing policy. It is close to the Town's purchasing policy.
- b. Mr. Spector stated that the town's policy which was adopted in 2014, was created before EDC was established. They manage some projects themselves and the EDC should be doing the work and not burden the town. They wanted it to be similar to the Town Purchasing Policy.

Motion: by Ms. Davies to approve to EDC Purchasing Policy.

Seconded: by Ms. Cole.

Discussion: none.

Vote: 4-0-0, passed.

6. Discussion of November 6th Tax Payments

- a. Ms. Davies stated that they want to discuss whether the Town should charge interest for people who cannot pay their November tax bill. There are a couple

of ways people can get help. WARF has monies people can apply for. If someone has made \$21,000 or less for the last 90 days there is a state program that can help as well. They should direct people to the program. There is a 45-day period that the State will take to look at applications.

- b. Chair Riley stated that the next Select Board meeting is November 17. Should they consider the interest charges at that meeting? Should they take it on a case by case basis?
- c. Ms. Parent stated that the sewer payment decision came very late last spring. People paid but then called about wanting refunds. She does not have a recommendation either way. She just wants the Select Board to keep that in mind. It is very hard if the decision is made after the fact.
- d. Ms. Fish stated that she already has people asking for payment agreements because they cannot pay. People are paying taxes instead of their other bills in order to avoid interest. They cannot reach everybody at this point.
- e. Ms. Davies stated that there are sources for people to go to for help. She thinks they should not reduce penalties or interest.
- f. Ms. Parent suggested that if the taxpayer provides documentation that they will be awarded money, they can take the interest off. She thinks this may be a good way to go about it.
- g. Chair Riley stated that they could also credit it towards their May payment.
- h. Mr. Houry stated that the WARF amounts are capped. They do not know how much money is left in the state program.
- i. Ms. Fish stated that she sent out almost 2,000 tax bills. There are a lot of people making monthly payments.
- j. Ms. Parents stated that the people doing payment plans are already agreeing to pay interest on their property tax.
- k. Ms. Fish stated that they have had a few phone calls where people are taking advantage. If they do not have to pay, they will not even if they have the money. This is also giving people a pass who are already delinquent. They have created a program to help people set up affordable payment plan for them.
- l. Mr. Kerbin stated that they will send people to tax sale if they have to, but they hope they do not have to.
- m. Ms. Davies proposes that they do nothing then and keep this the way they are.
- n. There is unanimous agreement.
- o. Mr. Kerbin stated that they can put information on the website as well.

J. OTHER BUSINESS

- 1. Mr. Sutherland stated that for 30 years or more he has had a passion for brick layering. He might have some comments with Mr. Eramo about the brick project at Town Hall.
 - a. Chair Riley stated that Mr. Sutherland is very qualified.
 - b. Mr. Sutherland stated that he would report to Mr. Kerbin any ideas he has. He thinks they could save some money. He does not want people to think he is criticizing but instead helping. He knows Mr. Eramo well. He would like to work together with him. He is looking forward to seeing the Town Hall repaired.

c. Chair Riley stated that Mr. Sutherland has the Select Board's support.

K. BOARD OF SEWER COMMISSIONERS

1. Sewer Connection Permit – Rob Hanson – 21 Prospect Street

a. Chair Riley stated that Mr. Hanson is adding a one bedroom, one-bathroom apartment to their home.

Motion: by Ms. Cole to approve the sewer connection permit for 21 Prospect Street as submitted by Rob Hanson.

Seconded: by Mr. Sutherland.

Discussion: none.

Vote: 4-0-0, passed.

2. Sewer Adjustments

a. Owen Shindler

I. Ms. Fish stated that this is for last fiscal year.

II. Chair Riley stated that this property is in Taftsville. The apartment has not been used in many years. The refund would be \$550.64 for an apartment located at 164 Butternut Lane.

III. Ms. Fish stated that there was an error in how the sewer bill was inputted. It should not happen again. Every apartment is billed separately.

b. Karen Deprizio

I. Chair Riley stated that this property is also in Taftsville. They have been billed at a family rate, but there is only two people there. A family may have been living there when it was originally connected and never changed.

II. Ms. Fish stated that there are no water meters in Taftsville. People are charge at a single, couple, or family rate. The same person owns unit 2.

III. Ms. Davies stated that they need to know about the other apartment.

IV. Ms. Fish stated that they received the sewer bill in January. They are saying it was sent to the wrong address. However, there has been no request for an address change. Nothing was returned from them. Tax bills are sent to the same address.

V. Ms. Davies stated that she does not need forgiveness. They should not reduce it until they hear about unit 2 in writing.

Motion: by Ms. Cole to table the determination for 79 Butternut Lane until the owner provides written information regarding Unit 2.

Seconded: by Ms. Davies.

Discussion: none.

Vote: 4-0-0, passed.

L. CITIZEN COMMENTS – none.

M. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Meeting Minutes – September 15, 2020

a. Line 215 - residents

2. Meeting Minutes – September 17, 2020

a. Line 40 – lintel

Motion: by Ms. Davies to approve the minutes for September 15 & 17 with the corrections noted.

Seconded: by Chair Riley.

Discussion: none.

Vote: 4-0-0, passed.

N. EXECUTIVE DISCUSSION TO DISCUSS APPOINTMENTS

Motion: by Mr. Sutherland to enter executive session to discuss appointments for the Planning Commission and Lister at 8:48pm.

Seconded: by Ms. Cole.

Discussion: none.

Vote: 4-0-0, passed.

Motion: by Mr. Sutherland to exit executive session at 8:58pm.

Seconded: by Ms. Cole.

Discussion: none.

Vote: 4-0-0, passed.

Motion: by Ms. Cole to appoint Kathy Avellino as a Lister.

Seconded: by Mr. Sutherland.

Discussion: none.

Vote: 4-0-0, passed.

Motion: by Ms. Cole to appoint Mary Margaret Sloan to the Planning Commission.

Seconded: by Ms. Davies.

Discussion: Chair Riley stated that this is a four-year term.

Vote: 4-0-0, passed.

O. ADJOURNMENT

Motion: by Ms. Cole to adjourn the meeting at 9:00pm.

Seconded: by Ms. Davies.

Discussion: none.

Vote: 4-0-0, passed.

Respectfully submitted,
Nikki Nourse