

**TOWN OF WOODSTOCK
SELECT BOARD
January 19, 2021
6:00 PM
Meeting
Zoom
Minutes**

Draft minutes are subject to approval.

Present: Chair Mary Riley, Jill Davies, L.D. Sutherland, John Doten, Keri Cole, William Kerbin, Nikki Nourse, Mica Seely, Gabriel DeLeon, Jeffrey Kahn, Thomas McCaughey, Police Chief Robbie Blish, Ray Bourgeois, Marie Clement, Nicholas Seldon, Karim Houry, Isabelle Chicoine, Ernesto Fernandez, Beth Finlayson, Jon Spector, Wendy Murrinan, Dave Brown, Fire Chief David Green, Joe DiNatale, Allan Stein, Jeremy Bhatia, Patrick Fultz, Joe Swanson, Bill Corson, Zoie Parent, Beth Fish, Seth Webb

A. CALL TO ORDER

1. Chair Riley called to order the Select Board Meeting of January 19, 2021 at 6:00 pm.

B. INTERVIEWS FOR THE EDC

1. Jeremy Bhatia

- a. Mr. Bhatia stated that he moved to Woodstock one month ago. He is new to Woodstock. He loves it so far. His job is remote. He now has the chance to ski as much as he can. He has a master's degree in public policy with a focus on economic development. He attended the last EDC meeting. He resides in the town. He was involved in the project management of developing a school in South Paulo, Brazil. He developed the investment model. It was funded through a family foundation. He saw the opening for the EDC on the town's website. Due to COVID-19 he has not gone around the town much yet. He would like to market Woodstock as a place people can live full time.
- b. Mr. Bhatia removed himself out of the running for the position.

2. David Brown

- a. Mr. Brown is a founding member of the EDC. He is greatly involved in many aspects of the town. He has been greatly inspired by the work Mr. Spector has done.

3. Gabriel DeLeon

- a. Mr. DeLeon has lived in Woodstock for a little over three years now. He is rehabilitating his house. He is responsible for project management at the Woodstock Inn. He loves being a resident of Woodstock. He has been involved in the Inn's business resumption activities during COVID-19. He is interested in attracting businesses to the area. He wants to help revitalize the town. He wants a thriving community on Central Street. They need to support locals and tourists. It is important to bring in new business. It is a balancing act on keeping Woodstock true to its history while also bringing in new business.

4. Ernesto Fernandez

- a. Mr. Fernandez and his fiancé just purchased a house across from the Taftsville Covered Bridge. He wants to get involved locally. He is coming from Cambridge, MA. He is the president of the Cambridge Masonic Temple. He understands the challenges of volunteer leadership. His goal is to better understand Woodstock and help where he can. He has done some grant writing for a few local grants. His background however is more in fundraising. He likes Woodstock as it is. The town has needs just like any other town.

5. Patrick Fultz

- a. Mr. Fultz owns Sleep Woodstock. He has helped with the town logo. He was involved with the creation of the new Chamber of Commerce website. He is working a new logo for Communication Committee for OFH. He had a 20-person agency in Manhattan. He would help the EDC on the marketing side.

6. Karim Houry

- a. Mr. Houry stated that he and Ms. Chicoine moved to Woodstock in 2018. They had a great first year. He has been volunteering and got involved in WARF. They raised \$670,000. He is proud of that. He founded the VT Lodging Association that has about 100 members. He was a ski instructor at Adaptive Ski Foundation. His skill set can be beneficial to the EDC. He has attended most EDC meetings.

7. Devon Kurtz

- a. Mr. Kurtz stated that he has lived in the Upper Valley for the last four out of five years. He lives on Rose Hill Road. He is a public policy advisory. His focus is on criminal justice and legislative advocacy. He has been to every EDC meeting since he moved back here. He believes there is not enough housing supply. They do not have to change aesthetics to fit more people. He is involved with the Restorative Justice Center in Hartford.

8. Thomas McCaughey

- a. Mr. McCaughey stated that he has attended an EDC meeting. He bought a house in Woodstock in 2013. He lives at 26 Pleasant Street. He has spent the last three years redoing it. His long-term plan is to spend much more time in Woodstock. He thinks the EDC would be up his ally. He thinks Mr. Spector has done an amazing job.

C. ADDITIONS TO AND DELETIONS FROM THE POSTED AGENDA – none.

D. MANAGER REPORT

1. General Report

- a. Mr. Kerbin has met with TRORC about grant opportunities for upcoming expenditures. Most grants are for highway and there are a few other possibilities. TRORC can help us with grant writing. They play a pretty active role. They had some ideas for the Town Hall rejuvenation project. They are currently drafting the warning. The Land Use Coordinator interviews have occurred.

2. Financial Report

- a. Mr. Kerbin stated that the audit will be available next week.

b. Ms. Parent stated it will be done next Friday. This year they will start earlier and start filtering things to the auditors right after Town Meeting. She has been working with Mr. Spector making sure they can do the reports to give the auditors information sooner.

E. FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT

1. Chief Green stated that the Fire and EMS have been going through a lot of changes. People can go to the Department of Health website to get current COVID-19 information. Windsor County has had 279 positive cases the past two weeks. He believes most of those are hospital driven. Woodstock has 32 positive cases. They have transported some of them and these people were very sick. A full-time firefighter has recently come back after having COVID-19. Most people are doing a really good job wearing masks. Overall, he thinks they are in pretty good shape. 20 out of 26 EMTs have opted to take the COVID-19 vaccine. He suspects the department to be fully vaccinated within the next three weeks. Firefighters are next on the list to receive the vaccine. On January 25th people age 75 and older can register to get their shots. They are looking into assisting in vaccinating people.

F. PERMITS

1. Overweight Truck Permits

- a. Barrett Trucking Co Inc
- b. Grizzly Mountain Trucking
- c. Mountain Milk LLC

Motion: by Ms. Cole to approve the overweight truck permits for Barret Trucking Co Inc, Grizzly Mountain Trucking, and Mountain Milk LLC as submitted.

Seconded: by Ms. Davies.

Discussion: none.

Vote: 5-0-0, passed.

G. NEW BUSINESS

1. Condition of Route 4 Discussion

- a. Mr. Seldon stated that Route 4 is in pretty bad condition. He owns a property in Woodstock. He understands the State is going to repave it. However, he would like to see potholes fixed now.
- b. There was discussion about how this would be difficult due to the winter and that it is better to wait especially since the State will be repaving all of Route 4 in the Village this year. Mr. Kerbin will talk to Ken Vandenburg to see if there are any temporary fixes they could do.

2. Speed Survey – College Hill Road

- a. Mr. Seldon stated that there was a speed survey done on College Hill Road that was requested by a neighbor of his last year. The posted speed is currently 35 mph. This is a designated area for biking and has many pedestrians. 35 mph is completely inappropriate. The survey states that 90% of cars are going a safe speed. 85% are driving at 25 mph. He is proposing to reduce the speed limit to 25 mph. The speed survey supports this. There are a few people going 35 or 40 mph and its dangerous. The High School also uses it

for training. People feel entitled to go that speed because that is what is posted. There is no visibility there.

Motion: by Ms. Cole to change the posted speed on College Hill Road from 35 mph to 25 mph for the entire length of the road.

Seconded: by Mr. Sutherland.

Discussion: none.

Vote: 5-0-0, passed.

3. Town Report Discussion

a. Cover

I. Chair Riley stated that she is looking for pictures of mask signs or COVID-19 related pictures. Please send them to Ms. Nourse.

b. Dedication

I. Chair Riley stated that she is working on this.

c. Warning

I. Chair Riley stated that this is coming along nicely thanks to Ms. Nourse and should be completed soon.

H. OTHER BUSINESS

1. Ms. Davies stated that she is working on roles and responsibilities of. She is working with Susan Silberburg and Mr. Kurtz. It states the roles and responsibilities of elected officials and employees. She needs help. She would like to use the job descriptions of different employees.

a. Chair Riley stated that many job descriptions are in the Manager's office. There is limited staff in the office most days.

b. Ms. Parent stated that these are not all electronic. A lot of the job descriptions they have are quite old and have not been updated.

c. Ms. Davies asked for the easiest available job descriptions first.

2. Ms. Davies asked about a road repaving plan.

a. Mr. Kerbin stated that they are working on that. He will present some information at their next meeting on Thursday.

I. BOARD OF SEWER COMMISSIONERS

1. Sewer Permit – 67&117 Safford Commons Way – Safford Real Estate

Motion: by Ms. Cole to table the sewer permit for 67 & 117 Safford Common way until the next regularly scheduled meeting.

Seconded: by Ms. Davies.

Discussion: none.

Vote: 5-0-0, passed.

2. Revision of Sewer Billing Policy

a. Mr. Kerbin stated they currently bill people based on water reading or number of peoples in a residence. He is proposing to change the billing policy to charge people based on the number of bedrooms in a unit. This would be based on the gallons per day permit submitted to the State for buildings. This new policy would come into effect July 1st.

b. Ms. Fish stated that the State has a set of standards for sewer and potable water. There fees are based on the number of bedrooms. The first two bedrooms

in a house are assumed to have two people in them. There is no way of knowing the number of occupants in a house and if it changes. This new policy would be based on State guidelines for design flow. They can get the number of bedrooms for each residence from the Listers.

- c. Ms. Davies thinks this new sewer billing policy would help a lot. It would be based on accurate information.
- d. Ms. Fish stated that this would also spread the rate over people more equally.
- e. Mr. Sutherland agrees that this would help a lot with sewer billing.

Motion: by Ms. Davies that the Town of Woodstock adopt a new sewer billing policy that would measure the flow rate based on the number of bedrooms instead of either water meters or fee based on number of people in dwelling unit and this billing will occur on a quarterly billing cycle with the flow rate as defined by the State of Vermont and will be in effect starting July 1, 2021.

Seconded: by Ms. Cole.

Discussion: none.

Vote: 5-0-0, passed.

3. Sewer Rate Discussion

- a. Tabled until future meeting.

4. Sewer Write Off – Michael & Barbara Pacht

- a. Ms. Fish stated that in 2016 Mr. Pacht bought and renovated their house. It originally had an apartment. He got rid of the attached apartment and made it one single dwelling. Therefore, they were billed incorrectly.

Motion: by Ms. Davies to abate the sewer bill for Michel and Barbara Pacht for the amount of \$572.39 for the apartment that is no longer existing.

Seconded: by Mr. Sutherland.

Discussion: none.

Vote: 5-0-0, passed.

J. CITIZEN COMMENTS

- 1. Mr. Webb stated that he is concerned that the Town still does not have a capital plan. The Select Board agreed to prioritize it this year. Last year taxes went up 10%. We do not have a capital spending plan. They need it for roads, bridges, culverts, buildings, plow trucks, etc. We have been paying for things when they break. Instead, we need this plan and be proactive.

K. EXECUTIVE SESSTION

Motion: by Ms. Davies to enter executive discussion to discuss appointments at 8:59 pm.

Seconded: by Ms. Cole.

Discussion: none.

Vote: 5-0-0, passed.

Motion: by Ms. Davies to exit executive session at 9:15 pm.

Seconded: by Ms. Cole.

Discussion: none.

Vote: 5-0-0, passed.

Motion: by Ms. Davies to appoint Patrick Fultz and Devon Kurtz to the Economic Development Commission.

Seconded: by Ms. Cole.

Discussion: none.

Vote: 5-0-0, passed.

L. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. 12.15.20 Meeting Minutes

Motion: by Ms. Davies to approve the meeting minutes for December 15, 2020 as submitted.

Seconded: by Ms. Cole.

Discussion: none.

Vote: 5-0-0, passed.

M. ADJOURNMENT

Motion: by Ms. Davies to adjourn the meeting at 9:19 pm.

Seconded: by Ms. Cole.

Discussion: none.

Vote: 5-0-0, passed.

*Respectfully submitted,
Nikki Nourse*


Mary Y Riley (Feb 24, 2021 11:17 EST)


Jill M Davies (Feb 24, 2021 11:48 EST)


L D Sutherland JR (Mar 11, 2021 08:21 EST)


Keri P. Cole (Mar 11, 2021 10:56 EST)