

**Town of Woodstock**  
**Select Board Meeting**  
**February 21, 2023**  
**6:00 pm**  
**Town Hall & Zoom**  
**Minutes**

**Draft minutes are subject to approval.**

**Present:** Chair Joe Swanson, Ray Bourgeois, Mary Riley, Susan Ford, Eric Duffy, Nikki Nourse, Tom Ayres, Trena Tolliver, Rebecca Mitchell, Tess Hunter, Michael Caduto, Brett Ralph, Marianne Ralph, Zoie Parent, Roger Logan, Jon Spector, Jenevra Wetmore

**A. Call to order**

1. Chair Swanson called the Select Board Meeting of February 21, 2023, to order at 6:02 pm.

**B. School Board interview – Marianne Ralph**

1. Ms. Ralph stated that she has two kids in the district. One is in Pre-K and the other is in 1<sup>st</sup> grade. She is a licensed counselor. She was working primarily in schools before moving here. She is licensed in Vermont. She owns a local business in Quechee. She built a home in Woodstock. She is very invested in the community and the schools. She feels that with her background in counseling and education, it can be very relevant to the School Board. She is familiar with what is happening and how schools work. She has two little kids who are going to be in these schools for a very long time, so it is something she cares a lot about. She thinks she can bring a lot to the table.

**C. Citizen comments – none.**

**D. Additions to & deletions from posted agenda**

1. Additions
  - a. Town Meeting organization
  - b. Executive session

**E. Manager's report**

**1. General report**

- a. Mr. Duffy stated that they have received the draft audit. They are hoping to have the finalized audit soon.

**2. Financial report**

- a. Ms. Ford stated that the manager search fee was at \$54,000.
  1. Mr. Duffy stated that when there was an interim Town Manager instead of paying the salary out of the salary line, they paid him out of the manager search line. That is why that number is so high.
  2. Ms. Ford stated that she wants to make sure that fee and the consultant fee are being split between the Town and Village.
  3. Mr. Duffy will confirm that, but he believes that is the case.

b. Ms. Ford stated that with the Woodstock Council on Aging there are two lines. One is \$1,000 over budget and the other is \$1,000 under.

1. Mr. Duffy stated that he will take a look at that.

c. Mr. Bourgeois stated that the sewer budget was not included.

**F. New business**

**1. Discussion regarding ARPA funds**

a. A survey will be sent out to get public opinion.

**2. Annual road posting for spring weight limits**

Motion: by Mr. Bourgeois to enact the annual spring road posting.

Seconded: by Ms. Riley.

Discussion: none.

Vote: 4-0-0, passed.

**3. EDC discussion of major grants**

a. Mr. Spector stated that the EDC is continuing to do a small number of large grants. They have two major grants. One is from the Housing Group, and one is from Marketing. The Housing Working Group proposed nine different initiatives with a total of \$247,000 to give incentives to create new housing units. All of these are targeted towards local workers at rent levels they can afford. The other is to fund a staff position which is the Housing Advisor for the second full year. They funded it for one year and it was an essential position for the operation for all these programs. They are recommending funding \$161,000 over three years. They are hoping to create up to 20 new units of housing over the next two years. There is a lot of debate about how much to fund for marketing. They are recommending three months of funding for \$37,200. They have three months to come back to the EDC with a proposal for a full year for \$100,000 including the \$37,200.

Motion: by Ms. Ford to approve the two EDC requests for Housing in the amount of \$161,000 and for Marketing in the amount of \$37,200.

Seconded: by Ms. Riley.

Discussion: none.

Vote: 4-0-0, passed.

**4. Discussion regrading solar electricity for low to moderate income households**

a. Mr. Caduto stated that Sustainable Woodstock has ben working for some months now on the concept of generating some solar credits for low income families in the Town of Woodstock. They have been talking about creating a solar array with either Sunewell or perhaps Norwich Solar. The Town of Woodstock has three roofs that are good locations for solar, the Town Garage, a portion of the Emergency Services Building, and the wastewater treatment plant. This is an opportunity to help push the Town's climate goals forward to help bring some equity to the opportunity of renewable energy to folks in

Town who could take advantage of this. People in these households would still be paying but at a reduced rate.

#### **G. Other business**

##### 1. Town Meeting organization

- a. Ms. Ford stated that instead of going line by line on the budget they can give people the opportunity to ask questions.
- b. Ms. Davies stated that there are some very basic increases that affect every department. They could talk about those first. For example, the healthcare and the union negotiated salaries could be mentioned first. Then individual department increases may not look as big.
- c. Chair Swanson stated that this year they will have voting from the floor for the first 10 articles. Matt Maxham will be the moderator.
- d. Ms. Riley stated that the Listers article will be a floor ballot vote.
- e. Ms. Nourse agreed. She has spoken with Charlie Degener regarding this, and he is prepared for it.
- f. Chair Swanson stated that they will need Justice's of the Peace to count the ballot for that article. He can explain the Lister's article and why they are considering Accessors instead.

##### 2. Executive session

Motion: by Ms. Riley to enter executive session under 1 VSA 313(a)(3) at 6:58 pm.

Seconded: by Ms. Ford.

Discussion: none.

Vote: 4-0-0, passed.

The Select Board left executive session at 7:01 pm and resumed the public meeting.

#### **H. Approval of minutes**

##### 1. 2/7/23 minutes

Motion: by Ms. Ford to approve the minutes for 2/7/23 as submitted.

Seconded: by Ms. Riley.

Discussion: none.

Vote: 4-0-0, passed.

#### **I. Adjournment**

Motion: by Mr. Bourgeois to adjourn the meeting at 7:05 pm.

Seconded: by Ms. Ford.

Discussion: none.

Vote: 4-0-0, passed.

*Respectfully submitted,*  
*Nikki Nourse*