

**Town of Woodstock
Select Board Meeting
October 17, 2023
6:00 pm
Town Hall & Zoom
Minutes**

Draft minutes are subject to approval.

Present: Chair Ray Bourgeois, Susan Ford, Greg Fullerton, Laura Powell, Eric Duffy, Nikki Nourse, Karim Houry, Meredith Bzdak, Jon Spector, Jill Davies, Lisa Lawlor, Jen Arnoldi, Michael Schnoering, Lauren Dorsey, Thomas McCaughey, Seton McIlroy, Peggy Fraser, Alita Wilson, Phillip Neuberg, Roger Logan, Rich Kozlowski, Fire Chief David Green, Mark Hunter, Trena Toliver

A. Call to order

1. Chair Bourgeois called the Select Board Meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

B. Additions to & deletions from posted agenda

1. Deletions
 - a. South Woodstock design update
 - b. Police contract discussion
 - c. Investment Advisory Committee presentation

C. Citizens comments

1. Mr. Houry brought up a concern regarding the hose providing water across the Elm Street Bridge. He requested an update on the two plans in place and their urgency, particularly if they aren't completed before winter. The potential implications for other water users were also raised.
2. Ms. Davies expressed her concern about the potential impact on the Village if the Town's investment code were not managed well. She emphasized the need to be proactive to avoid situations similar to past issues with water lines, which had affected businesses and residences. The discussion included the frequency of meetings and the number of meetings required for the project.

D. Manager's report

1. Mr. Duffy provided an update on various financial matters, including accounting methods related to taxes. It was clarified that Woodstock uses accrual accounting, which may lead to discrepancies in financial reports.

E. Liquor license application

1. Woodstock Village Market

Motion: by Ms. Ford to approve the liquor license application for Woodstock Village Market with the understanding that the State reviews these applications.

Seconded: by Ms. Powell.

Vote: 4-0-0, passed.

F. Old business – none.

G. New business

1. Town Hall Building Committee update

- a. The cost of construction documents and inspections for the proposed Town Hall renovation project was discussed. It was suggested that a cost estimate be

obtained for this phase of the project, as it would be irresponsible to proceed with a \$3.3 million project without exploring other options.

- b. A discussion took place regarding a potential easement. The potential impact on historical features was considered, as well as the importance of ADA access. Cost considerations for the project, including HVAC improvements, were also addressed.

2. Meeting schedule discussion

- a. The topic of having two regular Select Board meetings per month was discussed. It was mentioned that the 2nd meeting was introduced during a period when the Town didn't have a Town Manager or had an Interim Town Manager in place. The purpose of the 2nd meeting was to handle Select Board matters that required timely attention.
- b. Board members expressed a consensus that having only one Select Board meeting per month at 6:00 pm would be more efficient and sufficient for most matters, with exceptions during the budget process and other Select Board specific issues.
- c. The proposal to have one regular meeting and potential special meetings, as required, received support. The transition to a single meeting per month would be feasible as long as it did not hinder important decision-making or delay the handling of Select Board issues.
- d. The timing of the single monthly meeting was discussed. The suggestion was made to have it on the 3rd week.
- e. There was an agreement among the Select Board members to transition to a single regular meeting per month, with exceptions during the budget process and special Select Board matters. The proposed timing of the meeting would be on the 3rd Tuesday of the month.

3. Bids

- a. Sand
- b. Gravel
- c. Diesel

Motion: by Ms. Ford to approve the sand bid from D&D Excavating Inc for \$17.31/cu yd for screened sand, the sand bid from Pike Industries for \$20 per ton for 3/8" stone, the gravel bid from Pike Industries for \$17.50 for ¾" hardpak, and the diesel bid from Dead River Company for the variable price of \$3.620 per gallon.

Seconded: by Ms. Powell.

Vote: 4-0-0, passed.

4. SBA Assistance presentation

- a. The discussion revolved around the support and resources available through the SBA to help local businesses overcome financial challenges and thrive. It emphasized the importance of businesses taking advantage of these programs to strengthen the local economy and community.

5. Wastewater update

- a. The breakdown of costs including the allocation of 41% to the Town, was explained.

6. South Woodstock design update – deleted.

7. Police contract discussion – deleted.

8. EMS per capita fees to subscribing member towns

- a. The discussion focused on the calculation and collection of EMS fees from towns that subscribe to the services provided by the EMS.
- b. The primary topic of discussion was the per capita fee structure. Per capita fees are calculated based on the population of each subscribing member town, aiming to distribute the costs fairly among the communities benefiting from EMS services.

Motion: by Ms. Ford to approve the EMS per capita fees of \$70 for Pomfret, Bridgewater, Reading, and Plymouth, and \$45.16 for Hartland.

Seconded: by Ms. Powell.

Vote: 4-0-0, passed.

9. EDC Housing Working Group presentation

- a. Two initiatives were presented. The 1st focused on an ADU program that would provide tax incentives and exemptions for eligible property owners. The 2nd initiative aimed to address existing long-term landlords who maintain affordable rental rates. The Select Board expressed interest in exploring tax relief as an option.

Motion: by Ms. Ford to combine both ADU housing programs into one funding pool.

Seconded: by Ms. Powell.

Vote: 4-0-0, passed.

Motion: by Ms. Ford to grant up to \$535 to cover the insurance costs of the not-for-profit organizations providing food service on the Green.

Seconded: by Ms. Powell.

Vote: 4-0-0, passed.

10. Investment Advisory Committee presentation – deleted.

H. Other business – none.

I. Board of Sewer Commissioners

1. Sewer abatement request – Zilian – 4 Mechanic Street

- a. It was noted that the sewer bill sent to Zilian was addressed with an incorrect address.
- b. Zilian had paid the total sewer bill but requested an abatement for the interest that had accrued due to the incorrect address.
- c. The Select Board discussed the responsibility of residents to ensure that their address information is updated.

Motion: by Ms. Ford to deny the abatement request for 4 Mechanic Street.

Seconded: by Ms. Powell.

Vote: 4-0-0, passed.

2. Sewer permit – Johnson/Frates – 2 Dartmouth Lane

- a. The Select Board discussed the application and the criteria for approval.

Motion: by Ms. Ford to approve the sewer permit for Johnson/Frates for 2 Dartmouth Lane as submitted.

Seconded: by Ms. Powell.

Vote: 4-0-0, passed.

J. Approval of minutes

1. 9/19/23 minutes

a. Sewer motion has Ms. Ford twice.

Motion: by Ms. Ford to approve the minutes for 9/19/23 with the one correct noted above.

Seconded: by Mr. Fullerton.

Vote: 3-0-1, passed. (Chair Bourgeois for, Ms. Ford for, Mr. Fullerton for, Ms. Powell abstained).

K. Adjournment

Motion: by Ms. Powell to adjourn the meeting at 8:24 pm.

Seconded: by Mr. Fullerton.

Vote: 4-0-0, passed.

*Respectfully submitted,
Nikki Nourse*