

**Town of Woodstock  
Selectboard Meeting  
October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024  
6:00 PM  
Town Hall & Zoom  
Minutes**

**Draft minutes are subject to approval.**

**Present:** Chair Ray Bourgeois, Keri Cole, Laura Powell, Greg Fullerton

**Staff:** Eric Duffy

**Public:** Jesse Werner, Leo Werner, Byron Kelly, Peter Shoemaker, Linda Smiddy, Chris Miller, John King

**Call to order**

1. Chair Ray Bourgeois called the Selectboard meeting of October 3rd to order at 6PM

**B. Addition to & deletions from posted agenda**

**C. Citizen's Comments**

Jesse Werner raised concerns about the approval process for marijuana retail in Woodstock, questioned the number of approvals given by the local Cannabis Control Board

Eric Duffy explained the confidentiality laws surrounding marijuana businesses, suggesting that any approved applications should be listed on previous agendas.

Jesse Werner mentioned ongoing pushback from residents in West Woodstock due to a third marijuana retail location, highlighting an appeal against the state environmental court.

**D. Discussion**

**Public forum to discuss acquisition of the Woodstock Aqueduct Company.**

The meeting discussed the acquisition and management of the Woodstock Water System, key capital projects were outlined, such as the suspension of the main under the Elm Street Bridge, new well and pump replacement, and upgrading water mains. The acquisition cost of the water system is \$920,000, with an additional \$1.6 million for the Vondell property. Concerns were raised about the financial impact on taxpayers and the need for new revenue to support infrastructure improvements.

Eric Duffy introduced the discussion on capital projects, mentioning a summary prepared by Laura Powell.

Laura Powell outlined several capital projects, including the suspension of the water main under the Elm Street Bridge, new well and pump replacement, and upgrades to water mains and fire hydrants.

Eric Duffy provided a detailed list of assets and their estimated value, totaling approximately \$2.7 million.

Byron Kelly raised concerns about funding for these projects and the potential impact on taxpayers, emphasizing the need for transparency and public education.

Peter Shoemaker questioned the historical revenue generated by the water system and whether it was used to fund necessary upgrades.

Eric Duffy explained that the water company has not increased user rates since 2016, leading to a lack of revenue and accumulated debt.

Laura Powell and Eric Duffy discussed the need for capital reserves to avoid emergency loans and the potential for new revenue through new housing connections and increased user rates.

Peter Shoemaker emphasized the importance of understanding where the revenue will come from and the impact on taxpayers, suggesting that the town should be honest about the financial implications.

Linda Smiddy questioned the decision to address the fire engines, school, and water system separately and calls for a prioritization of projects.

Linda Smiddy called for a clear understanding of the total cost to taxpayers and the impact on taxes, suggesting that public ownership should be justified by better management and grants.

Chris Miller suggested separating the vote on the Vondell Reservoir from the infrastructure projects to avoid confusion.

Eric Duffy explained the original plan to have a single vote in November but had to shift due to grant funding and timing.

John King raised ethical concerns about paying \$1.6 million for the Vondell Reservoir, suggesting a lease option for the time the property has been owned.

Laura Powell and other speakers discuss the potential value of the Vondell Reservoir for future water system expansion and recreational use, emphasizing the need for community input on its future.

**E. Executive Session 1 V.S.A 313**

Motion: by Chair Ray Bourgeois Executive Session 1 V.S.A 313 (7:14PM)

Seconded: by Laura Powell

Vote: 4-0-0, passed. (Returned 7:40pm)

**F. Approval of Minutes**

9.17.24

9.23.24

9.25.24

Motion: by Chair Greg Fullerton to approval minutes 9.17.24, 9.23.24, 9.25.24

Seconded: by Laura Powell

Vote: 4-0-0, passed.

**Adjournment**

Motion: by Greg Fullerton to adjourn the meeting at (7:41 PM)

Seconded: by Laura Powell

Vote: 4-0-0, passed.

*Respectfully submitted,*

Kitty Mears Koar

  
Greg Fullerton (Nov 24, 2024 12:50 EST)

  
Keri Cole (Nov 22, 2024 16:30 EST)

  
LAURAPOWELL # 11/25/24

  
Raymond Bourgeois (Nov 23, 2024 07:54 EST)

**Signature:**

**Email:** [sford@townofwoodstock.org](mailto:sford@townofwoodstock.org)

