

MEETING OF THE WESTMINSTER SELECTBOARD

Wednesday, August 11, 2021

Westminster, VT Town Hall and by Zoom Conferencing

Members Present: Kevin Hughes (Chair), Craig Allen (Vice Chair), and Jason Perry. Susan Harlow attended by Zoom Conferencing, Toby Young was absent

Others Present: **Russell Hodgkins** (Town Manager/Zoning Administrator), Chuck Lawrence (Road Foreman), Ben Moffit, Millie Barry (Recording Clerk), FACTV (1 person) and others by remote means (not identified)

1. **Call to Order:** Kevin Hughes, Chair of the Selectboard called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. The meeting was held in person at the Westminster Town Hall and by Zoom conferencing available through FACTV. Information to attend by Zoom (remote means) is available on FACTV Facebook page or by contacting the Westminster Town Hall.
2. **Adjustments to Agenda:** None
3. **Acceptance of Minutes:** July 28, 2021, July 30, 2021 and August 2, 2021 - Craig Allen motioned to accept the minutes of July 28, 2021 as printed. Jason Perry seconded the motion, the motion carried unanimously. Craig Allen motioned to accept the minutes of the special warned meeting July 30, 2021 as printed, Susan Harlow seconded, the motion passed unanimously. Craig Allen motioned to accept the minutes of the special warned meeting of August 2, 2021, Jason Perry seconded the motion, the motion passed unanimously.
4. **Communications and Public Comments:** None
5. **Unfinished Business (Discussion/Action):**
 - A. American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) - Corona Virus Pandemic (COVID) local recovery funds update - Information on this item included in packet - Russell Hodgkins told the Board the first half of Towns portion, \$141,380.81 and half of the Villages funds of \$14,060.50 had been received. Mr. Hodgkins will post a notice in the Westminster Gazette for interested persons to contact him with interest in serving on a committee to use these funds. The State of VT (SOV) has not provided updates regarding spending the money.
 - B. Hartley Hill Road - No update. Legal Counsel is working on this item
 - C. Website Renewal: No update
 - D. Collaborative Finance Processing Manual - update if any - No update
6. **New Business:** (Discussion/Action)

- A. July 29, 2021 Storm - Emergency Financing - Mr. Hodgkins said there were three banks supply bids for the line of credit requested by the Selectboard. Mascoma Bank at 1%, 12 months with no payments, Community Bank, N.A. 1.56%, payments due monthly on the amount used and The Savings Bank of Walpole 3.25%. Mr. Hodgkins and Paul Harlow recommend the line of credit be taken with Mascoma Bank. Craig Allen said Mascoma was a great deal. Craig Allen moved to approve the line of credit from Mascoma Bank up to \$500,000.00 to use as emergency funds for the storm. Susan Harlow seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Mr. Hodgkins said to date there were expenses/bills of \$150,414.94 related to the storm.
- B. July 29, 2021 Storm - Process and Format - Information about this item included in the packet - Mr. Hodgkins said Westminster has not been declared a state of emergency by FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency). He has received requests for information from the agency and relayed FEMA would not make a physical visit to Westminster. All information will be relayed by virtual means using pictures, emails and other communication. In answer to Susan Harlow's question, Mr. Hodgkins said there is always the possibility the Town would not be declared an emergency. FEMA is specifically looking at damage in four towns. Chuck Lawrence said he believed there was more widespread damage during this storm. Mr. Hodgkins added the flooding that occurred during this storm was almost the same as Irene storm but there was Town wide damage. On behalf of the Board, Kevin Hughes thanked Russell Hodgkins, Chuck Lawrence, the entire Westminster road crew, the Westminster Fire Department, Jason Perry and anyone involved in responding to the emergency flooding and storm damage. Mr. Hughes said the storm highlights times have changed. There is some infrastructure requiring more attention, there were some priorities and protocols that can be strengthened and better. He stated his belief, as a taxpayer, the Town and present team would be successful making changes. Ben Moffit said the work done prior to the storm saved many roads. Jason Perry noted spelling errors in the information report.
- C. Truck Purchase: Financing Discussion - Russell Hodgkins requested to table this item to another meeting
- D. Fuel Bid Results - Information included in the packet on this item. Mr. Hodgkins said seven letters were sent to neighboring companies and the request for bids was advertised in the newspaper. The companies submitting bids were Dead River, HB Energy Solutions, Allen Brothers and Bart Energy. Susan Harlow motioned to accept #2 fuel at \$2.50 and off-road fuel at \$2.59. Jason Perry seconded the motion, the motion carried unanimously with Craig Allen recusing himself from the vote. Susan Harlow moved to accept the bid from HB Energy at \$1.92 for propane fuel. Jason Perry seconded the motion, the motion carried unanimously.
- E. Unleaded gasoline delivery - 2 prices - Information on this item included in packet - Mr. Hodgkins noted gasoline price had not been bid for several years. The former supplier (Burrows) is no longer delivering gasoline. Mr. Lawrence requested bids from several companies. Those submitting bids were Cota and Cota and Swanzey Oil. Jason Perry noted Cota and Cota was a local company but Mr. Lawrence said

Cota prefers the Town purchase all fuel from their company along with setting up an account. Mr. Lawrence said the Westminster Fire Department used more gasoline than the Road department. Craig Allen motioned to accept the bid from Swanzey Oil at \$3.14 per gallon delivered. Jason Perry seconded the motion, the motion passed with three members voting affirmatively. Mr. Lawrence and the Board discussed removing the in-ground fuel tanks at the Town garage.

In another matter, at 7:08 p.m. the connection to Zoom Conferencing and access to the meeting by remote means through FACTV was lost/interrupted.

- F. Forest Road - One way update - Mr. Hodgkins relayed he had talked to all residents of Forest Road (except one) with all approving to reverse the one way section, changing the one way access to the section off Covered Bridge Road. Mr. Lawrence said the guard rails and posts had been installed as agreed in turn off areas and new no parking signs would be installed in the future.
- G. Five year Capital Plan - previous to new - Information on this item included in the packet. Mr. Hodgkins said many of the items on the present plan had been completed and there new items to be addressed such as the two in ground fuel tanks at the Town Garage, the North West Community House and the Post Office. Mr. Hodgkins has received notification from the U.S. Government the post office building was required to be painted in 30 days. Mr. Hodgkins also mentioned there were retaining walls in need of repair or replacement. The Board will take the information under advisement and discuss at a future meeting.

- 7. **Manager's Report:** Mr. Hodgkins noted a special warrant to pay for the backhoe would require two Board signatures in the next week.
- 8. Boards and Commissions: Nothing to report
- 9. Other Business: Nothing to report
- 10. Date of Next Meeting: August 25, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.
- 11. Adjournment: Craig Allen motioned to adjourn the meetng, Jason Perry seconded the motion, the motion was adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

Clerk

Date