

WESTMINSTER SELECTBOARD MEETING

Wednesday, August 24, 2022

Westminster, VT Town Hall and remote by FACT TV

Selectboard Present: Jason Perry (Chair), Katrina Hamilton (Clerk), Kevin Hughes (Vice Chair) and Craig Allen

Staff Present: Alison Bigwood (Interim Town Manager/Zoning Administrator) Charles (Chuck Lawrence (Road Foreman) and Millie Barry (Clerk)

Others Present: John Eastman, Jason Smith, Dan Crocker, FACT TV and one person not identified

1. **Call to Order:** The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.
Information to access a future meeting using a remote connection is available on the FACT TV Facebook page, Town of Westminster website or by calling the Westminster Town Hall.
2. **Adjustments to Agenda:** Jason Perry noted the Highway Foreman's Report would be after Communications and Public Comments on the agenda not under New Business letter E.
3. **Acceptance of Minutes:** July 27, 2022 - Craig Allen motioned to accept the minutes as printed, Katrina Hamilton seconded, motion carried 4-0 by voice vote with no discussion.
4. **Communications and Public Comments:** None
 - Highway Foreman's Report – Mr. Lawrence said beginning September 5, 2022 at the School Street Westminster Heights intersection, Westminster Heights road will be closed for approximately 2 weeks, School Street will remain open to replace the culvert. This is one of two FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) projects remaining.
 - August 22, 2022 a site visit took place on Piggery Road USDA (United States Department of Agriculture) grant project. Bids are due on the project 9/13/2022 and will be discussed at 9/14/2022 Board meeting.
 - The bridge deck on South Valley Road had three estimates with one contractor submitting a bid of \$100,000.00. At present the bridge has a wood deck with an I beam understructure. Mr. Lawrence said the I beams were rotted and the proposal was to install a precast bridge deck to sit on existing (sound) footings. Mr. Lawrence plans to apply for ARPA (American Rescue Plan Aid) funds for this project.
 - Brian Harlow will install the culvert on Windmill South Road. This is a Better Roads Grant.
 - Bump Road is VT Agency of Transportation Grants in Aid project that will completed next week. Seeding took place 8/24/2022
 - Mr. Perry noted he and Mr. Lawrence attended the Rockingham Selectboard

meeting 8/23/2022. There is no new information regarding the Route 121 bridge work. Depending on the availability of a contractor, steel and design availability the project could begin March. At the present time the State is estimating an eight month closure time.

- At present guardrails are being installed on Route 121 by the town line and South Road
- In the next two weeks the road crew will be patching asphalt and working on road shoulders.
- Mr. Lawrence has submitted paperwork to ARPA to purchase a proposed saw that attaches to the tractor to cut brush on the sides of the road. The saw will cut brush cleanly and save manpower.
- Fuel tanks have arrived and the fire marshal will inspect the property for placement of the tanks.
- Received thus far for 7/29/2021 storm damage emergency work is \$868,397.28. There are two projects still pending, one costing approximately \$15,520.00 and \$79,560.00 (Heights Road culvert).
- Dan Crocker noted the excellent job grading Westminster West Road.

5. Unfinished Business (Discussion/Action)

- A. Current Open Appointments – discuss advertising – Information included in the packet regarding a health officer. Mr. Perry noted a Town health officer is required to be appointed by 9/30/22. The person is required to have knowledge resolving issues associated with rental housing, water/septic, mold and other public health issues. Mr. Perry said in the past the position was part of another Town job. He added it was difficult to get volunteers and suggested the Board consider a stipend for the position. The position will be advertised on the Westminster website, in **The Shopper** and **Westminster Gazette**. Ms. Bigwood volunteered to take the position on an interim basis. Mr. Allen motioned to appoint Alison Bigwood as Interim Health Officer, Ms. Hamilton seconded, motion carried 4-0 without further discussion.
- B. Financial Position Discussion – Tabled
- C. Windmill Hill South Trail Discussion – Legal Opinion included in packet – Mr. Perry noted his interpretation was the Board was open as to what it could and could not do. A gate cannot be locked and other questions regarding a gate were who would put it in, maintain and pay for it. Mr. Eastman noted their main concern was if the trail became drivable and how this would change the character of the area. He questioned if there was a maintenance agreement for the present culvert. Dan Crocker said the work on the trail was not done. Mr. Allen said he believed Mr. Crocker should present a dated proposal to the Selectboard to do further work on the trail. Mr. Eastman and Mr. Crocker disagreed on the use of the trail by motorized vehicles and hikers. Mr. Perry noted, speaking for himself, he did not want to see the usage of the

- D. trail change and also hoped there would be no further wash damage. If a larger water bar was required, this would be discussed. Mr. Lawrence and Perry will visit the site in the next two weeks.
- E. Hartley Hill Road – update – Mr. Perry said Fletcher Proctor was pursuing a surveyor.
- 6. **New Business** (Discussion/Action)
 - A. July 29, 2021 Storm Update – Money received, money owed, projects pending
Information presented in Highway Foreman’s report
 - B. Health Officer –Position to be filled by 9/30/2022 – discussed earlier in meeting
 - C. Errors and Omissions – information included in packet – Kevin Hughes motioned: August 24, 2022 under Title 32: Taxation and Finance, subject errors and omissions to the Grand List as follows to correct: **#1** Parcel: 006077.T01 owned by Leanne Richard, 40 West Park Drive current grand list \$18,600 to add the land value to mobile home. **#2** Parcel: 006077.000 Owners, Alexander N. Margolies and Leah Rosin-Prichard, 26 West Park Drive, current grand list \$105,800 to correct the grand list value to \$124,500 omitted under original ownership. **#3** Parcel 002018.310 owners, Benjamin C. Whittington and Liza L. Whittington current grand list value \$210,100 to \$250,100. Previous owner was eligible for \$40,000.00 Veterans exemption. **#4** Parcel 007058.000, owners David L. Morse and Susan P. Morse, 309 Fairbrother Lane, current grand list value \$74,700.00 to \$34,700.00 as owner is eligible for Veterans exemption. All four errors and omissions with annotated correction as listed. Mr. Allen seconded; motion carried 4-0 by voice vote.
 - D. Town Manager’s Report: Ms. Bigwood will be contacting department heads for a list of their needs and wants to begin working on the budget.
A one-day audit has been scheduled 9/15/2022. There is a to-do list of 42 items be completed. Ms. Bigwood will share list with the Fire District.
Mr. Perry noted his belief more time was required by the Board on the budget to be more accurate with what was needed as prices for almost everything have increased.
 - E. Highway Foreman’s Report – Discussed earlier in the meeting
 - F. Kevin Hughes motioned to move to executive session to discuss a personnel matter after other business on the agenda. Mr. Allen seconded; motion carried 4-0 by voice vote.
- 7. **Boards, Committees and Commissions** – None
- 8. **Other Business** – Fuel Bids – Bids were received from Cota and Cota, Dead River, Discount Oil, Bart Energy and Allen Brothers. Kevin Hughes motioned to accept the bid from Cota and Cota for heating fuel, propane, and off-road diesel for 2022/2023 season. Ms. Hamilton seconded; motion carried 4-0 by voice vote.

The Board moved to executive session at 7:42 p.m. At 8:19 p.m. the Board came out of executive session with no action taken. Kevin Hughes motioned to adjourn, Katrina Hamilton

seconded; meeting adjourned by 4-0 voice vote.

9. Date of Next Meeting: September 14, 2022

Clerk

Date

Minutes composed by Millie Barry 8/25/2022