

## WESTMINSTER SELECTBOARD MEETING

Wednesday, October 26, 2022 - 6:30 p.m.

In person at Westminster, VT Town Hall and remote by FACT TV

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

**Staff Present:** Jason Benson, Charles (Chuck) Lawrence (Road Foreman), Millie Barry (Clerk)

**Others Present:** Paul Guido, Paul Banik, Michelle Chmelar, 1 person for FACT TV

**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:** None

**3. Acceptance of Minutes:** October 12, 2022 – Katrina Hamilton motioned to accept the minutes of October 12, 2022. Kevin Hughes seconded; motion carried 4-0 by voice vote with no discussion. Craig Allen abstained from vote due to absence.

**4. Communications and Public Comments:** Michelle Chmelar (Planning Commission) noted there will be a housing forum Tuesday, November 15, 2022 at the Westminster Institute at 6:30 p.m. Items to be discussed will be cluster development, tiny homes, elder housing and second home investment property. After the meeting Ms. Chmelar said a report would be made regarding the results of the forum.

**5. Unfinished Business** (Discussion/Action)

A. Ruggiero – Trash and Recycling Update – Mr. Ruggiero was not present – This item will be tabled to November 9, 2022 meeting

B. FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) Funds/Fire Department – Ms. Hamilton said there were more people involved at the State level to track \$4,073.73 monies obligated by FEMA for the Westminster fire department paid to the State of VT. This item will be tabled to a future meeting.

C. Manager-Finance update – In the absence of Alison Bigwood, Mr. Perry said there had been Interviews and there were some good candidates. Item to be discussed at a future

meeting.

D. Conflict of Interest Policy- Policy included in packet – Mr. Hughes noted at the last meeting he submitted the additional definitions to be applied. He recommended the Board review the information and make recommendations or express concerns at the next Board meeting before the policy is adopted.

## **6. New Business – (Discussion/Action)**

A. Highway Equipment Replacement Schedule – Information included in packet – Mr. Perry requested information from the highway department reviewing vehicle/equipment to be replaced in the future, the range of cost and availability of items. He noted most maintenance of vehicles was done by the highway department. Jason Benson told the board truck #6, a 10-wheel truck, was due for replacement in the next fiscal year (2024). Mr. Allen noted that as the Town was trading in a 10-wheel truck, the cost could be less than trading and buying a 6-wheel vehicle as the trade value for a 10-wheel vehicle was higher. Truck #3 will be replaced in 2023. Truck #2 and #3 replacement year were swapped as truck #2 was a 10-wheel vehicle. Mr. Allen suggested the Town put trucks on a seven-year cycle adding most vehicles had a seven-year warranty and the information would show when trucks were purchased, actual year of vehicle and the expected trade date. Mr. Perry questioned if the extended warranty on the backhoe was purchased as the highway Department and Board talked about purchasing the extended warranty later. Mr. Lawrence will check on extended warranty. In 2025 a 1-ton flat truck is scheduled for purchase. Perry suggested purchase of a foreman's pick-up to replace one 1-ton dump truck (two separate vehicle purchases) versus the foreman driving a personal vehicle. Perry also questioned if the Town would go back to seven full time highway people. Mr. Allen requested an estimate of costs/ vehicle/equipment price per year for presentation to voters as replacements came due. Chuck Lawrence said as of June 2022 the highway department was using a computer program to track vehicle expenses and maintenance. The program includes hours and mileage of vehicles.

B. ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) Funds Discussion – What is allowed – Information Included in packet – Paul Banik (Chairperson of the ARPA Committee) requested the Chair of the Board explain an email, the reason the email was sent and why it was sent. Mr. Perry said he wrote and sent the email; it was his opinion. Mr. Perry read the email: in part – Going forward, if there are ARPA projects to be brought before the board for approval, I am requesting the item be an agenda item versus under 'boards, committees and commissions.' Perry requested supporting documents be provided in the Board packet provided with the warning so everyone has time to review the project or prepare any questions. The email

reminded the committee there is no rush to spend the ARPA funds nor are the funds intended to offset the budgets of departments within the town. Perry wrote if he was out of line, to let him know and he would go another route. He explained as Chair this is a policy he would like to see happen as it was his meeting and his agenda. He did not know where the instantaneous approvals came from. He stated his belief the fire and highway department had received the majority (if not all the monies) spent. He was not saying the monies spent were wrong or right only his opinion where monies were spent. Mr. Banik noted the email was sent to him personally (not the committee) and believed this was an item for open session. Mr. Banik continued from reading the email, he believed Mr. Perry felt rushed and pressured and there was an inside track to the monies. Mr. Banik said the documents included in the packet outlined the committee was in line with expenditures, spending and procedures since he became chairperson. Mr. Perry replied he had not seen the ARPA resource information included in the packet before 10/24/2022. Mr. Banik noted his opinion Mr. Perry's email was not a 'bolstering' document, not helpful to the committee attempting to do what the Selectboard requested, it was an accusation, unfounded and did not help the process. He requested Perry redact the email. Perry refused saying the email was his opinion. Mr. Banik said if Perry's opinions were founded, was it his opinion the committee was needed. Mr. Perry said he did not want to take over the committee. Mr. Banik requested questions and concerns be brought in a Selectboard meeting, not sent in an email. Mr. Perry agreed.

C. Manager's Report – As Alison Bigwood was absent, the Chair noted DeCamp Plumbing and Heating had installed the boiler and water heater. Due to efficiency, the breaker to the hot water heater in the office has been turned off, hot water will be supplied from the boiler. The HB Propane tank has been removed; a new tank installed. Propane used is for the Town Hall generator. The report went on to note Ms. Bigwood would assist with elections on November 8. At Ms. Bigwood's suggestion, the Board agreed there would be no meeting November 23, 2022 (before Thanksgiving). This meeting will be moved to November 29, 2022. Millie Barry requested clarification of the boiler/hot water heater bid process as Cole Streeter's bid was the low bid, questioning how the decision was made. Mr. Perry said four bids were requested, two were received. The chimney liner suggested by DeCamp was installed and Streeter required a permit for a plumbing license to make up the difference in the two bids.

D. Road Foreman Report – Mr. Lawrence said all grant work was closed. He was waiting for an invoice from Bazin Brothers regarding Piggery Road. At a road foreman meeting hosted by the Windham Regional Commission in Dover many towns in VT were experiencing issues

regarding purchase of equipment, salt/sand and hiring. Road salt price from Cargill is \$84.50, delivered per ton versus \$95.75 from Apalachee (previous year supplier). Mr. Lawrence said the salt from Cargill could be 'clumpy' possibly requiring straining.

E. Executive Session – If needed – Kevin Hughes moved to go to executive session after other business to discuss a contractual matter, seconded by Mr. Allen motion approved 5-0 by voice vote

## **7. Boards, Committee and Commissions –**

A. ARPA Proposal – Information included in packet – Ms. Hamilton referred to the proposal submitted by Susan Grabowski requesting ARPA funds be used for radar speed limit signs. Suggested locations were School Street in the vicinity of the Westminster Center school, Old Cemetery Road Route 5, Westminster West Road in Westminster West village and at the edge of Kurn Hattin road campus. Discussed by the ARPA committee was the Town's use of the State of VT speed trailer as use of mobile trailer is free, shared with other district towns by demand and the state sets and transports the trailer. Using the State unit could provide response/input before purchase of permanent signs. Mr. Allen suggested input from the sheriff's department regarding installation and how effective speed sign units were. Ms. Hamilton said the sheriff department trailer was shared with all the counties utilizing sheriff department contracts, signs were not permitted on Route 5 as it is State highway, there were mobile and solar units available, and she questioned maintenance costs and responsibility of maintaining any unit. Mr. Lawrence will contact the State regarding the use of their mobile trailer and research other questions

## **8. Other Business –**

- A. Mr. Hughes addressed Paul Quido stating when Mr. Slason (legal counsel) returned from vacation, there would be an answer to Mr. Quido's questions.
- B. Jason Perry referred to information in the packet regarding a letter to the Town of Westminster from Sheriff Mark Anderson stating fees of \$52.00 per hour for contracts at least 2,000 hours per annum and \$62.00 per hour for less than 2,000 hours per annum. The Board questioned the dates the letter (FY 2024) covered requesting Ms. Bigwood research coverage dates. Hamilton noted there was a portal she believed Ms. Bigwood could access to track the location, dates and time of weekly officer service. Mr. Allen stated the department patrolled, their job function was prevention, monitoring accidents, businesses, and residential neighborhoods versus investigations. He believed investigations most investigation were referred to the VT State Police.

**9. Date of Next Meeting:** November 9, 2022 at 6:30 p.m.

The Board moved to executive session at 7:22 p.m.

The Board reconvened regular session at 8:10 p.m. Kevin Hughes motioned to adjourn, Nathan Dugat seconded, motion carried 5-0 by voice vote.

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Clerk

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Date

Minutes composed by Millie Barry 10/29/22