

**Wolcott Selectboard Meeting
Minutes
October 2, 2019**

All Minutes are draft until approved by the Selectboard.
Please see future Minutes for approval of these Minutes.

Present: Kim Gravel, Richard Lee, Michael Davidson, Jenn Holton-Clapp, Eric Furs
Town Employees: Bernard Earle, Lucien Gravel
Public: Louis Ricciardello, Tim Ricciardello, William Pickens, Greg Williams, Sally Martin, Ashley Love, Marquis Houle, Kurt Klein, Bill Cotten, Monica Cross
Reporter: Doug McClure, *Hardwick Gazette*

The meeting was called to order by Kim at 6:00 p.m.

Comments from the Community:

Louis Ricciardello suggested reflectors be placed on the guard rails to help drivers see at night where to turn onto East Hill Road from VT Route 15. Lucien will follow up.

Bernard informed the board that the handicap ramp at Town Hall must be moved to the other side of the building for safety reasons. The handicap parking sign has already been moved. Bernard will check with a local carpenter to get an estimate for the work.

Approval of Minutes of September 4, 2019: Motion by Michael to accept the Minutes as written. Seconded by Richard. Voting: All in favor.

Insurance Committee - Report: A multi-page document had been provided to the board. Copies were available for the public. The Committee was comprised of Kurt Klein, Bill Cotten, Monica Cross, Richard Lee, and Linda Martin. The Committee met multiple times over the course of five or six weeks and worked to develop the best possible advice to the board regarding health insurance options for Town employees who are age 65 or older. When an employee turns 65, there are several choices. Those choices depend upon whether the employer has over, or under, twenty employees. Everyone who reaches age 65 must obtain Medicare Part A, for which there is no cost. If the employer has over twenty employees, the employee would not sign up for Medicare Part B and Part D. If the employer has less than twenty employees, the employee must sign up for Medicare Part B and Part D. The "Twenty Employee Rule" was put in place for employers. It saves small employers a lot of money on insurance costs. The Committee determined Wolcott has less than twenty employees based upon a definition of employee from the Department of Labor. It was recommended that the Personnel Policy be amended to add that when an employee becomes 65 and is Medicare eligible, the Town will provide health insurance that is consistent with what was provided prior to their Medicare eligibility. No employee, elected or appointed, should take a pay or benefit cut because they turn 65. It was recommended that the board enter into an agreement with the Town Clerk to have both the Clerk and the Assistant covered equitably.

Jenn stated the board has already decided that the amount of money that the Town is paying for a family plan with 100 % coverage and 100 % of a high deductible is too much for a small town. We are paying for the Cadillac high premium that no other employer, small or large, is paying. It might benefit us to look at what we are offering to begin with. We are paying more than any other employer in the State for a small amount of people who are sucking everything up.

The issue the Committee looked at is what happens when an employee turns 65 because that is what needs to be solved now. The board can take another look at their whole insurance plan.

Michael sees two issues, that the health insurance is different prior to age 65, and when turning 65. And the insurance the Town offers is not competitive with what other employers offer.

Kim pointed out that Linda could have kept her insurance as it was, but presented the board with a much better deal to save the Town money. Skip can stay on the insurance he has.

Bill stated the Town's personnel policy does not cover elected officials. He provided to the board for review a template from Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT) that is a sample contract. Kurt pointed out that VLCT will review the current, or a newly proposed personnel policy, for a fee. VLCT would require board approval of the expenditure. The board will contact the HR person at VLCT regarding the procedure. Motion by Eric to table the remainder of the Insurance Committee's report to the end of the meeting. Second by Michael. Voting: All in favor.

New Business:

Bill Pickens - East Hill Road, beaver baffles: Bill informed the board there is a problem with a couple of culverts along East Hill Road due to beaver activity. He has talked with Tyler Brown, a technician with Vermont Fish & Wildlife, about installation of a baffle. Lucien stated he will meet with Tyler on October 8 to discuss the issue, and will coordinate with Bill.

Pinnacle Lane: Eric stated the Highway Department will now maintain Pinnacle Lane since all required work has been completed as agreed upon, making it a Town road.

VLCT PACIF 2020 Insurance Renewal Application: Motion by Kim to have Linda sign and submit the insurance renewal application. Second by Richard. Voting: All in favor.

Sweet Trucking: Recycling will now be taken to Hyde Park instead of Williston. There will be an increase in the hauling rate for Sweet Trucking.

Depot Building: The building will be vacated by November 1. Kim will contact N.A. Manosh to get an estimate on winterizing the building.

Adjustment to TA66: Two additional invoices related to the North Wolcott Road repair were added reflecting an increase of \$2,000.

Kim noted that All Metals will no longer pick up metal roll offs at no charge.

Unfinished Business:

Road Crew Staffing: Lucien is seeking employees for the road crew who would work without benefits. The Selectboard authorized up to \$25 per hour as a salary.

Reed Road: The board tabled signing the document reclassifying Reed Road to a Class III road until a plan is developed for creating a turnaround.

Town Road and Bridge Standards: Eric will follow up with Jim Ryan for additional information regarding the new standards.

School Children Visit Selectboard Meeting: Eric has made contact with one of the teachers at the elementary school on this topic.

Solar Signs: The estimate for activating the two speed limit signs is \$750. The Highway Department will install the signs once a location is determined for the second sign, and when the road crew has time.

Installation of E 9-1-1 Signs: The Eagle Scouts might be interested in assisting with installation of green reflector E 9-1-1 signs in a year or so, but they currently have other projects they are working on. The Scouts would need assistance from the Fire Department or the Highway Department.

Free Piles: The issue of “free piles” meaning items set out in the right of way has come to the attention of the board once again. The Ordinance Committee will consider whether it is necessary to amend the Junk Ordinance to specifically refer to free piles in order to address this issue.

Review Correspondence:

Rob Moore, LCPC: Rob Moore will give a presentation to the board on road erosion, and the Fort Hill bridge, at the October 16 meeting.

Meghan Rodier, LCPC: Public comment on the stormwater project will be open until 11/8/2019.

Transfer Station Audit Sheets: Reviewed

Town Financials: Reviewed by the board.

Sign Payroll and other Orders: Done.

Sheriff's Department - August Report: Received.

VLCT Notice of Planning & Zoning Forum 10/23/2019: Received.

Insurance Committee: The report from the Insurance Committee was brought back to the floor. Motion by Eric to enter executive session, citing labor relations agreements with employees as the basis. Seconded by Michael. Voting: All in favor. The board entered into executive session at 7:56 p.m. Subsequently, the board invited in Insurance Committee members, Kurt Klein, Bill Cotten, and Monica Cross. Committee members left executive session at 8:42 p.m.

Following executive session: Motion by Richard that effective October 1, 2019 any Town employee eligible for Medicare coverage who chooses Medicare as their primary insurance will have 100 percent of their premium paid for Parts A, B, D, and F. If that employee had additional family coverage prior to turning 65, the Town will pay a premium equivalent to the previous plan premium amount. Seconded by Michael. Voting: 4 in favor, 1 opposed. Motion carried.

Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Deborah Klein

The next regular Selectboard meeting - October 16, 2019