

**Wolcott Selectboard Meeting
Minutes
November 20, 2019**

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

Present: Eric Furs, Kim Gravel, Michael Davidson
Absent: Jenn Holton-Clapp, Richard Lee
Town Employees: Lucien Gravel, Deborah Klein
Guests: Sheriff Roger Marcoux, Capt. Morley, Sgt. Chris Watson
Public: Kurt Billings, Karen McKee, Mary Harris, Robert Harris, Cindy Lowell,
Don Lowell, Judy Ward, Diane Olson, Bill Cotten, Jim Robert, Dave
Holton, Monica Cross, Kurt Klein, Bruce Wheeler, Amy Davidson
Reporter: Doug McClure, *Hardwick Gazette*

The meeting was called to order by Eric at 6:05 p.m.

Amendments to the Agenda: The Sheriff's presentation was moved to No. 3 on the Agenda. An executive session was added as No. 9 on the Agenda.

Notice was given of the Lamoille County Preliminary 2020-2021 Budget Meeting at the Courthouse on December 5, 2019 at 7:00 p.m.

The board recognized receipt of a letter from Bernard Earle resigning his position as Animal Control Officer effective December 31, 2019. Motion by Eric to accept the resignation.
Seconded by Michael. Voting: All 3 in favor.

Sheriff Roger Marcoux, Lamoille County: Michael stated that because at a prior board meeting citizens had expressed concerns regarding the Sheriff's Office presence in Town, and response to calls, the Sheriff was asked to be present to address those issues. Sheriff Marcoux introduced Capt. Morley and Sgt. Watson. Sgt. Watson distributed copies of a multi-page document and reviewed statistics from a call summary for Johnson, Hyde Park, and Wolcott covering January 1, 2019 through November 2, 2019. The document will subsequently be put on the Town website. Wolcott pays 20 percent of the partnership. Calls for service equal out. Sheriff Marcoux stated Wolcott has a significant drug problem. Drug dealers are moving in from Massachusetts, New York, Connecticut, and all over. Where ever the drug dealers live, they are dealing drugs in all of the local towns. There is also an opioid problem, which is a health problem. All of the Sheriff's Department officers carry Narcan. The officers often reach the person in need before the rescue squad can. The Sheriff pointed out that Towns such as Essex and Burlington have ordinances addressing the sale of drugs in rental properties. Michael and the Sheriff will further discuss some of these issues.

Sheriff Marcoux assured everyone he is trying his best to provide professional services. He is focused on being properly staffed, and dealing with complaints. It is difficult to retain younger folks due to the overwhelming travel, and considering he cannot get a 20 year retirement program. The office is now down two positions. Although the Sheriff talks with State officials quite often advocating for rural communities, he suggested it would be helpful to talk to our local representatives. Drug investigations require a lot of overtime on the part of his officers; building a big case takes time. Soon a Federal drug investigator will be housed in his office. A press release will be issued once that is set.

In response to a question about what citizens can do, the Sheriff suggested a Neighborhood Watch program where people keep an eye out for each other. When reporting an incident, his office needs to know the “who, what, where, and when” so they can compile the information and go after the biggest players.

The Sheriff was thanked for his Department’s services and response to the Town of Wolcott during the Halloween storm. Concern was expressed that the State does not provide financial assistance to Towns to help cover the costs of law enforcement.

The Sheriff was asked how much time is spent patrolling particular roads. The Sheriff is thinking about adding up the mileage for his officers in each Town. Some citizens are particularly concerned about speeding on VT Rt 15 through the Village. Sgt. Watson will follow up. It was suggested that if the Sheriff’s Office had more of a presence, driving through Town for example, that could serve as a deterrent to crime.

Approval of Minutes of November 6, 2019: Eric asked that the Minutes be amended to reflect the correct spelling of Tyler Billingsley’s name. Eric also asked that on page 2, the first sentence of paragraph 3: “Lucien stated Gravel Construction Co. is prepared to start work on road repairs this Friday on a time and materials basis” be amended to add at the end, “at the direction of Tyler Billingsley.” Eric also asked that under Comments from the Community the sentence, “The public is encouraged to attend these meetings” be amended to add at the end, “especially those who are most impacted.” Kim asked that the third sentence under Executive Session on page 4 be amended to add: Motion by Michael. Seconded by Richard. Voting: All in favor. Michael asked that the last sentence of the first paragraph on page 3 be amended. It now reads: “Michael stated that was his preference going into this, but things didn’t go down that way this year that allowed that to happen, but he thinks that is something to consider for next year.” Motion by Eric to accept the Minutes as amended. Seconded by Kim. Voting: All 3 in favor.

Comments from the Community: The question was raised whether Keeler Pond Road had been plowed. Lucien stated it had been plowed. Lucien went on to state that Young Road had not been plowed because there are too many junk cars in the turnaround. The board was asked why two board members were absent from tonight’s meeting. Jenn was on vacation, and Richard was called into work.

Michael stated he had called Bear Bessett of Wildcat Busing when the road crew had just started. Bear identified areas that needed improvement. When Michael followed up this morning, about two weeks later, Bear said the roads are now looking fantastic, and are a big improvement. Bear has a good relationship with the road crew.

New Business:

Jim Robert - Proposal to combine Planning Commission and Development Review Board (DRB): Jim stated the Planning Commission and the DRB are experiencing staffing problems. The Planning Commission currently has three members, but needs five. Under the circumstances, all three members must be present for meetings, and it would require a unanimous vote to take any action. More importantly, the DRB has to have five members by State statute. There has been discussion regarding combining the membership of both the Planning Commission and the DRB. Bill Cotten agreed it is a good short term solution. Maxfield English and Bill Cotten are already dual members. Motion by Eric to appoint Jim Robert and

Bruce Wheeler to the DRB with Kim Gravel and Michael Davidson as alternates. Seconded by Michael. Voting: All 3 in favor.

Town Report preparation: Michael stated Allison Bigelow has offered to be in charge of preparing the Town Report. Eric will follow up.

VT DOC Agreement for Community Service Work contract - Highway Department: Lucien stated the Highway Department has entered into an agreement to retain the services of DOC workers. Several DOC workers pulled out the beaver dam on East Hill recently.

Town of Wolcott - Financial Reports: The board will review the financial records. Kim stated the biggest concern is there will not be enough funds to cover the Highway Department payroll and vehicle expenses for the year. This year's budget for "Labor/Mileage" is \$143,700. As of November 20, \$87,039 has been spent. As for the expenses so far for Garage vehicles and equipment repairs, that is chalked up to the fact that maintenance was not kept up to snuff.

Unfinished Business:

North Wolcott Road - repairs: According to Tyler Billingsley of East Engineering, pre-bids are due on Friday, with bids due December 3. Work is to be completed by the end of the year. Eric will follow up on any Corp of Engineers paperwork that needs to be signed.

Road Crew Staffing: An application has been received for the road crew. Motion by Eric to table discussion of the application until executive session. Seconded by Michael. Voting: All 3 in favor.

Winterizing Depot Building: NA Manosh has completed their walkthrough of the building.

Eviction Proceeding - Town Property on East Hill: Eric stated he submitted the necessary paperwork to the attorney. He is waiting to hear back.

Insurance policy for Municipal employees: The vote on this issue now appears in the Amended Minutes following executive session.

Videotaping of Selectboard meetings: Kurt and Deb Klein attended a training session at Green Mountain Access TV today. They will attend another training session on Friday. Videotaping of board meetings will begin with the December 18 meeting.

Review Correspondence:

Lamoille County Planning Commission (LCPC): Same letter regarding annual appropriation request as below.

LCPC annual appropriation request - 2020-2021: The request was considered by the board. Motion by Eric to approve the request of \$1,031 to LCPC. Seconded by Kim. Voting: All 3 in favor. This is the same amount that was awarded last year.

Transfer Station Audit Sheets: The audit sheets will be discussed with Richard.

Sign Payroll and other Orders: Done.

VLCT News: Received.

Executive Session: Motion by Eric to enter executive session to discuss personnel matters.
Seconded by Kim. Voting: All 3 in favor. The board entered executive session at 7:22 p.m.
Following executive session, no action was taken.

Adjourn: Motion by Eric to adjourn at 8:04 p.m. Seconded by Kim. Voting: All 3 in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Deborah Klein

Next Selectboard meeting - December 4, 2019
Special Selectboard Meeting, budget hearings - December 11, 2019