

**Wolcott Selectboard Meeting
Minutes
January 22, 2020**

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, Jenn Holton-Clapp,
Richard Lee
Town Employees: Lucien Gravel, Bernard Earle, Diane Earle, Deborah Klein
Public: Kurt Klein, Robert Harris, Bill Cotten, Monica Cross, Michael Shedd
Reporter: Doug McClure, *Hardwick Gazette*

Eric called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

Amendments to the Agenda:

Executive Session: Motion by Eric to add Executive Session to the Agenda as No. 10.
Seconded by Richard. Voting: All in favor.

PACIF Report: The board acknowledged receipt of a loss report for claims made against the Town.

Hardwick Rescue Squad: The board received a letter with a request for the 2020-2021 appropriation. Motion by Eric to table discussion to No. 8 on the Agenda. Seconded by Richard.
Voting: All in favor.

2019 Equalization Study: The board acknowledged receipt of a corrected version of the study from the Vermont Department of Taxes.

Approve Minutes of January 8, 2020: Motion by Eric to approve the Minutes as written.
Seconded by Richard. Voting: All in favor.

Approve Minutes of January 15, 2020: Motion by Michael to approve the Minutes of the Special Selectboard meeting as written. Seconded by Richard. Voting: All in favor.

Comments from the Community: The board used a projector to display documents during budget discussions. It was suggested the board utilize technology more often.

The board was complimented on their work on the 2020-2021 budget. There was an expression of well wishes for the road crew, along with the hope that Townspeople understand the crew is learning.

New Business:

Sign loan agreement - flood damage: The board accepted a bid from Union Bank at the January 8, 2020 meeting for a five-year loan in the amount of \$250,000 with a fixed interest rate of 2.15% to cover the cost of repairs to roads damaged during the Halloween storm. Motion by Kim to execute the loan agreement with the terms as previously accepted. Seconded by Richard. Voting: All in favor.

Re-designate two assigned fund balances: Two fund balances, one for \$1,000 which resulted when a solar project deposit was refunded, and another for \$2,807 from a computer

equipment fund be reassigned. Motion by Michael to move the \$1,000 and \$2,807 fund balances to the Town Administrator fund. Seconded by Richard. Voting: All in favor.

Unfinished Business:

Approve Minutes of December 11, 2019: It was suggested that under Presentation by the Auditor there be inserted: "This was noted as a significant deficiency" following the second sentence. Motion by Eric to approve the Minutes as amended. Seconded by Richard. Voting: All in favor.

Approve Minutes of December 18, 2019: Motion by Kim to approve the Minutes as written. Seconded by Eric. Voting: All in favor.

Old Town Clerk's building - water supply: It has been brought to the board's attention that the water system for this building is connected to a neighbor's dwelling. Eric has emailed the Town's attorney regarding this issue.

Canon copier lease expiration: The board is seeking additional information and will discuss at the next meeting.

Procurement policy: A six-page Purchasing Policy was developed for the Town. The policy establishes the purchasing procedures that the Town must adhere to. It was noted that such a policy is needed for FEMA reimbursement. Motion by Michael to adopt the Purchasing Policy. Seconded by Richard. Voting: All in favor.

Resolution supporting completion of rail trail: It has been requested that the Town include an Article in the Warning at this year's Town Meeting strongly supporting the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail be completed by 2025. It was pointed out there is no commitment from the Town regarding the Article. Motion by Eric to include an Article in the Town Meeting Warning asking for strong support of completion of the rail trail by 2025. Seconded by Jenn. Voting: All in favor. It was suggested that residents contact our State Representatives and let them know of their support.

Eviction proceeding - Town property on East Hill Road: Eric reported the attorney is preparing documents for removal of the individual residing on this property.

Budget for 2020-2021: Michael led a discussion on the proposed 2020-2021 budget pointing out increases and new costs. A discussion ensued regarding the hiring of a Town Administrator (TA). The board was asked if they are looking at a full-time or part-time TA for next year. The board was also asked if there will be an Article on the Warning about the TA position. Rather than an Article, funds are built into the proposed budget for a part-time TA. Jenn stated that as a taxpayer, she would want to know if the position is going to be a benefit, and how it would be funded in the future. Eric pointed out that the Town has lost employees who have worked here for decades. If there is a chance to reorganize the Town, he is for it.

Motion by Michael to move \$20,000 from the Administrator line to the unassigned fund balance. Seconded by Richard. Voting: All in favor. Motion by Eric to accept the 2020-2021 budget as proposed. Seconded by Kim. Voting: All in favor.

Appropriations: The Hardwick Emergency Rescue Squad has requested an increase in their appropriation from \$6,653 to \$13,403 for the next fiscal year. The increase is requested due to the large number of volunteer hours being incurred. They feel the need to hire more people.

Motion by Eric to level fund all appropriations with the exception of Hardwick Emergency Rescue Squad being increased to \$13,403. Seconded by Kim. Voting: All in favor.

Articles:

The School House Restoration Committee gave a presentation to the board on January 8. The committee recommended that a line item for Historic Preservation be implemented as a yearly commitment to preserving the Town's past as outlined in the Town Plan. The committee is seeking Town matching contributions of \$1,000 for two \$500 grants through the Historic Preservation Trust of Vermont for structural assessment, and a structural engineer report. The committee is also seeking a reserve fund to be set up in the amount of \$8,500 for matching grant awards and application procurement in the future as needed. Motion by Eric for an Article to appear in the Warning for voters to consider the \$1,000 matching funds for the two grants. Seconded by Kim. Voting: All in favor.

Motion by Eric for an Article to appear in the Warning for voters to consider establishing a reserve fund in the amount of \$8,500 for matching grant awards and application procurement as may be needed in the future. Seconded by Kim. Voting: 2 in favor, 3 opposed. Motion failed.

The board discussed the advantages of making the Treasurer an appointed, rather than elected, position. In the event no one runs for Treasurer, the board could then appoint someone to the position after reviewing resumes. Also, this person would not have to be a Wolcott resident. Motion by Michael for an Article to appear in the Warning for voters to consider making the Treasurer an appointed rather than elected position. Seconded by Jenn. Voting: All in favor.

The board under Unfinished Business approved adding an Article to the Warning for voters to consider strong support of completion of the rail trail by 2025.

Review Correspondence:

Town Hall Rental Agreements:

Motion by Kim to approve rental of Town Hall on February 15 from 3:30 to 9:00 p.m. for a birthday party. Seconded by Eric. Voting: All in favor. No alcohol will be served.

Motion by Kim to approve rental of Town Hall on March 14 from 12:30 to 7:30 p.m. for the United Methodist Church annual Maple Sugar on Snow event, with fee waived. Seconded by Richard. Voting: All in favor.

Motion by Kim to approve rental of Town Hall on February 8 from 12:30 to 8:00 p.m. for the United Methodist Church, Ballet Wolcott, and Wolcott Historical Society community event for Black History Month. Seconded by Richard. Voting: All in favor.

Town Road Condition Log: Received.

Vermont Department of Taxes: 2019 Equalization Study, received.

Lamoille Regional Solid Waste Management - representative appointment: Richard agreed to again serve in this capacity. Motion by Eric to appoint Richard Lee as our representative. Seconded by Michael. Voting: All in favor.

VERB Board seeking nominations: The Vermont Employment Resource & Benefits Trust, Inc. is accepting nominations for a board member with the term expiring December 31, 2020.

Executive Session: Motion by Eric to enter executive session to address a personnel issue. Seconded by Michael. Voting: All in favor. The board entered executive session at 8:17 p.m. The board came out of executive session at 8:30 p.m. Motion by Eric to hire Michael Shedd as Animal Control Officer. Seconded by Richard. Voting: 4 in favor, Kim abstained due to family relationship.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Deborah Klein

Next regular Selectboard meeting - February 5, 2020