

Wolcott Selectboard Meeting
Minutes
May 5, 2021

Zoom meeting: 6:00 p.m.

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

Present: Linda Martin, Kurt Klein, Kurt Billings, Allen Carpenter
Absent: Richard Lee
Employees: Randall Szott, Dillan Cafferky, Belinda Harris Clegg, Deb Klein
Public: Chad Roy, Bruce Wheeler, Michelle Cortes-Harkins, Rick Harkins,
Monica Cross
Reporter: Doug McClure, *Hardwick Gazette*

Martin called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Amendments to the Agenda: None.

Approve Minutes of April 21, 2021: Motion by Klein to accept the Minutes. Seconded by Carpenter. Discussion: None. Voting: All 4 in favor.

Comments from the Community: Klein commended all those in Town who participated in Green Up day last Saturday. Volunteer turnout was excellent, and everyone was enthusiastic. The road crew was thanked for picking up along the roadside on Monday, especially in such poor weather. Klein said this is the best he has seen the Town look in years. Martin agreed.

Highway Department

Sand Bid 3 Year Contract: Cafferky inquired of Gravel Construction whether the Town could have the flexibility of trucking what sand they need or have space for, rather than the full amount as stated in the bid request. The response was, if there was no set amount, and the sand would be purchased by the yard, then Gravel wants a three-year contract instead of one year, as stated in the bid. The board determined it would be unfair and unethical to change bid specifications now that the three bids have been received. There could be a credibility issue going forward. The board can consider a three-year contract when sand bids go out next year.

Cafferky stated he has been seeking quotes for paving a couple different sections of East Hill Road, the top of Town Hill Road, and two locations on North Wolcott Road. He has received two quotes so far and is awaiting a third. Cafferky is seeking consent from the board to rely on the quotes rather than go through a sealed bid process as required by the Procurement Policy. Cafferky explained that pavers are in short supply. The time required for the sealed bid process might result in the Town not getting pavers scheduled to do the work this year. Motion by Klein for the Selectboard to consider the quoted bids as an exception to the Procurement Policy. Seconded by Billings. Voting: All 4 in favor.

Cafferky reported he met with Rob Moore of Lamoille County Planning Commission (LCPC) to discuss the best way to use some available grant funds. The grant at issue is for \$17,000 with a \$3,500 local match. The likely location for the work will be Sand Hill Road, with the addition of stone ditches and changing a culvert. Work will start this summer.

The board thanked the road crew for the good job they have been doing on Town roads. Cafferky stated that once the rain stops, the crew will get the roads tuned up.

Town Administrator's Report: Szott addressed some of the issues he has been working on:

- Met with LCPC, State Wildlife, and SLR Consulting on flood mitigation reports. The focus was on the North Wolcott ball field. The board will discuss this matter at a later meeting.
- Attended a Vermont League of Cities & Towns (VLCT) Chat during which the State budget was discussed.
- Brought to the board's attention the issue of pupil weighting in Vermont, and how the distribution of funds impacts tax rates.
- Looking at the possible installation of an electric vehicle charger in town.
- Informed the board that substantial progress has been made regarding a Town forest. This will be addressed at the next board meeting.
- Work continues on an Emergency Management Plan. The plan should be ready for the board to consider for adoption at the next meeting.

New Business

Schoolhouse Committee Update: Chad Roy provided an overview for the board on the work of the Committee since it started in 2016. The schoolhouse is part of the Wolcott Town Plan for historic preservation. The Committee has always viewed the building as worth saving. That is particularly true now that the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail is coming through. Much work had been put into obtaining engineering proposals to determine what needs to be done with the building, including roof repairs, and its structural integrity. There is \$3,000 in the Schoolhouse Committee fund. At Town Meeting in 2020 the Library Board presented the Committee with a check for \$2,000 that has not yet been cashed. Without support from the former board, the Committee felt deflated, and fell dormant. Roy is glad the current board is starting a conversation about how to proceed.

Martin stated that in June the board will be viewing physical assets in Town, including the schoolhouse. The board will have a conversation about the future of the schoolhouse, and will communicate with the Committee. Roy will provide to Szott information on grants the Committee has applied for in the past.

Broadband - Representative Update: Bruce Wheeler, one of Wolcott's representatives with NEK Community Broadband, provided to the board a document regarding the group's work. Wheeler stated the group is moving forward, but Wolcott is one of 40 towns in this Communications Union District (CUD). Christine Hallquist is communicating with their group. Wheeler estimated it would be some time before Wolcott would get fiber optic cable. In the interim, Wheeler suggested Wolcott may want to look at wireless options. The board noted that the Lamoille FiberNet group appears to be moving forward faster than the group that Wolcott is

in. Wheeler will investigate whether Wolcott can be a member of both groups, or if Wolcott can switch membership.

Town Hall Rental - Justice for Dogs: The Town received an application from Justice for Dogs to rent Town Hall for their annual tag sale fundraiser that will be held this fall. The organization is once again asking that the rental fee be waived. Motion by Klein for the Town Hall rental fee to be waived for the Justice for Dogs fundraiser this fall. Seconded by Carpenter. Voting: All 4 in favor.

Budget/Actual Report for Selectboard - Town and Transfer Station: Treasurer, Harris Clegg, provided the board with Profit & Loss reports for review and discussion. Harris Clegg directed the board's attention to several areas including: the transfer station is not bringing in sufficient revenue. The board has several options to consider in addressing the shortfall. Revenue from dog licensing fees is down compared to past years. There may need to be more enforcement. Funds in this year's Litter Committee budget can be reassigned to next year's budget. Harris Clegg requested clarification from the board on the particular fund from which Highway Department equipment leases should be paid. Motion by Martin to clarify that lease payments for Highway Department equipment is to be paid out of the reserve equipment fund. Seconded by Klein. Voting: All 4 in favor. The full board is to consider all of Harris Clegg's suggestions for discussion when the board meets in June.

Ratify Solid Waste/Junk/Litter Committee and update: Since adoption of the Solid Waste/Junk/Litter Ordinance, a new Committee has formed. Michelle Cortes-Harkins is chairing the Litter Committee this year. Cortes-Harkins stated the Town is looking better, and was pleased with the success of Green Up day in Wolcott. The Committee will meet monthly. Meetings are open to the public. Agendas and Minutes will be posted on the Town's website. The Committee will look at citizen complaints, and will discuss ways in which those complaints may be addressed. Cortes-Harkin's stated the members are engaged in their work, and have many good ideas. Harris-Clegg mentioned she has received positive comments on the "Love Where You Live - Don't Trash Wolcott" signs along the roadways. It was noted that the signs will be moved periodically, but will not be posted permanently. Martin stated that Wolcott had such a group some years ago. She expressed the importance of letting the public know how waste, junk, and litter can damage the environment. Motion by Martin to ratify the Solid Waste/Junk/Litter Committee. Seconded by Carpenter. Voting: All 4 in favor.

Rail Trail ROW Update: The board will enter into a lease agreement with the State involving the rail trail right-of-way that impacts the Highway building. The board has a drawing from the State but wishes to have the exact area identified, and square footage verified, for future reference. The State is indicating the square footage of the right-of-way is 2,373. The actual lease cost for that square footage would be \$173.23. However, to enter into a lease agreement with the State, the minimum annual fee is \$200. Szott will follow up with the State on the board's request for better dimensions. Regardless, the Town will enter into the lease agreement with the State as previously agreed, prior to the May 15 deadline.

Wolcott Law Enforcement Study Group Update: The Law Enforcement Study Group that had been formed with representatives from Wolcott, Johnson, and Hyde Park is now defunct.

Wolcott has formed its own Law Enforcement Committee with new members including Rick Harkins and Ryan Bjerke. The Committee has focused their attention on opening the door to: 1) improved communication with the Lamoille County Sheriff's Office; 2) communicate with law enforcement representatives in the Towns of Hardwick and Morristown; and 3) reengaging with the three-Town Study Group should it be reactivated.

Community Garden Water/Plumbing Request: The Wolcott Community Garden will consist of eight raised beds in the green space behind the Wolcott Library which is now housed in the old Depot building by Town Office. The garden project group would like an outdoor water spigot to be installed in the library building in order to provide sufficient water to ensure a successful harvest for the help-yourself veggie pantry. County Plumbing estimates the job would cost between \$400 and \$500. On behalf of the Community Garden group, Deb Klein requested the charge for installing the outdoor water spigot be paid for out of Town maintenance funds rather than from the garden project account. The water spigot will be a permanent fixture and an asset to the building. Discussion included using the outdoor water spigot at Town Office and extending a hose across the parking lot, and then possibly using buckets to get water to the beds. Motion by Martin to use Town maintenance funds to pay for installing an outdoor water spigot in the library building. Seconded by Klein. Voting: All 4 in favor.

FEMA Funds Update: Martin reported that the Town has received Federal Aid Highway recovery money for repairs made on Elmore Pond Road as a result of the October storm. Martin is hopeful the Town will receive \$26,000 in reimbursement funds from FEMA shortly.

Unfinished Business

Personnel Policy Revision: Matter tabled until the May 19 meeting.

Asset Management Plan: Matter tabled until the May 19 meeting.

Harris + Allen, Gardner, and Tallman Deeds (Brook Rd.): A survey has been conducted of the boundary lines of property owners who will be impacted by installation of the new culvert on Brook Road. Once FEMA agrees to the location of the culvert, a mylar survey map will be prepared.

Adjourn: Motion by Klein to adjourn. Seconded by Carpenter. Voting: All 4 in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 7:51 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Deb Klein

Next regularly scheduled meeting May 19, 2021