

Wolcott Selectboard Meeting Minutes August 18, 2021

Wolcott Town Office/Zoom/phone-in: 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, Allen Carpenter, Richard Lee, Kurt Billings
Employees: Randall Szott, Belinda Harris Clegg, Deb Klein
Public: Karen McKee, Monica Cross, Dolan Patrick, Ruthanna Demag, Scott
Holsten, Joyce Holsten, Linda Brady
Guest: Kate Wanner, The Trust for Public Land
Reporter: Doug McClure, *Hardwick Gazette*

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

Amendments to the Agenda: A petition to be submitted to the Selectboard will be addressed under Comments to the Community. Speeding on Town Hill, and employee health insurance to be added under New Business.

Approve Minutes of August 4, 2021: Motion by Klein to approve the Minutes of August 4.
Seconded by Lee. Discussion: None. Voting: All in favor.

Comments from the Community/Correspondence: Karen McKee submitted to the board a petition, and requested a special town meeting be held within 60 days. Martin read the petition aloud: "We hereby petition the Wolcott Select Board to hold a special town meeting to be held in the year 2021 to vote and elect the following offices and set term limits by Australian ballot: Select Board, Town Clerk and Treasurer, Moderator, Listers, Road Foreman/Commissioner." Following some discussion, the petition was turned over to the Town Clerk to check signatures. Clegg will follow up with the board.

Highway Department

School Street Bridge - Two Way Traffic: The Selectboard will contact the VTrans District 6 Advisor to discuss opening the temporary bridge to two-way traffic, and to request appropriate signage.

Demag requested that the road crew erect signage for the Community Library on School Street, and maybe VT Rt 15 to make it easier for people to locate the library in its new location.

Town Administrators Report: A Zoom meeting was conducted with the AARP-VT representative regarding grant issues. Sharp increases are noted in cost and shipping for grant approved items. Shipping delays, due to the pandemic, will require an extension before the grant can be closed out.

The Vermont Emergency Preparedness Conference will be held over three days in September. A portion of the conference will be held in-person, and a portion will be virtual. A flyer was distributed to board members with contact information if interested.

New Business

Update on Town Forest: Kate Wanner, Senior Project Manager with The Trust for Public Land, updated the board on the Town Forest project. Wanner has been working on possible funding sources to enable the Town to purchase the proposed parcels. There is positive news about a possible sponsor for funding through a grant. The issue involves timing. There won't be a definitive answer until mid-December. If that option is not feasible, the Town may be able to apply for federal funds. Her focus is to minimize funds expended by the Town. There was some discussion on how ARPA funds might be used.

Wanner stated there is an additional 300+ acre parcel that landowners are now interested in selling to be included in the Town Forest. Further contact with the landowners will continue in September. The board discussed the land grade, possible uses, and access to the rail trail. Clegg will check to see if a survey of the land has been recorded. Wanner noted that if this acreage was added, more land would come off the Grand List, but it would not cost the Town more.

Discussion ensued regarding trails, and management of trails, in a Town Forest. Some towns form a separate committee for their Town Forest. If there are a lot of trails, then a committee for long-term maintenance and management of the trails would be needed. There are grant opportunities for recreation infrastructure. It was noted that there has long been an effort to plan and construct a trail that would connect the rail trail, the elementary school, and the ball field. August 27 is a deadline for a letter of intent for a recreation grant that might address such a trail. Following discussion, the Selectboard agreed to approve the Planning Commission submitting a letter of intent. Wanner will assist with that.

It was noted that Wanner will be present at the Wolcott Town event on Friday, September 10 between 5:00 and 7:00, to discuss the potential Town Forest, as part of the information sharing effort.

Maple Bear Lane - Private Road Discussion: Scott and Joyce Holsten are requesting their current address of 750 Maple Bear Lane be eliminated, and that they be able to use the address of 1283 Keeler Pond Road, as did the previous owners of the house they bought. The Holstens' rely on package delivery and have struggled to get delivery companies to locate Maple Bear Lane. Martin provided background on how the Maple Bear Lane came about when the property was subdivided prior to the sale of the house and some land to the Holstens. After consulting Lamoille County Planning Commission, the Wolcott Zoning Ordinance, and the Wolcott Street Naming Ordinance, the conclusion is the Maple Bear Lane name violates our local ordinances. The Holstens have the only house on the road. The Street Naming Ordinance provides for a new name to be created for a private road with a minimum of three residences. Motion by Martin for the Selectboard to send a letter to the Zoning Administrator directing him to revise the Development Review Board decision to conform to local ordinances, and to include a note in the Development Review Board file. Seconded by Lee. Voting: All in favor. Scott and Joyce Holsten may now use 1283 Keeler Pond Road as their address.

C/TPA Designation for FMCSA Drug and Alcohol Clearinghouse: Szott reported that in addition to using the Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT) employee drug test reporting portal, the Town should also designate a Consortium/Third-Party Administrator (C/TPA) as part of the Town's DOT drug and alcohol testing program. By doing so, employees are checked not only on the state level, but also the federal level for any prior violations. The annual fee is minimal, around \$16.45 per employee. The Selectboard approved, and directed Szott to set it up.

Employee Health Insurance: Billings noted that his employer health insurance rate is increasing due to Covid. It was noted the Personnel Policy automatically addresses how rate increases are to be handled. Clegg will contact the board right away should an increase in coverage be announced.

Town Hill Road Speeding: Martin received an email from a Town Hill Road resident reporting vehicles exceeding the posted speed limit. The resident requested that the solar speed sign be moved from the current location to a spot further up the road. It was noted that the solar speed sign is not in a good location on Town Hill Road, but that it is a permanent installation. Discussion included seeing if the solar speed sign that was damaged can be repaired, or installation of additional regular speed signs. The board will contact the Lamoille County Sheriff's Office to request a portable speed sign be placed on Town Hill Road as soon as possible. A request will also be made for directed patrols.

Unfinished Business

Asset Management Plan: Tabled.

Harris + Allen, Gardner, and Tallman Deeds (Brook Rd.): Tabled.

Firearm Language for Personnel Policy: Szott reviewed possible language addressing firearms that could be included in the Personnel Policy. Following discussion, the board will create a Town policy, and put out signage, rather than add to the Personnel Policy.

Thoughts on Community Engagement and Vision for Town: Martin distributed a handout listing details for the Friday, September 10 community event that will be held between 5:00 and 7:00 p.m. School Street will be used for parking. The Wolcott Volunteer Fire Department will grill hotdogs and hamburgers. The Girl Scouts will have games for kids in the green space behind the Library. Booths will be set up so folks can get information on topics including the Community Garden and green space plan; Town Forest; ARPA funds; broadband; old school house, and sewer solutions. It is understood the School Board will also be present, and will host an ice cream social. Also, to be announced, will be information with categories for the "Storytelling through Photos of Wolcott" Photo Contest. Contest winners will have their photos selected for inclusion in the Town Report. The grand prize winner will have their photo appear on the cover. The AARP videographer will shoot a promotional video that day. The event is free. All are encouraged to attend.

Fuel Bid Decision: Updated bids were received from Bourne's, Fred's, and Irving. The board considered the differences in fuel costs, service rates, as well as other terms. Motion by Klein to accept the updated fuel bid from Bourne's. Seconded by Lee. Voting: All in favor.

Hybrid Meeting Options: Dolan Patrick prepared a document for board members outlining options to consider for improving hybrid meetings. He noted internet service is the biggest issue. Board members are to review the information and be prepared to discuss their ideas. Funding for the equipment will also be discussed.

Adjourn: Motion by Lee to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Klein. Voting: All in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Deb Klein

Next regularly scheduled meeting - September 1, 2021