

Wolcott Selectboard Meeting
Minutes
August 4, 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, Kurt Billings, Allen Carpenter, Richard Lee
Guest: Susan Alexander, Director, LRSWMD
Employees: Belinda Harris Clegg, Dillan Cafferky, Deb Klein, Dean Mercier
Public: Lucien Gravel, Ruthanna Demag, Diane Olson, Tyler Earle, Kaleb Earle,
Raymond Earle. Jim Holton
Technical Assistance: Dolan Patrick
Reporter: Doug McClure, *Hardwick Gazette*

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

Amendments to the Agenda: Clegg asked that Audit Proposal, and Wolcott Community Garden Account be added. Jim Holton asked that the Fire Department Coin Drop be added. Martin added all three to New Business.

Approve Minutes of July 21, 2021: Motion by Billings to approve the Minutes of July 21. Seconded by Carpenter. Discussion: None. Voting: All in favor.

Comments from the Community: Tyler Earle, who resides on East Hill Road, addressed a citation he received from the Town's Animal Control Officer for dog barking violations. Tyler read aloud a letter signed by various neighbors indicating they are not bothered by the dogs at this residence. Tyler feels he has been wrongfully accused, but indicated he has no problem paying the \$50 fine. Tyler and Kaleb, who also lives at the residence, have 16 dogs. Six dogs are pets, the others are hunting dogs. Most have been rescue dogs. Tyler and Kaleb have purchased bark collars for the dogs living outside. The board emphasized that the objective is for the barking to be controlled so the neighbors are satisfied. A violation is triggered by 20 minutes of continuous barking. A complainant will need to record such barking. A question arose whether a breeder license also requires a Zoning permit. Research will be done on that issue.

Highway Department: The board discussed a July 28 letter to the Town from Wilson Consulting Engineers regarding the temporary repair of a Town Hill culvert invert. The project would entail pouring a new reinforced concrete invert. Fish and Wildlife would require fish baffles and grading to allow fish and other wildlife to cross the new culvert bottom. The engineer estimates construction costs to be between \$30,000 and \$50,000. Total project cost could be between \$40,000 and \$60,000. Cafferky recommended the engineer get started on the first steps, and begin working with Fish & Wildlife. The estimated cost for the first three

steps as outlined in the letter would be \$3,250. Those funds would come from the Highway Department's Class 3 Construction budget. Motion by Lee to authorize the engineer to begin work on the first three steps as outlined in the letter with an estimated cost of \$3,250 to be paid out of the Highway Department's Class 3 Construction budget. Seconded by Carpenter.
Voting: All in favor.

Cafferky reported the crew has started roadside mowing. The mower is rented until next Wednesday. If needed, a crew member is authorized to mow on Friday in order to complete the work. Martin recommended mowing start earlier next year.

Cafferky reported that truck #13 is in the shop due to suspension problems. The board will be contacted once a repair estimate has been received. Viking advised Cafferky that if the Town wishes to purchase a new truck, they should contact the company now since it could take up to a year and a half to take delivery. Cafferky was advised to look into lease options. The Town has received compliments on the condition of roads.

New Business

Susan Alexander - Lamoille Regional Solid Waste Management District (LRSWMD):

Alexander, Director of LRSWMD, was introduced. Alexander had reviewed the P & L for the Wolcott Transfer Station and made comments for the Town to consider. It was noted that while revenues for the past few years have remained steady, costs for disposal and hauling have continued to increase. The Transfer Station was able to operate in the black last year, but is currently operating in the red. The LRSWMD has purchased a baler that can compress cardboard. The District will experiment with that machine for a couple of months and let the Town know if Wolcott can join in the rebundling of cardboard. Alexander will check on the feasibility of the Town getting a permit to allow a small amount of composting on site to avoid hauling costs. Otherwise, a larger tote can be obtained rather than using two smaller ones. She will also provide more information on sorting out glass from other recycling as is done at LRSWMD facilities. The District collects batteries at all of their facilities. She will get us more information on that. It is important for the attendant to accurately gauge what is being brought to the Transfer Station so that charging is accurate. Alexander provided a copy of the District's Materials Management Guide that includes the District's pricing guide. The District charges for recycling, even if it is brought with trash. Charging for some bulk items may need to be reconsidered. Since the cost for some items is by cubic yard, a model can be provided to assist in determining a more accurate measurement. A representative is available to work with staff. Alexander advised the board to think into the future, since costs will rise.

School Street Water - Annual Rate: It was noted that School Street residents were invited to the meeting, but none were in attendance. Currently, residences receiving water from the Town are charged \$120 every six months. The program is designed to pay for itself. The program is currently \$1,916.72 in the red due to repairs that had to be made. Rates will have to be raised to build back up the reserve. Motion by Klein to increase the rate to \$150 every six months.
Seconded by Lee. Voting: All in favor.

Water System VT Rt 15 - Old Town Clerk's Building: Clegg provided a history of how the water system housed in the old Town Clerk's building feeds to another residence. Problems

have occurred in the past where the pipes in the residence have frozen because a proper temperature was not maintained in the old Town Clerk's building. The Town will look into the best way to address the issue.

Hybrid Meeting Options: Dolan Patrick, a Wolcott resident, has been volunteering his time and equipment to record Selectboard meetings, and monitor those who choose to Zoom or phone into the meetings. Patrick believes it is a good idea to continue to offer remote participation in meetings. Remote participation is particularly attractive to those who do not wish to drive in the dark, or in winter conditions. The Delta variant is another consideration. His recommendation is for the board to plan for the future. Martin stated the board does wish to continue with a hybrid model. Patrick provided an overview of some devices, and other equipment that can be used. He pointed out it would be good to be able to share documents with the Zoom audience. Patrick will contact the board with ideas. Patrick was thanked for his service to the Town.

AARP Grant Award: On July 28 AARP National officially announced that the Town of Wolcott's proposal for the AARP Community Challenge 2021 grant was awarded. The amount of the award is just under \$12,000 with no matching funds. The grant provides for a new park area in the space behind the Library that will feature a community garden, and provide equipment for year round use. The grant requires the funds be used for raised beds, solar motion lights, a fire ring, a metal game table, an 8' bench with arms, a propane heater and a children's 15 x 30 ice rink kit. Additional park items may be purchased with remaining funds. Items can now be purchased, but some of the larger metal items may not be deliverable until spring due to material shortages. The ice rink will be available for this winter.

Deb Klein proposed submitting a grant proposal on behalf of the Town for a Spark Connecting Community grant offered through Vermont Community Foundation. The project would seek designs for a logo representing the Town's newly established Community Garden, the free Veggie Pantry, and the soon to be realized park. Sketches would be accepted from all Wolcott residents for a vote. The amount requested is \$950. There are no matching funds. The proposal is due August 9. Motion by Lee to authorize Deb Klein to submit a proposal on behalf of the Town as outlined. Seconded by Carpenter. Voting: All in favor.

Fire Department Coin Drop: Fire Chief, Jim Holton, sought authorization from the Selectboard for his Department to conduct a coin drop on VT Rt. 15 in Wolcott on September 4 and 5. The Department was unable to conduct this fundraiser last year due to the pandemic. The board agreed. Martin will write a letter on behalf of the board authorizing the coin drop.

Wolcott Community Garden Account: As Treasurer, Clegg sought approval from the board to open a checking account with Union Bank for Community Garden funds. Motion by Lee to approve Clegg opening the checking account for the Wolcott Community Garden. Seconded by Billings. Voting: All in favor.

Audit Proposal: In response to a bid request, Clegg received one response from RHR Smith & Co., an accounting firm based in Maine. The company specializes in governmental and non-profit audits. Their charge would be \$10,900 to conduct the audit for the Town, the

Transfer Station, and the Library. There is \$14,000 in the budget. Clegg called references. Motion by Klein to accept the proposal of RHR Smith & Co. to conduct this year's audit. Seconded by Lee. Voting: All in favor. Martin will sign the engagement letter. It was noted that the auditor the Town has used in the past is unable to perform the service this year due to insufficient staff.

Unfinished Business

Asset Management Plan: Tabled.

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

Firearm Language for Personnel Policy: Tabled.

Thoughts on Community Engagement and Vision for Town: The board discussed plans for a Community event for Wolcott on a Friday evening in early September. School Street would be closed to allow for parking. This would be an opportunity for residents to hear what the Selectboard is doing and to give input. Booths would be manned by individuals who could discuss various topics of interest to the Town such as ARPA funds. The plan is to have the Fire Department grill hotdogs and hamburgers. The School Board may join in with an ice cream social. Ideas are being sought for music. The Library may solicit cookie donations. The Girl Scouts could oversee games for kids. Planning will continue.

Theme and Dedication for Town Report: For next year's Town Report a photo contest will be held soliciting photos from Wolcott residents to see whose photos will be printed in the report. The grand prize photo will be on the cover. There will be three categories for submissions. The board discussed possible categories. The three categories will be announced at the Community engagement event.

Fuel Bid Decision: The board had received three responses to the fuel bid from: Bourne's, Fred's, and Irving. Klein outlined the cost differences between the three companies. The Town currently gets fuel from Bourne's and has their tanks. The board will further investigate the difference in cost of service. It was noted that the quotes have expired. The board can decide at the August 18 meeting how to proceed.

Adjourn: Motion by Lee to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Billings. Voting: All in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 8:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Deb Klein

The next regularly scheduled Selectboard meeting - August 18, 2021