

**Wolcott Selectboard Meeting
Minutes
July 21, 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, Richard Lee, Allen Carpenter
Employees: Randall Szott, Belinda Harris Clegg, Deb Klein, Dean Mercier
Public: Diane Olson, Karen McKee, Bruce Wheeler, Monica Cross, Fred
Therrien, Sr., Fred Therrien, Jr.
Technical Support: Dolan Patrick
Reporter: Doug McClure, *Hardwick Gazette*

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

Amendments to the Agenda: None.

Approve Minutes of July 7, 2021: Motion by Klein to approve the Minutes of July 7, 2021.
Seconded by Carpenter. Discussion: None. Voting: All in favor.

Comments from the Community: None.

Highway Department

Driveway Permit: The Road Foreman submitted to the board a driveway permit for review and approval. The application was for a driveway on Baldwin Brook Road from Lucien Gravel.
Motion by Lee to approve the driveway permit as proposed. Seconded by Klein. Voting: All in favor. Board members signed the form.

Town Administrator's Report

Szott provided documents and updated the board on the status of the Town Forest proposal. The owners of the parcel that may be purchased by the Town have developed a plan whereby they will keep 14 acres. A survey will be prepared. A national resource survey of the land has been prepared. Soil tests will soon be conducted. A funding plan is still in the works, with a couple of options open.

Szott began investigating possible inclusion of a policy regulating firearms in Town buildings and vehicles in the Personnel Policy for safety reasons. The Town of Alburgh has such a policy. This can be further researched.

New Business

Vicious Dog Complaint and Hearing: The Therriens were thanked for being present at the meeting. Klein noted that the term "Hearing" that appears on the Agenda should be changed

to "Discussion." Klein described the circumstances under which the Town, as required by statute or ordinance, is required to hold a hearing with regard to a vicious dog. Although one of their dogs died as a result of an attack, the circumstances as reported to the Animal Control Officer (ACO), and documented in his report, do not require a hearing. Despite the fact that the board does not have authority to compel the dog owners to take any action, the board expressed interest in what plan there may be going forward. The ACO recommended there be some sort of restraint of the dog in question. The owners indicated measures have been taken in that regard. The owners understand they would be responsible for future aggressive behavior by their dog should it come under state statute, or ordinance.

Vote to Join Lamoille Fiber Net and Appoint a Representative: The Vermont Communications Union District (CUD), Lamoille Fiber Net (LFN), has indicated that the Town of Wolcott may join their group. Motion by Klein for the Town of Wolcott to become a member of Lamoille Fiber Net. Seconded by Lee. Voting: All in favor. Bruce Wheeler agreed to serve as the Town's representative on LFN. Motion by Lee to appoint Bruce Wheeler as the Town's representative on LFN. Seconded by Carpenter. Voting: All in favor. Wheeler understands Michael Davidson is willing to serve as the alternate on LFN. Motion by Lee to appoint Michael Davidson as the Town's alternate on LFN. Seconded by Klein. Voting: All in favor.

Open Fuel Bids: The Town received three bids for fuel: from Fred's Energy, Irving Oil, and Bourne Energy. Fred's numbers were: 2.559 for fuel oil; 25 cents over their bulk cost when delivered (variable) for diesel; 2.35 for propane. Irving's numbers were: 2.441 for fuel oil; 2.19 for propane; 2.59 for diesel. Bourne's numbers were: 2.599 for fuel oil; 2.657 for diesel; 1.89 for propane.

Szott pointed out that last year the Town used 12,800 gallons of diesel; 4,325 gallons of fuel oil; and 900 gallons of propane. The Town is currently getting fuel from Bourne's and has received same day service when needed. There has been no problem with their service. It was noted that if there is a switch to a different company, the propane tanks would need to be switched to the new company. It was noted that Fred's and Bourne's provide service, and would have good response time. It is unclear whether Irving provides service, or where deliveries would come from. The matter was tabled to the August 4 meeting to allow board members additional time to consider the options.

Set Tax Rate: Clegg reported to the board that she has determined the tax rate for next year. Documents were provided to the board. The municipal tax rate is going down six cents. Motion by Martin to accept the tax rate as: 2.4460 for homestead, and 2.4820 for non-residential. Seconded by Billings. Voting: All in favor. Clegg noted the education tax rate is about the same for homestead, and is up a bit for non-residential.

Theme and Dedication for Town Report: Board members will give thought to a theme and if there will be a dedication in next year's Town Report. Discussion of those ideas will take place at the August 4 meeting.

New Printer/Copier Lease for the Town Office: The printer/copier owned and used by Town Office has developed a problem that cannot be repaired. Multiple black marks appear on each

page printed. Discussion ensued regarding entering into a lease agreement for a new printer/copier. The proposed agreement is for a Canon copier at \$100 per month for 60 months. After 60 months, the Town would have the option of purchasing the copier for \$1. Funds for the lease would come from the Town Clerk's budget. Motion by Lee to enter into a lease agreement for a new Canon copier as discussed. Seconded by Klein. Voting: All in favor.

Replace Refrigerator Town Office: It was noted that the current refrigerator was donated to the Town in 2007 and was about three years old at that time. The freezer no longer freezes, and the refrigerator does not get cold enough for proper food storage. It was noted that the refrigerator is utilized by anyone using the building, and not just Town employees. Clegg proposed the purchase of a Magic Chef, apartment size, refrigerator. It appears the cost for this appliance would be \$607.98. Funds for the refrigerator would come from the Town Building fund. Motion by Klein to authorize replacing the refrigerator in Town Office with a new refrigerator at a cost not to exceed \$700. Seconded by Lee. Voting: All in favor.

Training for Town Personnel: Clegg would like to register for a virtual Athenian dialogue training presented next month by the Rhode Island Town & City Clerks Association. The cost for the course is \$50. Discussion ensued regarding appropriate training using taxpayer dollars regardless of what funds may be in the budget. Martin believes Wolcott does not have the flexibility of spending as other, larger Towns may have. It is likely impossible to set a written policy for the type of training that is appropriate for personnel. But from a policy standpoint, if the training will enhance professional development, for example training on new laws, then it is appropriate. If the training is more for personal development, then it is more problematic. Going forward, the board would like to see improved communication, such as advance information on the type of training, before being asked to sign off on a charge. Motion by Lee to approve the \$50 charge for the virtual course as described. Seconded by Klein. Voting: All in favor.

Transfer Station Heat Update & Revenue/Expense Report: Lee stated that the current solar array has one plugin that is used for the cash register. The previous system had two plugins so that the second one could be used to run the fan. It was noted that the heater is sufficient if there is a fan operating. Someone with solar expertise will be consulted for advice on how to proceed.

Carpenter and Klein reviewed Transfer Station reports. Carpenter noted patterns of high and low usage. Klein provided a handout to board members that reflects steady revenue, but an increase in expenses. While further analysis will be done, it is estimated that at the current rate, 2021 could see a deficit of five to seven percent. It was noted that cardboard consumption has increased. That may be due to the increase in online shopping during the pandemic. That is likely to continue. Without an increase in pricing, the operation appears unsustainable. Discussion ensued regarding prices charged in Wolcott and surrounding towns. Transfer stations throughout the County are experiencing problems. Klein suggested as possibilities: increasing prices; not requesting roll offs be picked up if not really needed; ensuring proper pricing of items as customers pay. The board will consider possible changes in pricing to discuss at the August 4 meeting, then vote. The board will invite a representative of the Lamoille County Solid Waste Management District to attend the August 4 meeting.

Vermont Council on Rural Development (VCRD) Grant Opportunity: Klein wrote an application for a \$4,000 grant for an energy efficient project. No matching funds are required. The proposal is to replace the five lamps and posts outside Town Office, some of which are broken, with solar lights. Klein distributed to the board a handout depicting how the proposed lamps would look. Motion by Lee to submit the grant application. Seconded by Carpenter. Voting: All in favor. Klein will submit the application before tomorrow's deadline.

Thoughts on Community Engagement and Vision for Town: Martin is seeking ideas on how to increase community involvement to address several important opportunities and projects available to the Town. Inquiries will be made to see what groups would like to be involved. A good date for the event might be after Labor Day.

Carpenter Needed: It was noted that repairs are needed around Town that would require the skills of a carpenter. Board members agreed it is a good idea to retain the services of an individual with the required skill set to do the work.

Unfinished Business

Asset Management Plan: Tabled.

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

Adjourn: Motion by Klein to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Lee. Voting: All in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Deb Klein

Next regularly scheduled meeting - August 4, 2021