

**Wolcott Selectboard Meeting
Minutes
July 20, 2022**

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, Richard Lee, Allen Carpenter, Kurt Billings
Employees: Belinda Harris Clegg, Deb Klein
Public: Dolan Patrick, Paul McGrath, Lucien Gravel, Dana Gravel, Jim Paradee, Jim Holton,
Michael Paradee, Alyson McCarthy, Robert Melfry, Gordon Young
Guest: Kate Wanner, Senior Project Manager, The Trust for Public Land

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

Amendments to the Agenda: None.

Approve Minutes of July 6, 2022: Minutes amended on Page 2 under Project Manager Report changing the cost of roadside mowing from \$7,000 to \$9,000; and on Page 3 under Paving Grant replacing the words “seek a grant next year” with “use the grant we have next year.” Motion by Klein to accept the Minutes of July 6 as amended. Seconded by Lee. No further discussion.

Voting: All in favor.

Comments from the Community: Jim Holton, Fire Chief, requested a letter from the Selectboard granting permission for a coin drop to be held on September 3 and 4. Motion by Lee to approve the Fire Department holding a coin drop fundraiser on September 3 and 4 this year. Seconded by Carpenter.

Voting: All in favor.

Holton asked the board to apply for a grant through Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT) available to PACIF members in the approximate amount of \$2,700 for the purchase of reflective vests, gloves, and other safety equipment. No local match is required. Motion by Klein to approve the Selectboard submitting a grant application through PACIF for the purchase of safety equipment for the Fire Department. Seconded by Lee. Voting: All in favor.

Correspondence: Martin conveyed that Lamoille County Planning Commission (LCPC) suggests waiting until next year for the recreation grant to move the parking area at the North Wolcott ballfield because there is work that needs to be done in preparation. The Red Cross sent to the board a request for an appropriation. The Town received a \$477 refund as a result of an audit for Workman’s Comp. The board received confirmation from the Vermont Homeowners Assistance Program that a Wolcott resident’s request for assistance is being processed. An invoice was received from All Metals for the demolition and cleanup work done on the Town’s property on East Hill Road. Correspondence was received from the State of Vermont regarding quarterly highway funds. The Selectboard received notice from the State that the local Cannabis Control Board needs to meet to consider the Wolcott grow application that was approved by the State.

PUBLIC HEARING: Amendments to Street Naming & Street Numbering Ordinance

Amendments were made to the Ordinance for two reasons. First, the Development Review Board (DRB) determined that the Street Naming Ordinance did not comport with the Wolcott Subdivision By-Law regulations, so requested an amendment. The DRB wishes to be able to create a private road when one or two structures exist and there is the possibility for future development. Second, the board plans to move forward with a Town-wide 911 sign project, similar to Hyde Park and Elmore, using ARPA funds, necessitating changes in the wording of the Ordinance. The board reviewed the language in the amended Ordinance. Motion by Klein to adopt the Street Naming & Street Numbering Ordinance as amended. Seconded by Lee. No further discussion. Voting: All in favor. Pursuant to State statute, the amended Ordinance becomes effective 60 days after date of adoption, barring the filing of a petition.

Kate Wanner, The Trust for Public Land – Town Forest update

Wanner stated the Bourne's property being considered for inclusion in the Town Forest is now available for sale. This property would be in addition to the Bedell property already under consideration, as was voted upon at the Special Town Meeting. Wanner stated there are several reasons why including the Bourne's property would be advantageous, including available funding sources. Having greater than 700 acres allows for multiple uses including old growth and non-managed areas, trails, hunting and fishing. There could be a trail that would connect to the rail trail. No additional Town funds would be required. The Town would have \$1,000,000 worth of property at a cost of \$25,000. Gordon Young, chair of the Stewardship Committee, stated the Committee favors securing both properties. The additional acreage would give the Town more to work with, and provide more flexibility. Wanner and the Committee will continue to work on details, and bring their findings to the Selectboard for approval. Wanner anticipates a two-phase closing, with the Bedell property being purchased first, and the Bourne property being added within one year.

Project Manager Report

The structure on the Town's East Hill Road property was demolished and the area was cleaned up by All Metals. The estimate for cleanup had been \$5,500, but the actual charge was less. The patch paving work on North Wolcott Road has been completed. Bourne's will install a propane heater in the Town Garage. Painting of the Garage will start next week, requiring rental of a man-lift. A landowner on Morey Hill has applied for property tax relief from the State. While the application is pending, the property will not go to tax sale. The Town is working with Bourne's on a fixed price for heating oil. The Town is working with Kofile on the fixed IP address issue. One of the Town's plow trucks has mechanical problems. It is estimated repairs would be \$25,000 to \$30,000. An order for a new truck was placed about one year ago, but the delivery date keeps getting pushed back due to supply chain issues. The current estimate is for a November delivery. Green Mountain Services has been asked to keep the Town and emergency services updated on the special needs of those who are housed in the duplexes on White Tail Drive. Klein reviewed the Sheriff's report for the month of June.

Selectboard review/action

Gulf Road weight limits: Martin stated the one-lane bridge on Gulf Road has had a posted weight limit of 6 tons. Overweight permits issued by the Town have excluded Gulf Road. A Gulf Road resident has expressed concern about the safety of the bridge given the weight of the trucks that regularly use the road. Klein reviewed the history. In 2011 the road foreman at the time reported to the board that he wanted to post the bridge at 6 tons. There was no Selectboard motion. In 2012 the Selectboard moved to have overweight permits exclude trucks in excess of 24,000 pounds on the Gulf Road. Weight limit signs of 6 tons are posted on either side of the bridge, but from VT Rt 15, the weight limit sign says 24,000 pounds. State statute sets the weight limit at 24,000 pounds. Klein stated the 6-ton weight limit

is not based upon State inspections and that the engineer ratings are good. He stated the posting of the 6-ton weight limit signs appears to have been done arbitrarily, and was not approved by the Selectboard. Excluding Gulf Road from the overweight permits precludes use by the school bus, heating oil, garbage collection, and other service vehicles, besides private trucking companies, resulting in selective enforcement, or a shutdown of commerce. The Sheriff's Office can enforce the speed of vehicles, but not their weight. A safety issue exists for trucks turning right from VT Rt 15 onto North Wolcott Road. Trucks cannot maneuver the turn without entering into the oncoming lane. Motion by Klein to rescind the 2012 Selectboard motion and redo the overweight permits by removing the Gulf Road restriction, and remove the 6-ton weight limit signs from Gulf Road. Seconded by Lee. Voting: 4 in favor, Billings abstained. Motion carried.

Ballet Wolcott – Town Hall Rental for 2022-2023: Klein stated that Ballet Wolcott requested a reduced rental fee for a limited time. As a result of Covid, the Ballet has been hit hard financially, and would like a little time to get back on their feet. Klein said he would hate to see Ballet Wolcott go, since there have been only about 15 non-Ballet renters in the past year. As a compromise, Klein suggested that Ballet Wolcott's monthly rental rate be reduced from \$350 per month with the understanding that Ballet staff be responsible for cleaning Town Hall after their use instead of the Town paying for cleaning. Motion by Klein to reduce Ballet Wolcott's monthly rental fee for Town Hall from \$350 to \$250 with the understanding the Ballet does their own cleaning, from September through the end of the year. Seconded by Lee. No further discussion. Voting: 4 in favor, Martin abstained since she serves on their board. Motion carried.

Transfer Station: The Transfer Station has been losing money. The Town's cost to dispose of tires has gone up. Disposal of compost is a high cost. Motion by Lee to increase the cost of a regular tire from \$5 to \$6, and an extra \$2 charge for a rim. Seconded by Billings. Voting: All in favor. The Transfer Station attendant will be advised to have only one compost bin available at a time. Should that bin fill, the other container can be brought out. The point is to eliminate paying for pickup of two half full containers instead of one full one. The board will look further into the composting issue. Selectboard members are volunteering to take trash from Town buildings to the Transfer Station, and assist the Transfer Station attendant. The attendant does not have a helper.

Delinquent Tax Agreement Request: The board received a request from a landowner on Jones Lane to enter into an agreement to pay delinquent taxes inhouse rather than have the property go to tax sale. The landowner requested to pay off the \$974.93 due by making \$100 payments each month for four months, and then \$150 per month until paid in full. The request is made for health reasons. The landowner has a history of successfully completing payment plans with the Town. Motion by Lee to enter into the payment plan as requested to pay the \$974.93 in delinquent taxes. Seconded by Billings. Voting: All in favor.

North Wolcott Road crosswalk request: An elderly resident who lives along North Wolcott Road has requested the creation of a crosswalk so he can more safely access his mailbox. The board will need to research the issue.

Wolcott Town Event – August 26, 2022: Martin distributed to board members a list of food and items needed for the second annual Town Event that will be held Friday, August 26. Booths will be set up like last year, where folks can glean information about what is happening on the Town level. Topics will include the Town Forest, broadband, schoolhouse revitalization, waste water, and hybrid meetings. The Library will have an open house. Pots and soil will be provided in the Town Garden for folks to plant

seeds for a windowsill herb garden. Food will be provided. The Fire Department has again volunteered to grill hamburgers and hotdogs. The Library will provide cookies and popcorn. Ice cream will again be provided by the school board. The Girl Scouts will oversee children's games, and balloon making will be back. Performances by Ballet Wolcott. The board is seeking someone, or a group, to perform music.

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

Respectfully submitted by Deb Klein

Next regularly scheduled Selectboard meeting – August 3, 2022