

# Wolcott Selectboard Meeting Minutes September 7, 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, Allen Carpenter, Kurt Billings, Richard Lee  
Employees: Deb Klein  
Public: Dolan Patrick, Bruce Wheeler  
Guest: Christa Shute, NEK Broadband, Executive Director

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

**Amendments to the Agenda:** Martin asked that the NEK Craftsbury/Wolcott Broadband opportunity discussion under Selectboard review/action be moved up in the Agenda once Christa Shute zooms in. No objection. Martin announced she has received an update on the status of the Brook Road culvert.

**Approve Minutes of August 17, 2022:** Motion by Klein to approve the Minutes of August 17. Seconded by Billings. Discussion: None. Voting: All in favor.

**NEK Craftsbury/Wolcott Broadband opportunity:** Christa Shute, the Executive Director of NEK Broadband, was present to address questions the board might have regarding the broadband opportunity that was initially discussed at the August 17 meeting. Wolcott has an opportunity to use ARPA funds, and receive two matches, to have fiber installed in certain areas of Town. Fiber that will be installed in Craftsbury can be extended to 1.3 miles of upper Town Hill Road with 26 premises; 1.3 miles of upper East Hill Road with 12 premises; and .65 mile of Manley Road with 7 premises. Of the 45 premises covered, the State has identified 14 as being high priority based on criteria including: students, those working from home, and those needing medical care. This would greatly expedite service to these areas. The deadline to take advantage of the opportunity is September 15, 2022. Shute reviewed with the board several maps to help explain the NEK broadband structure, and to respond to board questions.

Eight Towns have voted in favor of using ARPA funds to supplement the NEK broadband backbone build in order to extend out construction. There are four or five more Towns that have yet to vote, including Craftsbury. Motion by Klein to use ARPA funds in the amount of \$52,917 and receive matching funds for fiber to be extended to portions of Town Hill Road, East Hill Road, and Manley Road, contingent upon Craftsbury extending a spur to Wolcott. Seconded by Lee. Voting: All in favor. Shute stated it is difficult to say when fiber may be extended to the rest of Wolcott. Wheeler added that with the extension there will be several other ways for people to get good internet before the fiber project is completed.

### **Comments from the Community/Correspondence:**

The Town received a flyer as a reminder that the Vermont League of Cities and Towns Fair will be held October 6 in Killington. Also received is a notice that 2023 Municipal Planning Grants are available up to \$26,400. The application deadline is December 1, 2022.

### **Project Manager Report**

Champlain Oil has offered to sell to the Town a .63 acre parcel of land that abuts Town land along VT Rte. 15. A gas station had been there some years ago. Although the underground tanks were removed, the soil was supposed to be tested each year. A brown field test will be ordered through Lamoille County Planning Commission (LCPC) at no cost to the Town. If purchased, the land could possibly be used as a parking area or to house electric charging stations.

There is an electrical line around Town Office that extends to the well head that needs to be buried underground. The company that started the project does not currently have a trencher. The Town is seeking the services of a handyman. An ad will be placed for plowing and shoveling at Town Office and Town Hall. Research is being conducted on purchasing a sander that would be used with the Town's one-ton truck.

The Litter Committee is working with Helpsy to have two bins installed at the Transfer Station for the collection of textiles. Accepted items will include clothing, linens, footwear, and more. There would be no charge to those making donations. Lee noted that customers are not permitted to enter the metals bin at the Transfer Station.

It was noted that the cost to the Town to run ads in the *News & Citizen* has increased considerably. The increased cost may require the fee for certain permits to be raised.

### **Selectboard review/action**

**Town Forest Stewardship Committee:** A vacancy exists on the Committee. Roger LaChance, East Hill Road, has volunteered to fill the spot. Motion by Lee to appoint Roger LaChance to the Town Forest Stewardship Committee. Seconded by Klein. Voting: All in favor.

**Lamoille FiberNet:** A vacancy exists on the Lamoille FiberNet CUD. Andrew Ross, Town Hill Road, has volunteered to represent the Town. Motion by Lee to appoint Andrew Ross as Wolcott's representative on the Lamoille FiberNet CUD. Seconded by Billings. Voting: All in favor.

**Gulf Road:** A Gulf Road resident questioned the 35 mph speed limit on a portion of Gulf Road, suggesting it is too high. Through the curves by the Transfer Station, the speed limit is posted at 25 mph. Martin shared with the board the results of her research. LCPC provided her with names of engineers who might do a speed study of the road. One was not interested, another estimated the cost for a study would be between \$1,500 and \$2,000. Martin was told by Vermont Local Roads that a speed study could, in fact, result in a higher speed limit. LCPC could set up a speed monitor. The board declined to pursue a speed study based on several factors: low number of complaints, the expense to taxpayers for a speed study; geography and layout of the road; accident history being very, very low; and from observation, most drivers go the speed they feel is comfortable.

**Heating oil:** The Town is still researching the best rate for heating oil. It may be that 3% below rack is the best rate available.

**Town Office closed September 23:** It was announced that Town Office will be closed on Friday, September 23 to allow for cleaning and organizing.

**Errors & Omissions:** The Listers sought authorization from the Selectboard to change the Grand List. The request was made to correct the assessment of a property owner. The board authorized the change as requested.

**Community Barbeque 9-9-2022:** Due to inclement weather, the Community Barbeque had to be rescheduled for September 9 from 5:00 to 7:00 PM. The Fire Department will again grill hamburgers and hotdogs. Corn on the cob will be served, along with pickles and dilly beans from garden produce. Canopies, tables and chairs will be set up for the information booths. The Library will host an open house, there will be arts and crafts for kids, along with balloon animals, and popcorn. The Girl Scouts will organize children's games in Depot Park. Ballet Wolcott will give a performance. The Town Garden will provide containers, soil and seeds for an indoor planter. The Girl Scouts and volunteers will provide cookies. All food and events are free. Donations will be requested to offset some of the expenses.

**Adjourn:** Motion by Lee to adjourn. Seconded by Billings. Voting: All in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 7:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Deb Klein

*Next regularly scheduled Selectboard meeting – September 21, 2022*