**Windham VT Selectboard Meeting Minutes**

**August 1, 2022 Regular Meeting**

**Via Zoom**

Kord Scott, selectboard chair

George Dutton, selectboard

Michael Pelton, selectboard

Mary (Mac) McCoy, selectboard clerk

Bill Casey, lister

Russell Cumming, lister

Bill Dunkel, chair planning comm & ZBA

*Others Attending*:

Joyce Cumming

Maureen Bell

Vance Bell

Carolyn Rubin

Crystal Corriveau

Gail Wyman

Beth McDonald

Cathy Fales

Elizabeth Sober

Leigh Merinoff

Ginny Crittenden

Barbara Jean Quinn

Al McLaine

Pat McLaine

Tom Widger

Tom Johnson

Louise Johnson

Carrie Tintle

Ron Cohen

Becky Eliastam

Erin Kehoe

Abby Pelton

**Call to Order**

Kord announced the meeting, called it to order, and started the recording at 5:33 PM.

**Additions/Changes to Agenda**

There were two changes to the agenda. In item 2), info after the dash should not be there. In item 4), date of minutes should be 7/18.

**Announcements/Reminders**

* Kord said he realized posting the full parking lot on the agenda for the 7/18 meeting was too much, and future agendas will contain only what is expected to be addressed.
* Kord apologized for confusion at the 7/18 meeting when the selectboard returned from executive session, and it was unclear to those who wanted to attend the remainder of the meeting when they could return. The only motions that passed after the return from executive session were to approve the animal control contract and to approve the pay orders. Kord asked if anyone wanted to discuss these issues and have the selectboard reconsider the motions. No one present asked for that.
* Kord announced that there will be a presentation at the 8/15 selectboard meeting regarding broadband from DVFiber. David Cherry, Windham’s representative to this project, wants as many people as possible to attend this and to sign up for this service. (See flyer attached.)
* Kord announced that there will be a Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA) meeting tomorrow 8/2 to address the zoning violations on a property on Wheeler Road.
* Kord announced that a culvert is being installed within the next two weeks on Chase Road., and that road will be closed for a month on the end of the road going to Townshend.
* Michael announced that the Fire Company BBQ will be this Saturday, 8/13, and he encouraged everyone to attend. (See flyer attached.)

**Approval of Minutes**

There was one change to the minutes from the 7/18 meeting related to the pay orders. Michael wanted to add that the funds for the uniform service could be used instead by the crew to buy their own work cloths, including boots.

**Motion:** To approve the minutes form 7/18/22 with the change noted. Kord moved, and all agreed.

**Public Comment**

* Vance stated that the ZBA meeting would be open at the Meeting House, but the AV equipment that is needed had never been purchased, although the selectboard discussed buying this more than 1½ years ago. George said he had looked into this but wanted more information and wanted the ARPA committee to discuss it. Vance will set up for the 8/2 meeting with the borrowed equipment currently available. Becky E. volunteered to help with this, as she has experience with AV - Zoom coordination.

**Next Step:** The selectboard will see that costs are determined and approved for this expenditure.

* Joyce noted that proper procedures were not followed at the last meeting related to going in and out of executive session. She said Russell’s name should not have been mentioned. She further stated that Russell had sent Kord the Open Meeting Law regulations, and Kord should follow them.

**Correspondence**

* Joyce wrote that she didn’t think the full list of parking lot issues provided at the last meeting were sufficient for discussion.
* Bill Casey wrote that Abby should not be allowed to have the Friends of Windham School’s logo visible at the selectboard meetings; he also wanted to know why his request to change the speed limit by the school on weekends had not been addressed.
* John Finley wrote asking to serve on Windham’s planning commission.
* The state of Vermont sent an order for reappraisal.

**New Business**

1. Response to Michael Pelton’s statement – Joyce and Bill Casey responded to the statement Michael made at the 7/18 selectboard meeting. Joyce said Michael wasn’t present at the exchanged he referred to between Wren Watts and Russell at the post office where Wren works, and she (Joyce) was there. She said the exchange lasted less than one minute, in which Russell told Wren that she would be receiving a letter about a structure on her property. Joyce said Wren might have been “put out” because she had already received the letter, as Russell said nothing that could have been described as an attack or harassment.

Bill C. said a selectboard meeting is not a forum to make an attack on someone, and that Wren and Kermit had exceeded the two-minute limit for public comments. Bill said Michael did not ask Russell what had happened, and he suggested that Michael was motivated by his support for the school, which Kermit also supports. Bill referred to Kermit’s statement that Russell repeatedly tried to run over his birds and gave him the finger, saying it is impossible to do these two things at the same time. Bill said Kermit has violated zoning regulations, as have others, which the listers see when they get property information from owners. Bill said that Michael owes Russell an apology.

Michael said the intent of his statement was, in part, to address complaints the select-board had received about Mr. Cumming. He recognized that the selectboard doesn’t oversee the listers, and his statements referred to the complaints as being “alleged.” His statement asked residents to follow policies, and encouraged all public officials to show respect for residents.

1. Better Road Grant Award – Kord said the town has received $20,000 for work on Wheeler and Abbott Roads and $6,000 to create a plan for our roads, following Act 64 requirements.

**Next Step:** Review our plans; add expiration date to the calendar.

1. Planning Commission Appointment – John Finley was considered for the planning commission. Bill said he had email conversations with John, who is completing training for the Vermont State Trooper Auxiliary. There was a question as to whether John will be a full-time resident and whether or not that matters. Bill said residency is not required. John has served on other planning commissions. Michael said John’s resume was impressive, and George said he looked like a good addition. Bill said John wants to participate after his trooper training is completed.

**Moved:** To appoint John Finley to the planning commission. Kord moved, and all agreed.

**Next Step:** Appoint John Finley to the Zoning Board of Adjustment at a later date.

1. Approval for ARPA Committee Description and Members – Mac, who serves as the committee’s clerk, gave on overview of the committee’s description (full description is attached), which will recommend to the selectboard the best use of the $118,000 the town will receive in ARPA funds. She mentioned the town is required to have a diverse committee, which it is, and to share work with the town as a whole, which they will do. She also read the list of the nine people who volunteered to serve on the committee (attached).

**Moved:** To approve the committee description. Kord moved, and all agreed

**Moved:** To appoint the committee members listed. Kord moved, and all agreed.

**Next Step:** Mac will notify Town Clerk Ellen that she needs to prepare the oaths for the committee members, and she will let committee members know they must be sworn in.

1. Mountain Housing Meeting – Michael reported that this organization builds affordable homes that working people with lower incomes can afford. Paul Alcorn from this group would like to speak with the selectboard about possibilities in Windham.

**Next Step:** Contact them about coming to a meeting.

1. PVR Order for Reappraisal – We are required to reappraise all Windham properties. Cy Bailey from Property Valuation and Review (PVR) encouraged us to sign this order. Michael said it is in our best interest to move forward.

**Moved:** To sign and send the order. Kord moved, and all agreed

**Old Business**

1. Calendar Review – Kord reviewed the items on the selectboard calendar. The 7/31 item came from the VLCT calendar, and neither he nor Treasurer Kathy Scott know anything about it. The 8/1 item for reporting the VT Homeland Security and Intelligence only applies to much larger towns. Kord did not talk to Rachel Spangler about Rescue, Inc. by 8/1, as she is on vacation. Crystal said that she and Rachel received an email from Rescue, Inc. saying they have a good working relationship with Londonderry Rescue and want to continue as they are. No selectboard members are able to attend the leadership summit on 8/10. The WN&N deadline is 8/15.

**Next Step:** Crystal and Rachel will discuss the situation and report to Kord.

**Next Step:** Someone will write the selectboard article for the WN&N.

**Next Step:** Bill asked Mac to add to the calendar that on 8/17 a reply will be due on the bid received from Vermont Foam Insulation to insulate the Meeting House and Town Office. (That date might be extended.)

1. IT and Computer Security at the Town Office – Michael said this issue needs to be addressed as soon as possible. Kord said we’ve looked at Carbonite, as VLCT approved that kind of system. We could go with a local person, and put the work out for bids. The state uses Microsoft 365, which we might consider, because we need Microsoft software updates that would be included. Microsoft will donate their 365 to nonprofits but doesn’t know if a town will qualify.

**Next Step:** Becky volunteered to help with this. She and Kord will talk.

1. Connecting Ingalls and Old Farm Roads – Richard Paré, road foreman, said there are risks involved with this work, and it might be best to do it in pieces. Michael asked that Richard come up with a proposal. Perhaps we can get help from Better Roads.

**Next Step:** Kord will talk to Richard to have him recommend the best way forward.

1. Signs at Carlton’s Corner – Richard told Kord that he has some of the needed signs and posts, and he’ll order whatever else is needed.
2. Roadside Mower – The Springfield John Deere representative was scheduled to come here to give an estimate on the trade-in value of our loader. Kord doesn’t know if that happened. We’ve had two quotes on an over-the-guard-rail mower.  
   **Next Step:** Determine what equipment is best for roadside mowing.
3. Using NEMRC for Reappraisal – Russell stated that he had negotiated with NEMRC, and they agreed to start our appraisal in 2024. He had sent out 10 requests for proposals, and received two replies. The other company’s bid (besides NEMRC) was more expensive, couldn’t finish the work until 2025, and would not consider an earlier date. Kord had concerns about NEMRC’s payment system, but Cy Bailey from the state’s PVR said no other towns have reported any problems with it.

**Next Step:** Cy Bailey will meet with the selectboard on 8/15 to discuss the reappraisal and the state’s expectations.

1. Zoning Issues and Permits – Tomorrow 8/2/22, the ZBA will address the zoning problem related to the construction of the new house on Wheeler Road. This will be a public meeting, but without public comment. Testimony will be received from the parties involved. Town attorney Bob Fisher will attend, and Bill D. will chair the meeting. The situation has made the selectboard aware that they were not getting copies of zoning permits, and that has been rectified.

**Next Step:** Steps are being taken for improved communication between our zoning administrator (Alison Cummings), the listers, and the selectboard.

1. Town Properties for Sale – There is an 8/15 deadline for offers on the three properties the town owns. Some offers have been received and are in the vault in the Town Office. Russell stated that people don’t know that our town regulations prohibit building on these properties, as all three are smaller than one-acre plots. Bill D. said he had discussed this with Bob Fisher, and whether a house can be built on these plots depends on whether or not there was a house on the property before the zoning regulations went into effect. Carrie and Ron asked how those making offers will know if they can build on the land they made an offer on. Bill said the first zoning regs were in 1954, and we need to look at each property’s records and see when the house there was built and what regs were in effect then.

**Next Step:** Kord will ask Bob F. to clarify this matter – which properties can be built on and who, how, and when we need to notify people about what we find out.

**Next Step:** The selectboard and the zoning administrator will learn more about the zoning regulations.

1. Speed Limits – George asked about speed studies in addition to the one done on West Windham Road. Kord in getting more information about possible studies on Wheeler, Abbott, and the unpaved part of Rt. 121. George said traffic on WWRd. was obnoxious last weekend, as there was an event on the road as well as the usual Hamilton Falls traffic. He would like people who are having events to ask their guests to drive slowly. He also suggested having a study done that focused on WWRd’s weekend traffic only.

Leigh stated that there is speeding on Windham Hill Road by her property, especially speeding logging trucks. She had cones put out in the middle of the road to slow traffic while they had a summer camp, but the town trucks couldn’t get around them. Constable Jim Lawler suggested that she create an in-only and out-only traffic pattern, so no cars have to back out of the property’s parking area. Leigh will pursue that idea. She also asked for any other suggestions for traffic safety control.

In terms of speed studies, Ron asked if White Road could be included. Kord said the mechanical counter measures speed and amount of traffic. Michael would like information also about varying the speed limit at the school.

**Next Step:** Kord will talk to sheriff’s office to see if they will do studies on additional roads, and he’ll ask about varying the speed limit at the school.

1. Invasive Plants – Diane Newton and Alison Trowbridge will write an article about poison parsnip for the upcoming WN&N.
2. Facility Maintenance – Proposals are needed for insulating the Meeting House and the Town Office. George suggested others who insulate, but they are booked. Bill has one proposal for insulating the Meeting House and needs another. The ARPA committee is also looking into this need for insulation. Bill commented that there is no way to insulate the Town Garage.

**Next Step:** Getting additional proposals is needed and will be pursued as possible. Future agendas will consider the three town buildings separately, as they have different issues.

1. Signed Permits for Rt. 121 Culvert Project – These permits have been completed.
2. Bridge 13 Work – Everything related to this project has been completed.
3. Animal Control Agreement – Kord will sign and return this to the Sheriff’s Office.

**Other Old Business/Road Issues**

There were none.

**Payroll/Bills**

**Moved:** To approve the pay orders received from the town treasurer. Kord moved, and all agreed.

**Moved:** To have Kord sign for the payments presented. Kord moved, and all agreed.

Note: Abby was not present at the beginning of the meeting and made an announcement now. She said the Friends of Windham School is raising funds to renovate the multi-purpose room, and she asked for support. Leigh said she would help.

**Adjournment**

**Moved:** To adjourn the meeting at 7:25PM. George moved and all agreed.

The next selectboard meeting is scheduled for August 15, 2022 at 5:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary McCoy, selectboard clerk

**Accompanying documents:**

Email from Joyce Cumming

Email from Bill Casey

Email from John Finley

Letter from Vermont’s Property Valuation and Review

Flyer for DVFiber Presentation at 8/15 Selectboard Meeting

Description of ARPA Committee

List of ARPA Committee Members