

**Windham VT Selectboard Minutes
January 9, 2023 Regular Meeting
Hybrid Meeting at Town Office and on Zoom**

At Town Office

Kord Scott, selectboard chair
George Dutton, selectboard
Mary McCoy (Mac), selectboard clerk
Kathy Scott, town treasurer
Gail Wyman, asst. town treasurer
Richard Paré, road foreman
Ellen McDuffie, town clerk
Carrie Tintle, asst town clerk
Ron Cohen

Attending via Zoom

Michael Pelton, selectboard
Maureen Bell
Jim Lawler
Kathy Jungermann
Imme Maurath
Abby Pelton
Bill Dunkel
Tom Widger

1. Start Recording and Call to Order

Kord announced the meeting, started the recording, and called the meeting to order at 4:40 PM. (The meeting started late due to audio-visual problems.)

2. Changes to Agenda – There were no changes to the agenda.

3. Announcements/Reminders – There were no announcements or reminders.

4. Act on Minutes from the Previous Meeting

Michael had not read the January 3, 2023 minutes, so action on the minutes was delayed until the next meeting.

5. Public Comment – There were no public comments.

6. Payroll/Bills – There were no questions nor discussion.

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

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

7. Old Business

A) Budget Preparation / Roads – Kathy stated that she and Richard worked together to prepare the proposed Roads Budget. The bottom-line total shows a 7.5% increase over the 2022 budget. The proposed 2023 total to be voted on is \$518,524. This is the total needed, shown on Line 92, less the non-tax revenue received.

Line 15 – Total Contract Services were voted at \$41,200, in 2022, and the amount actually spent was \$15,268. We underspent in every category except ditch maintenance. However, services costs are estimated to be \$29,800 in 2023.

Line 20 – Total Diesel Fuel was over-budget nearly \$14,000, due to increases in costs.

Next Step: Kord will contact the state about the contracts for fuel they provide to towns. George will contact other diesel vendors regarding their prices.

Line 54 – Maintenance on the grader was costly this year, but it was not expected to be the case this coming year. The new truck has an extended warranty.

Motion: To increase the amount for Equipment Maintenance to \$30,000. Michael moved, and the motion failed.

Line 58 – The quoted cost for general insurance has increased significantly.

Next Step: Kord will contact the general insurance provider to check on this increase.

Line 66 – This increase in road crew payroll reflects increases in COLA and insurance.

Line 67 – The expense for milage was deleted due to nonuse.

Line 78 – This increase for road materials is due to the increased cost of stone and sure-pack. Kord noted that we set aside funds annually for paving and other road work.

Next Step: Present the amount for road materials in a separate article for Town Meeting.

Line 85 – The cost for Garage Stock/Gas (Line 80) has gone way up.

Motion: To increase the amount for Supplies General (Line 85) from \$2,500 to \$4,000. George moved, and all agreed.

Line 92 – The proposed total will change, based upon quotes and information yet to come.

Next Step: Approve the Roads Budget for 2023 at the next meeting.

B) General Fund – Kathy noted that the heading on the spreadsheets say 2021, but they are the proposed budget for 2023. The bottom-line total proposed (Line 189) is \$267,131.

Line 6 – The amount due the Transfer Station has increase significantly.

Next Step: Kord will find out why the Transfer Station fee increased so much and if it can be decreased, as it was last year.

Line 13 – The payroll for the auditors (and others who are paid hourly) was increased, as Kathy calculated wages to reflect pay raises from \$15/hour to \$17/hour.

Line 35 – The full cost of the NEMRC Reappraisal is not shown in the listers' total, as it requires an article for approval at Town Meeting. Kord said it has been suggested that we move away from having three elected listers to having one paid professional.

Next Steps: Place an article for the reappraisal in the warning for Town Meeting. At a later date, consider changing from elected listers to a hired professional.

Line 41 – An increase of \$200 for heating oil at the Meeting House was discussed with general agreement, although no motion was made. Imme, treasurer for the Meeting House Committee, requested another of \$5,000 for the Meeting House Fund.

Next Steps: Kathy will determine the number of gallons used in the past for fuel at the Meeting House and finalize the amount for 2023. George will call oil vendors to check on

prices, and Kord will find out the state rate. The selectboard will present an article at Town Meeting to determine the amount to be placed in the Meeting House Fund.

Line 57 – Bill said the Planning Commission’s biggest expense was the legal cost related to the zoning violation on Wheeler Rd. This is not a part of the Planning Commission’s budget, as all legal expenses are in the Selectboard’s budget. It was agreed that the Planning Commission members have given many hours of work and should receive an increase in compensation, which has been \$500 per person.

Motion: To increase the stipend for Planning Commissioners to \$700 each, making \$4,900 the total amount on Line 54, and to eliminate the category of Planning Commission Clerk on Line 55. George moved, and all agreed.

Line 65 – No contract has been received from Londonderry Rescue, so the amount budgeted is not firm.

Next Step: Find out how much Londonderry Rescue will be for 2023.

Line 66 – There were questions about the \$30,000 requested by the Fire Company, as they have two new trucks and a healthy bank account.

Next Step: Find out why the Fire Company needs the amount requested.

Line 67 – The compensation for the constable was discussed in recognition of the vital services Constable Jim Lawler is providing the town. Abby thanked Jim for his good work. Bill Dunkel asked that he also enforce the timber harvesting regulations. Funds are also needed to send Jim for state training that will give him enforcement powers, which he currently doesn’t have. Jim has a good working relationship with the sheriff, which he will maintain.

Next Step: Jim will find out what his training will cost, including ways to waive some or all of the cost. The selectboard will reconsider his compensation at the next meeting.

Line 68 – Compensation for the Health Officer may be increased.

Next Step: Marcia Clinton will be contacted to find out from her what services she is providing the town and what time is involved.

Line 71 – There was brief mention of adding a line item to compensate our Emergency Managers. No action was determined.

Line 75 – The successful use of Survey Monkey by the ARPA Committee has raised awareness about the future possible use of this and other internet services.

Motion: To change the title of this category to “Online Subscriptions” and to change the amount budgeted to \$500. George moved, and all agreed.

Line 78 – The legal expense related to delinquent taxes is decreased by the funds that are collected from the parties connected to that expense.

Line 85 – The lawsuit related to the vote to close Windham Elementary School has not been decided.

Line 86 – The legal costs for the sale of town properties were offset by the sale of the properties.

Line 91 – There was discussion from those present that the compensation for the selectboard members (now \$2500 each) is too low. One suggestion was to raise the amount to \$3,000 each. Bill suggested that the selectboard chair should receive more. However, the selectboard was uncomfortable giving themselves a raise.

Line 95 – The total budget for the selectboard reflects all legal services, as all contacts with Bob Fisher, our town attorney, must go through the selectboard. The need for funds to pay grant writer(s) and administrator(s) was discussed. This work is very time-consuming, and with the town's increased receipt of grant funds, help is needed.

Next Step: Michael will find out what the going rate is for grant writers/administrators. At the next selectboard meeting, the selectboard will determine whether to add this category to the budget.

Line 114 – Input is needed from the Social Services Committee as to the requests received.

Next Step: Get that information and set the proposed budget for social services in 2023.

Line 118 and 119 – The clerk and her assistants are budgeted an increase in salary, based on the number of hours they work and an increase in the hourly rate of \$15 to \$17.

Line 123 and Line 139 – The cost of digitizing the index for the land records will be covered by the ARPA funds, which are not a part of the General Fund's budget.

Line 144 – There was some discussion about the budgeted amount for Website Management. Maureen spoke for Vance, her husband, saying most of the budgeted expense goes for the website itself. She also said that Vance intends to continue as website manager.

Line 150 – Kathy stated that she has had banking problems since People's Bank became M&T Bank, so that she is considering switching to TD Bank, which provides additional helpful services. Another possibility is to do some of the banking through NEMRC services.

Line 153 – This cost for supplies was over-budget in 2022, due to upgrades in the Town Office. Similar expenditures are not expected in 2023.

Line 165 – The cost of furnace heating oil has increased significantly.

Line 168 – Ellen collects fees for processing permits and records and for making copies on the office copier. She said there is no clear policy about who can use the copier for free. For example, the Fire Company runs 600 fund-raising letters twice a year at no cost to them.

Next Step: Ellen will determine what it costs the town per page to make a copy. The selectboard will discuss a possible policy related to the copier's use.

Line 172 – Kathy said the costs of the payroll company have gone up.

Next Step: Kathy will explore the payroll services provided by TD Bank and NEMRC.

Line 187 – Last year, \$1,581 was collected for zoning fees. This is used to cover the expenses of the Zoning Department, including the zoning administrator’s pay.

8. Adjourn regular meeting and stop recording.

Motion: To adjourn the meeting at 7:18 PM. George moved, and all agreed.

The next selectboard meeting is scheduled for Monday, January 16, 2023 at 5:30 PM

Respectfully submitted,
Mary McCoy (Mac), selectboard clerk
Approved 1/16/23

Attachments:

2023 Proposed Roads Budget

2023 Proposed General Fund Budget