

**Windham VT Selectboard Minutes
March 20, 2023 Regular Meeting
Held on Zoom Only**

Kord Scott, selectboard chair	Bill Casey	Gail Wyman
Michael Pelton, selectboard	Russ Cumming	Abby Pelton
George Dutton, selectboard	Cathy Edgerly Fales	Ginny Crittenden
Mary McCoy, selectboard clerk	Maureen Bell	Tom and Louis Johnson
Kathy Scott, town treasurer	Bill Dunkel	Kathy Jungermann
		Imme & Steve Maurath

1. Start Recording and Call to Order

Kord announced the meeting, called the meeting to order, and started the recording at 5:30 PM.

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

3. Announcements/Reminders – There were no announcements

4. Act on Minutes from the Previous Meeting

Motion: To approve the minutes from March 6, 2023. Kord moved, and all agreed.

5. Public Comment – Ginny complimented the road crew on their good work dealing with the huge snow storm that hit here March 13-15.

6. Correspondence – There was no correspondence.

7. Payroll/Bills – There was no discussion.

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

8. Discussion/Motion for Kord to sign for SB

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

9. Staff Reports & Discussion

A) Bank Changes and New Accounting System – Kathy said the process of switching from T&M Bank to our new bank, TD Bank, begins tomorrow (3/21/23). The town will still have four accounts. We will get 2% interest, instead of the previous 1%. Kathy will be able to scan our deposits, instead of physically depositing them at a bank location. She will also work with our vendors to make direct deposits to pay our invoices. This will save time and expense, as there will be fewer trips to the bank, no checks to write, and no postage or envelopes.

Kathy said there was supposed to be a training this past week on the new NEMRC accounting system, but it was postponed due to the storm. They are uploading our ledgers and amendments, and Kathy expects to be up and running in a couple of weeks.

Motion: To change our payment policy for the selectboard's approval of expenditures, so that the treasurer no longer presents a list of checks for approval but now presents a list of invoices for approval. Michael moved (with some wording from Kathy), and all agreed.

B) ARPA Committee plans for 4/1 meeting and 4/30 report to U.S. Treasury – Mac (Mary McCoy) said the committee met on 3/16 instead of on 3/15 as scheduled, due to the snow storm. They made plans for the April 1 tour of the Meeting House to see its problems and consider various funding opportunities for its repair and renewal. She said she, Kord, and Imme will meet to file the annual ARPA report to the federal government, due 4/30.

10) New Business

A) Discuss questions from the Vermont Emergency Mngmt via A. Sebatto – Kord explained that these questions from the state could be answered from our reports to the federal government.

Next Step: Kord will send the questions to Imme and Kathy J. who review them and make suggestions, and the selectboard will complete the answers at their next meeting.

B) Report on Municipal Roads General Permit (MRGP) Renewal (due 4/1/23) – Kord said he finished this annual report required by the Act 64 Clean Water Act. A check was issued by us but has not yet been received.

C) Update on the Mini MERP Grant – Mac reported that she and four others from the ARPA Committee completed the online application for the MERP Mini-grant, asking for the full \$4,000 possible. These grants are awarded on a first-come-first-serve basis, and we believe we were one of the first towns to apply. Cathy said we plan to use the funds to create a plan for the Meeting House that will be developed at a townwide meeting, dovetailing with no-cost work by the Brattleboro Development Corporation. Bill said the MERP funds are supposed to be awarded in two months.

D) Discuss how future meetings will be held – George said we need to get back to hybrid meetings, and he offered to come in person now and then. Michael said he prefers Zoom but recognizes that meeting in person is preferred by some people. Kord noted that when we had hybrid meetings, only a few people came. He said the VLCT has asked the state legislature to allow Zoom only meetings on a permanent basis. Many in attendance stated their preference for Zoom meetings.

Kord said he learned that if we have hybrid meetings, a selectboard member does not have to be there in person. Perhaps Ellen would be willing to be there. Michael said we need a computer for this with an auxiliary camera and microphone. Cathy suggested moving the computer from the library which is not being used. Kord said we have a laptop that Becky Eliastom provided, and it has a wide range camera. Mac mentioned using ARPA funds for AV equipment.

Next Step: Kord will ask Ellen if she would stay for the meetings.

E) School Board's idea of selling school's heating oil to the town – Russ explained that the school now has a propane-powered heating system so has no use for the 900-1000 gallons of oil in their oil tank. The school board wants to sell the oil to the town, which has three buildings heated by oil. They would sell it at market value, which is about \$4.50 per gallon. The school would pay to have the oil pumped from its tank and transferred to town buildings' tanks. Questions were asked about how much was in the town's current tanks, whether the school's oil was clean, and who should pay for the transferring the oil. Russ said he would find out how much is currently in the town tanks,

and he would take care of all the logistics. There was back and forth between Michael and Russ over who should pay for the pumping. Michael felt the town should pay for it. **Moved:** To buy the oil from the school after Russ determines the exact cost and informs the selectboard. Kord moved, and all agreed. (The decision about who pays for the transfer was postponed.)

11) Old Business

A) Appoint Bill Dunkel as ex-officio chair of the PC – Kord said that formal action was required.

Moved: To change Bill Dunkel’s status as a member of the Planning Commission to the Planning Commission’s ex-officio chair. Kord moved, and all agreed.

Next Step: Kord will ask Ellen to prepare the oath of office for Bill to sign.

B) Info from guest re Chester’s process for short-term rentals – This was postponed until the representative from Chester can meet with us.

C) Update/discussion re Altpfart property (burned building near Abbot) – Kord discussed this with Bob Fisher, our town attorney. Bob will write a letter to the owners which will be sent by Ali Cumming, Windham’s zoning administrator, as the letter will state the zoning regulations that the property is violating. The letter will also include information about a possible buyout of the property by FEMA.

Next Steps: Send out the letter this week.

D) Update re highway ordinance and speed limits – Michael drafted an ordinance and sent it to the selectboard. It was different from what was decided at the last selectboard meeting, based on input he received from town residents. He thinks we need a consistent speed limit for everywhere in town, and it should be 35 mph, with 30 mph limits for South Windham, the area of the school and town office, and an area from the town garage to Four Corners. On Horsenail Hill/White Road it would be set at 30. Exact locations need to be defined. Michael asked that the decisions made at the last meeting be reconsidered. George said he liked those decisions.

Discussion followed about what the speed limits should be, with several voices saying people are unlikely to go 30 or 35, but by setting lower limits, perhaps people will not go 50. Some said it is undesirable to have the limit change back and forth on Windham Hill Road. The selectboard members seemed to agree that one limit of 35 mph for the town was best, with the three areas designated at the last meeting set at 30, and the paved section of Rt 121 kept at 40 as it is.

Next Steps: Michael will rewrite the ordinance to reflect one limit of 35 mph except for three areas of 30 mph and one of 40 mph. George will determine the exact locations for the 30 mph areas. The draft ordinance will then be reviewed by Bob Fisher, and two town hearings will be held before the ordinance becomes final and adopted.

E) Update on outreach re Highway Dept Property – An email is ready to be sent out about the town’s need for property. Kord advised removing the reference to the Fire Company possibly sharing the property, as they are not onboard with this idea. Cathy said she did some research about small town fire companies and highway departments sharing land and facilities. She has info if that were to be pursued here. We currently only need enough land for the salt shed, but a larger plot will be needed before long.

Next Step: Michael will remove the reference to the Fire Co. and send the email to Ellen for broadcasting to her lists.

F) Update on Unifirst uniform problem – Kord reported that he spoke with a Unifirst manager about charging us for laundry services that they did not provide. That person offered about \$1300 to \$1400 as a refund, but Kord is still considering whether that offer is adequate. Bob Fisher said we have a case for a refund.

G) Report on AV equipment needs and requirements – There is no update.

Next Step: The needs will be determined after our next hybrid meetings.

12) Adjourn the Meeting and Stop the Recording

Motion: To adjourn the meeting at 7:25 PM. George moved, and all agreed.

The next selectboard meeting is scheduled for Monday, April 3, 2023 at 5:30 PM

Respectfully submitted,
Mary McCoy (Mac), selectboard clerk
Approved April 3, 2023