

**Windham VT Selectboard Minutes  
May 15, 2023 Regular Meeting  
Held on Zoom Only**

Kord Scott, selectboard chair	Maureen Bell	Erin Kehoe
Michael Pelton, selectboard	Pat McLaine	Bill Casey
George Dutton, selectboard	Gail Wyman	Pete Newton
Mary McCoy (Mac), selectboard clerk	Crystal Corriveau	Bill Dunkel
Ashley Pringer, sheriff's animal control officer	Barbara Jean Quinn	David Lewis
	Tom & Eileen Widger	Tom & Louise Johnson
	Cathy Edgerly Fales	Abby Pelton

**1. Start Recording and Call to Order**

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

**2. Additions/deletions and/or changes to agenda** – There were no changes to the agenda.

**3. Announcements/Reminders**

Michael said that the Town Office is closed until Wednesday, due to Ellen having Covid.

Mac said that there is an opportunity to meet Rory Rosselot, who is running for school board, anytime Tuesday from 4:30 to 6:00 at 1113 Old Cheney Road.

**4. Act on minutes from the 5/1/23 selectboard meeting**

**Motion:** To approve the minutes from 5/1/23. Kord moved, and all agreed.

**5. Public Comment** – There were no public comments.

**6. Correspondence**

> An email was received from Crystal regarding town meeting, which will be discussed later in Old Business.

> Michael said he had received an email from John Pozzi wanting to know or the process for filing a complaint against a town official and also wanting information about listers' access to people's property. This will be addressed at a future meeting.

> Michael also said he had received emails from Wren Watts and Kermit Blackwood about the release of private info from the Town Office. This will be addressed at a future meeting.

**Next Step:** Mac will put these on the parking lot for discussion at a future meeting.

**7. Payroll/Bills**

**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.

**8. Guest, Staff, and Grant Reports and Discussion**

A) Update on ARPA and solar site visits – Mac reported that the ARPA Committee is eager to move forward and present a recommendation to the selectboard. This week, they are receiving two site visits from solar companies who will make cost estimates for the future solar array on the Town Office roof.

**B) Update on grants, including Paul Bruhn and MERP mini-grant** – Cathy reported that the town did not receive the grant from Paul Bruhn for work on the front of the Meeting House. The MERP mini grant will be used for architectural and engineering assessments of the Meeting House. These will be needed for other grant proposals. We can apply for a Vermont Historic Preservation grant and a Rural Development grant.

### **New Business**

**A) Discuss webmaster resignation and search** – Kord reported that Vance needs to resign as webmaster, but agreed to stay until a replacement is found.

**Next Steps:** Kord will check with Vance for a recommendation on his replacement. Kord will also prepare a notice for Ellen to send out via email. Michael will contact other towns to see who they use for their websites.

**B) Make zoning administrator appointment – Michael Simonds** – Kord said Ali Cummings is resigning as zoning administrator. Michael Simonds has agreed to take the job, which he has held in the past. Ali is meeting with Michael this week to explain the current record keeping system and to bring him up-to-date on other zoning matters.

**Motion:** To appoint Michael Simonds as zoning administrator, pending Ali's resignation. Kord moved, and all agreed.

**C) Discuss Compensation & Benefits Survey** – Kord explained that the VLCT publishes an annual summary of the salary and benefits of paid officials and employees in the towns that choose to participate. It is helpful in comparing Windham's compensation for town officials and employees to those in other towns. We have participated off and on, and it is time to do it again. Michael and George agreed.

**Next Step:** Kord will see that the information is provided to the VLCT.

**D) Mowing invasive chervil** – Kord said that the Conservation Committee has requested that the wild chervil be mowed before it flowers. Last year, Richard mowed it with his own sickle bar mower, which the town rented from him. Mowing under the guardrails was challenging, and spraying with a weed killer would be easier and more final, as mowing must be repeated. The selectboard felt the Conservation Committee's recommendation should be followed, but other options should be explored for the future.

**Moved:** To have Richard mow with his sickle bar mower. Kord moved, and all agreed.

### **Old Business**

**A) Update re Town Meeting and needed volunteers** – Tom said everything needed for lunch has been found or purchased, and the \$1 payment will not be necessary, as it was in the past, but donations will be accepted. He has moved out the tables and will set them up after Strong Living on Thursday. Removing the storm windows from the sanctuary windows was discussed. Kord and Bill will take care of removing them prior to Saturday. Pete will remove the doors on the landing, and the doors on the main floor can be kept open. This will address the egress issues. We are still looking for a Fire Watch.

Crystal said Town Meeting should have been held under a tent in the back of the school, as there is plenty of parking there, but she recognized that it was too late to change. She also wished child care was being provided.

Only seven people responded to the Survey Monkey about Town Meeting, and only three of those volunteered. We have enough help with set up and lunch, and it was felt that people

will help clean up after the event is over. Maureen will help set up the two sandwich boards to remind folks about Town Meeting. We also need to set up for the election.

**Next Step:** Kord will check with Ellen about the election set up.

**B) Discuss Meeting House CAPP (Community Assessment Priority Plan)** – Kord said the plan will be developed with input from everyone in town who is interested. Overseeing the plan’s creation will be a temporary steering committee with a representative from the town’s Meeting House Committee (Maureen), the Friends of the Meeting House (Pete), the Energy Committee (Bill D.), and the selectboard (Kord). Cathy Fales will coordinate the steering committee and work with Meg Staloff, who will facilitate the townwide meetings.

**Next Step:** Kord will set up a Zoom meeting for Thursday for the steering committee.

**C) Update on short-term rental registry** – Michael shared information from Granicus, the company working with Chester’s registry. Granicus said there are at least 31 short-term rentals (STR) in Windham. The cost for Windham to use Granicus would be \$6,000 per year. This service would help us identify STRs that are “noncompliant,” meaning they are not safe, that they might have septic issues, or they are a nuisance to neighboring homes. Michael said some owners of STRs are not reporting themselves as a business, and the registry would make sure that happened. Bill D. questioned whether Windham had experienced any problems related to STRs, and if a registry was needed here, if it was worth the cost, and if it would make the town liable if problems came up. He also questioned if homeowners who rented a few times a year should be considered businesses. Michael said the registry would not make us liable, and we should be proactive before problems arise. David added that the registry was about accountability and making sure homes aren’t rented for big parties.

**Next Step:** Discuss this more at future meetings.

**D) Update re stream evaluation and West Windham roads** – Kord and Richard met with the ANR stream engineer who looked at the work the town’s road crew did after Cobb Brook overflowed, left its original stream bed, and damaged West Windham Road. The engineer thought no funds would be available through VTrans for the work the town did. However, another person from VTrans will look at it to see if it qualifies for a different grant. Richard told Kord that the road crew could add more material to block the problem from happening again. George said he might provide some stone for that purpose.

**Next Step:** Continue to address this issue and provide an update in the future.

**E) Discuss Erin Kehoe’s FOIA request and follow-up questions** – Michael explained that Erin requested documents regarding interactions with the town constable (Jim Lawler) and the sheriff’s animal control officer (Ashley Pringer) related to a complaint about her dogs. After receiving the requested documents, she sent 13 follow-up questions. These focused on how complaints are handled. Michael said that the animal control officer is guided by state law. The constable is an elected town official who follows town procedures. Kord said the selectboard realizes that complaints should be made in writing, not by phone calls, as they are transparent when in writing.

Erin questioned Ashley, asking why it took 20 days for her to respond. Ashley said that situations about animal welfare are handled first, before complaints about barking dogs. Erin asked how the complaint allowed a search of her property. Ashley said there was no search, only a look at the dogs. She is allowed to go where things are in plain view, and she does not go into gated or fenced areas, unless she sees an animal in distress. Otherwise, she needs a

warrant to go into a gated or fenced area. Erin said the constable also told her he could go anywhere that wasn't gated, and Erin questioned this. She asked why her doorbell had not been rung, which would have triggered her security camera. Ashley said she had knocked, but she did not see a doorbell. Erin asked if Ashley was aware that Erin has a law suit against the town, and Ashley said she was not until after the visit. George said he was concerned that the constable or any town official goes onto peoples' property.

**Next Step:** Discuss possible town policies related to complaints and to town officials going on people's property.

**F) Update re outreach for Highway Dept property, Carling email** – Michael said there was one response to his email and his New & Notes notice for property for the town's salt shed and other road crew materials and equipment. It is for parcel 040232.2, 10 acres off of Route 121 on the left side of the road enroute to Grafton. It isn't clear if this would be a sale or a donation of this land.

**Next Step:** Kord will ask Richard to look at the land and report at the next meeting.

**G) Update re Alpfart property and demo permit** – Kord reported that Ali sent the letter stating the situation and requirements that they need to get a demo permit and have demolition completed by August 1, then get an engineer to determine if there is a legal site on the property for them to build a new home. As yet, we have received no response from the Alpfarts. Bill D. questioned if there is any site on the property not in a floodplain.

**Next Step:** Wait for the Alpfart's response.

**H) Update re 121 culvert project** – Kord said he met with folks from VTrans and discussed the situation. The project will go out for bids for construction in 2024. Easement and right of way issues will be involved.

**Next Step:** Send out request for bids later this year.

**I) Update on LHMP** – Kord met with the overseer from the Windham Regional Commission (WRC) and answered his questions. The completed draft of the report should be received this week. It is needed to receive support from FEMA and provides us with maximum support.

**J) Update re MRGP reporting requirement** – Kord said there is a new requirement for the Municipal Roads General Permit, which is needed for culverts, ditching work, etc. Reporting must be maintained, and the WRC will no longer complete this reporting system for us. We need to learn how to complete it on our own.

#### **11) Adjourn regular meeting and stop recording**

**Motion:** To adjourn the meeting at 7:11 PM. George moved, and all agreed.

**The next regular selectboard meeting is scheduled for Monday, June 5, 2023 at 5:30 PM**

Respectfully submitted,  
Mary McCoy (Mac), selectboard clerk  
Approved June 5, 2023