

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

Present:

Kord Scott, selectboard chair	Maureen Bell	Tom Widger
Michael Pelton, selectboard	Imme Maurath	Bill Dunkel
George Dutton, selectboard	Ron Cohen & Carrie Tittle	Abby Pelton
Mary McCoy (Mac), selectboard clerk	Cathy Edgerly Fales	Ellen McDuffie
Meg Staloff, SeVEDS	Kathy Jungermann	Carolyn Rubin

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.

3. Announcements – There were no announcements.

4. Act on the minutes from the 10/30/23 selectboard meetings

Motion: To approve the minutes from 10/30/23. George moved, and all agreed

5. Public Comments – There were no public comments.

6. Correspondence – There was no correspondence.

7. Payroll/Bills

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

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

8. Staff Reports and Discussions

A) Meg Staloff/BDCC Social Services request – Meg, program manager for the Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation’s Southern Vermont Economy Project (SeVEDS) explained that her project is a nonprofit in need of support from the 21 towns it serves. They ask each town for \$3 per resident, and she asked Windham for \$1347 to support their programming to develop the region’s economic development. SeVEDS needs support from towns for work that is not available from other sources or is needed as matching funds for grants. Since Windham has not funded SeVEDS in the past, this donation would need to be warned and voted on at Town Meeting as a separate line item. Meg will send their impact report.
Next Steps: Consider putting SeVEDS’ request on the warning for Town Meeting.

B) Update on Wheeler Road/FEMA project reimbursement request – Imme reported that all the paperwork was submitted and approved, and we should receive a payment of around \$287,000.

C) Update of Rt. 121 culvert project, easement plans/letters to go out – Imme reported that she has been meeting with FEMA, and the easement documents went out last week. The town has to pay the expenses for the work before FEMA reimbursement. The construction can be

extended until 2025, so we don't have too many big projects to pay for at one time. This culvert is located about a quarter mile from Four Corners headed toward Grafton. A detour route will need to be determined during construction. Imme suggested a route using Stage Coach and Popple Dungeon Roads.

D) Update on current FEMA FHWA projects – Imme is dealing with great amount of paperwork for finished and ongoing projects. Funding for the culvert in South Windham has stringent state requirements and is unlikely. It is too late in the season for the road crew to do anything, except perhaps make a temporary repair.

E) Discuss/decide the dissolution of the ARPA Committee – Mac said all committee members feel their work is completed, as final decisions on expenditures rest with the selectboard. Kord can complete the annual reports, as he has done in the past.

Motion: George moved to dissolve the ARPA Committee. All agreed.

F) Discuss/decide GMP contact person for the Town Office solar array – Kord said Mac was the likely person due to her past work on this. Michael volunteered to help if needed.

Motion: To appoint Mac to serve in this capacity. Kord moved and all agreed.

G) Discuss/decide next meeting's minutes with Mac absent – Michael offered to prepare the minutes so Mac could enjoy her vacation. All agree, and Mac thanked Michael.

H) Discuss/decide who issues permits for zoning administrator's property – Michael Simonds, zoning administrator, will need a permit for work on his property, and he wants someone else to issue the permit to avoid a conflict of interest. Bill Dunkel agreed to serve in this temporary role, as he is very familiar with zoning requirements. Ron Cohen also volunteered.

Next Step: Kord will check with the VLCT to make sure Bill can serve in this capacity.

I) Update on grants – Cathy said she and Pete Newton will meet to decide how to manage the applications for a State Preservation grant and a Bruhn grant, as both are due near the same time and might focus on the same needed project. Cathy has reached out to the grant makers, who have agreed to give her some advice.

J) Excess Solar Electric credits sharing decision – George suggested giving the excess energy credits (those not used by the town's three buildings and the Firehouse) to Neighborhood Connections and then to the West River Community Project. Carrie expressed a vehement objection to WRCP receiving any support, and she said the excess should support nonprofits or poor people in Windham. Mac said there are no nonprofits in Windham, and the selectboard has stated an intention to give the excess to one or more nearby nonprofits, as giving to several individuals would require creating a time-consuming program with a short-term benefit for recipients. George stated opposition to giving it to individuals. Mac suggested postponing a decision until we know more clearly how much energy we have to share.

Next Step: Mac will find out if it is possible to give the energy to individuals.

9. New Business

A) Discuss budget preparation plans for 2024 – Kathy and Gail are learning how to develop the budget in the new NEMRC accounting program. Extra selectboard meetings may be necessary to review their budget. Kathy J. (an auditor) said the warning needs to be signed by the third week in January and ready for the printer by the first week in February. Maureen

asked when Town Meeting will be held, and the selectboard members said in March. Cathy asked if having Town Meeting on a Saturday this year helped to increase attendance.

Next Step: Consider holding town meeting on Saturday.

10) Old Business

A) Planning Commission clerk hiring and assisting with PC Zoning Regulation priorities – Bill reported that they had one applicant, Antje Ruppert, but the only evening she can attend a meeting is Monday. Bill asked most PC members about changing their meeting day to Monday, and they were fine with that. Abby said she wants to apply for the job, and Bill will contact her about this. Bill said the PC thinks the decision about hiring should be made by the selectboard.

B) Discuss status of heating oil purchase from the school – Michael said it was approved and Russell Cumming was going to manage it, but he is no longer on the school board. The school's tank needs to be pumped out and the oil needs to be put in the Town Office tank.

Next Step: Michael will call Cota & Cota and manage the transfer of the oil.

C) Report on TAP grant for transportation alternatives – The Windham Regional Commission has helped us in the past with this grant, but they are overwhelmed with other priorities. This is a hard grant to get, but last year's request resulted in funding for our new salt shed. Imme and Michael expressed concern about pursuing this grant at this time. Cathy said there may be other ways to receive assistance with the grant.

Next Step: Michael will look at the grant again to see how it might fit our needs.

D) Update on Meeting House monitoring system's contacts and key lock box – Kord said no one is comfortable with the current provider, KO Electric Service. The alarm goes off with there is no fire, and when a test alarm was sent to them, they did not respond. David Cherry recommended Royal Technologies, and Kord met with them. They will provide an estimate for their services.

Next Step: We need to get the current codes from KO, as the ones we have do not work.

E) Update on webmaster search – Vance (current webmaster) met with Becky and Jordan Eliastam, and they have taken over the website work. They are working now as volunteers to gain an understanding of what the job involves. Kord said their goal is to enable some other officials to post on the website, such as the selectboard clerk posting the minutes.

Next Step: Maureen will help determine the expenses involved in maintaining the website. Others will make suggestions as to needed changes.

F) Update on Altpfart property demolition – The Altpfart's received the certified letter Michael S. sent as zoning administrator. Gary Altpfart called and said he is hiring Hill Construction for the demolition, but the demolition date has not been determined.

G) Executive Session – Kord asked Mac to read on his behalf the explanation for moving into executive session.

Motion: Because we need to discuss grievances against town officials and, separately, because we need to conduct our annual evaluations of the road crew, I move that we go into executive session to discuss the grievances and the evaluations under the provisions of Title 1, Section 313 (a) (1) and (3) of the Vermont Statutes. Kord moved, and all agreed.

Adjourn regular meeting and stop recording

Motion: To adjourn the meeting at 6:52PM. George moved, and all agreed.

Call regular meeting back to order and restart the recording

Kord called the meeting to order and restarted the recording at 7:44 PM.

Report from Executive Session – Mac stated the results of the meeting.

Regarding annual evaluations of the road crew, the selectboard reviewed the compensation plans, and Kord will conduct the evaluation sessions next week.

Regarding grievances against town officials, Kord will meet with the official questioned about a conflict of interest, and copies of the town’s conflict of interest policy will be shared with all town officials. Furthermore, the selectboard will ask to meet in executive session with a certain group of town officials to discuss the many grievances against them.

Motion: To approve all of the above actions. Michael moved, and all agreed.

11. Adjourn regular meeting and stop recording

Motion: To adjourn the meeting at 7:46 PM. George moved, and all agreed.

**The next regular selectboard meeting is scheduled for
Monday, December 4, 2023 at 5:30 PM**

Respectfully submitted,
Mary McCoy (Mac), selectboard clerk
Approved December 4, 2023