

**Windham VT Selectboard Minutes
May 6, 2024 Regular Meeting
Held at the Town Office and on Zoom**

Present at Town Office

Kord Scott, selectboard chair
Mary McCoy (Mac), selectboard clerk
Richard Paré, road foreman
Cathy Edgerly Fales, grant strategist
Dillon Lowell, Frendly Gathering
Absent: Michael Pelton, selectboard

Present on Zoom

George Dutton, selectboard
Antje Ruppert
Bill Dunkel
Maureen Bell
Imme Maurath
Eddie Furci, Frendly Gthrng

Phil McDuffie
Barbara Jean Quinn
Becky Phillips
Ellen McDuffie
Bea Eliastam

1. Start Recording and Call to Order

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

2. Additions/deletions and/or changes to agenda – Kord added to New Business the establishment of a new credit card account.

3. Announcements – There were no announcements.

4. Act on the minutes from the April 15, 2024 selectboard meeting

Motion: To approve the 4/15/24 selectboard minutes; George moved and Kord agreed.

5. Public Comments – There were no public comments

6. Correspondence – A phone call was received regarding property that might be used for the town garage. This item was included on the agenda under New Business.

7. Payroll/Bills

Motion: To approve the check warrant reports from the town treasurer. George moved, and Kord agreed.

Motion: To have Kord sign the reports. George moved, and Kord agreed.

8. Staff Reports with Discussions and Possible Decisions

A) Frendly Gathering request – Dillon explained that the Frendly Gathering, held in the past at Timber Ridge, would like to return there in 2025. He said this three-night event with camping focuses on peace, love, and music. Dillon acknowledged complaints from the past about the noise of amplified music, which he said they will address by having only acoustic music late at night. They will also decrease the number of tickets sold and sell them at a higher price, while emphasizing family attendance. Security people will monitor the event. Traffic will be controlled by having people park at Magic Mt. and take relay buses to Timber Ridge. Bill said there is nothing in our town zoning regs that prohibit the event or require selectboard approval. The possible date for the event is July 17-19, 2025.

Next Step: The Planning Commission will consider whether Windham needs regs for this or other events, including looking at regs from other towns.

B) Webmaster – Bea spoke with Howie Ires about the job of rebuilding and maintaining the website. With a better understanding of the job, he withdrew his interest in it.

Motion: To hire Curly Sprouts Creatives to upgrade and maintain the town website. George

moved, and Kord agreed.

Next Step: Bea will contact Curly Sprouts Creative to get the paperwork prepared.

C) Road Foreman – Richard said a request had been received to put a power line under a town road. Currently, there are no zoning regs or permits about this, and there need to be. Bob Kehoe (Sparky Electric) said the lines should be buried at least three-feet deep and in a Schedule 80 conduit. Further guidance is also needed. The work should be paid for in full by the land owner, and the road should be restored to good condition.

Other road issues: RFPs are still under development for a new town truck. Winter work has been finalized and a survey of our culverts has been conducted which indicate that we may need 700 feet of culverts. Some of those may be delayed, due to the expense involved. West Windham Road repairs are needed due to stream erosion. FEMA is aware and has put this on their list for work and payment. Skip Lisle looked at our beaver-deceiver, and he will work with Richard to repair it. Everett and others will give advice about turning Cobb Brook Road into a trail in order to limit traffic on that road. First, stream erosion has to be addressed. Paving projects are on hold while Richard and Everett determine which culverts should be replaced first. Several road signs are down, and these are being repaired.

Next Steps: Get further info from Green Mt. Power and Everett Hammond, town engineer, re power lines under town roads. George and Richard will finalize the RFPs for the new truck and provide a report at the next SB meeting. Kord will secure input from our stream engineer, Everett, and the FEMA inspectors. Richard will let George know when meetings take place.

D) Grant Administrator – Imme reported that she is wrapping up her work for FEMA and federal highway reimbursements, providing them with even more documentation. This includes reimbursements for the culvert in South Windham. Imme is waiting for some of the vendor bills from the town treasurer.

E) Grant Strategist – Cathy has submitted a grant request for technical assistance, with the outcome expected in a month. She is considering other grant opportunities due this summer, including a grant from the Windham Foundation. This Thursday, she will meet with Pete Newton to review the paperwork for the Bruhn Historic Preservation grant.

F) Planning Commission – Bill said the PC will meet on May 13 to review the town plan and other matters. Matt from the Windham Regional Commission will be there. The last town plan was approved in 2019 and is good for another three years. He expects to have some recommendations to make about zoning changes.

Next Step: Kord asked the PC to consider regs for putting power lines under our roads.

G) Meeting House Committee – Maureen reported that all issues have been addressed that were brought to light by the PACIF inspection. Game day continues with eight to ten people attending. There will be a tag sale on Saturday May 25 of Memorial Day weekend with a few tables still available for vendors. She noted that it was suggested that the front row of pew be removed to facilitate voting for folks who are less mobile. Tom Widger looked the pew and recommended against removing it, due to rusty screws.

Next Step: Kord will take a look at it and see what he thinks about removing the front pew.

H) Town Clerk – Ellen said there are 20+ dogs that have not been registered. She is reaching out to newcomers about dog registration, the News and Notes, and the Transfer Station.

D) Listers – Antje said she is getting a better grasp of her new job. Most problems have been addressed, although questions remain about some contiguous properties. All of the important information about property appraisals went out according to schedule. She and/or Bill Casey will be attending some of the grievance meetings along with the NEMRC rep. She and Bill continue to be available during their office hours on Wednesday from 9:00 to Noon with Ron there irregularly. Antje wants to be able to check the lister mail from her home.

9) New Business

A) Discuss outreach re possible TG relocation property – Richard Bingham has four or five acres on Horse Nail Hill Road that might be used for a Town Highway Dept facility. The location is not ideal, as it is on the far north side of town, and the possible cost is unknown.
Next Step: Kord and Richard will look at the property and get financial information.

B) Discuss US Talc and their pond's overflow maintenance on White Road – Sean Reese informed the selectboard that US Talc is in bankruptcy, and he is concerned about the future maintenance of the pond's discharge into town drainage, as stipulated in their agreement with the town when their talc mine was closed.

Next Step: Kord will talk to Bob Fisher, town attorney, about this and report back.

C) Update on Wildlife Refuge presentation held 5/2 – Mac reported that 27 people attended the meeting on 5/2 with Andy French from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Dept. re its purchase of The Nature Conservancy's property on Glebe Mountain. Concerns were expressed by several there about increased traffic from visitors. He stressed the importance of creating a "friends group" from Windham to give input and advice on how public access to the wildlife refuge is managed. Twenty-one folks at the meeting signed up for the friends group, and Tan Branson will create an email list for them. There are benefits to the town, especially for road repairs through FLAP grants. Funds that the town plans to use for those repairs can be redirected for other purposes, such as creating more parking space at the Meeting House. The USF&W already plans to repair the bridge off Corn Hill Road this summer.

D) Discuss lack of quiet work space in Town Office – More people are using the Town Office, especially the back room, used by the treasurer. The auditors have worked there or in the front space of the town clerk. The Historical Society has been using the conference table for meetings in the back office. Imme also works there and said it impossible to concentrate. A schedule is needed of who uses what space and when. Also, more meetings could be held in the meeting room upstairs at the Meeting House, although a relay router would be needed for Zoom meetings there, as the WiFi connection is currently weak in that room. The space there would work for small groups and might be sufficient for the numbers that show up in person for hybrid meetings. Another possibility at the Town Office is to expand usage of the Listers Office, which currently only gets used on Wednesdays from 9:00 to Noon.

Next Step: Imme and Kathy Scott will think about ways to address the situation in the Town Office, including expanding the use of the Listers Office.

E) Discuss securing a new credit card – Kord explained that a new credit card account is needed for use by the town clerk and road foreman. Most vendors bill us, so this would be for small buys or ones with vendors that have no account with the town. There would be a \$1000 limit. Kord asked TD Bank (the town's bank), but they require that government entities have an audit before getting a credit card account. Heritage Bank will provide a card account if authorized by the selectboard. Kord didn't think there would be a monthly charge, and there

would be no interest due, as all bills are paid off each month.

Motion: To get two credit cards for use by the town clerk and the town garage at the Heritage Bank in Londonderry. George moved, and Kord agreed.

10) Old Business

A) Discuss and create plan to meet with town officials for team building – Since Michael was not present, this discussion was postponed until the next meeting.

B) Discuss storage and possible future use of the exhaust hood – Goerge said he has talked with others in town who heard about the exhaust hood, and they asked that any decision be delayed until after more is known about the likely impact of its installation. He suggested a possible survey of the town's folks re its usage and appearance. Cathy said a survey may be premature until we have more info about the appearance after installation. She will look at the Bruhn grant paperwork to see if that would pay for preliminary plans/concept sketches re the installation.

Next Step: George will work with Cathy and Pete to get more definite info on the installation.

C) Discuss purchase of an A-V package with ARPA funds – George recommended the purchase of a small PA system for the downstairs of the Meeting House, which would replace the old system there that didn't work well for Town Meeting. The purchase would be for a Rockville 150 stereo bluetooth amplifier receiver with two speakers for \$200. This would be hooked up to the system upstairs for a meeting in both rooms. It could also be moved for other purposes, as the setup is simple. This would be in addition to the previously discussed purchase of the JVL system for 2 speakers, a mixer, 2 wireless mics, 1 wired mic for \$934, and 2 wireless headsets for \$85, totaling \$1019.

Motion: To purchase the Rockwell package, the JVL package, and the headsets. George moved, and Kord agreed. (\$1500 was earmarked for A-V equipment from ARPA funds.)

D) Discuss Ooma Office and First Light phone and internet services – George said that First Light can provide fiber internet with 50 upload and 50 download speeds, which it has provided for Windham Elementary. Due to a policy change, First Light can now provide service at the Town Office. It would be \$326/month with a three-year contract and no installation costs. The Meeting House and Town Garage already have good internet through VTel. Until DVFiber comes to the southern half of Windham, this would be a significant improvement for the office, now served by Consolidate Communications' slow speeds. For phone service, George recommends Ooma Office for all phones in the three town buildings. It offers voice messaging and other features, including an automated attendant to direct calls.

Next Step: George will contact CCI to see what phone options they offer, and he will contact David Cherry regarding the estimated time that DVFiber will reach Windham.

E) Discuss using Microsoft 365 to share information – Bea said she and Michael Pelton wanted to see who would be hired for the website work and what they recommend for info sharing. Curly Sprouts Creative likes Google, as it can work with Microsoft products, with no purchase needed.

Next Step: Make a decision at the next meeting when Michael is there.

F) Discuss the status of the Meeting House's electrical system – George spoke with an electrician who recommended we continue working with Bob Kehoe.

Next Step: George will contact Bob to examine the system.

G) Discuss leveling the fuel tank at the Town Office – Kord spoke with Cota & Cota, and they will lift up the tank and level it with cement blocks for \$250 to \$300.

12. Adjourn regular meeting and stop recording.

Motion: To adjourn the meeting at 7:43 PM. George moved, and all agreed.

**Next Regular Selectboard Meeting is scheduled for
Monday, May 20, 2024 at 5:30 PM**

Respectfully submitted,
Mary McCoy (Mac), selectboard clerk
Approved May 20, 2024