

**Windham VT Selectboard Minutes
June 3, 2024 Regular Meeting
Held at the Meeting House and on Zoom**

Present at the Meeting House

Kord Scott, selectboard chair
Michael Pelton, selectboard
Mary McCoy (Mac), selectboard clerk
Richard Paré
Cathy Edgerly Fales

Present on Zoom

George Dutton, selectboard
Antje Ruppert
Imme Maurath
Maureen Bell
Bill Dunkel
Barbara Jean Quinn
Abby Pelton

1. Start Recording and Call to Order

Kord called the meeting to order and started the recording at 5:31 PM.

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

3. Announcements – Michael announced that the in-person meeting for voting on the school will be this Saturday, June 8 at the Meeting House. Kord announced that Ron Cohen plans to move to another state. The selectboard needs to replace him until a new lister can be elected at Town Meeting 2025. Imme announced that a Monster Bike Ride will go through Windham on Saturday, June 15. The group stops at the Meeting House, and they will make a donation to the town of \$1,000 for the Meeting House.

4. Act on the minutes from the May 20, 2024 selectboard meeting

Motion: To approve the May 20, 2024 selectboard minutes; 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 check warrant reports from the town treasurer. George moved, and all agreed. Kord will sign these, as he is now authorized to sign for the board.

8. Guest and Staff Reports with Discussions and Possible Decisions

A) Road Foreman – Richard reported on several issues. Dead and dangerous trees on roadways have been marked for removal. Information has been gathered for the RFP for a new truck and will be put into the RFP format. Everett, town engineer, is working on the stream erosion issue in West Windham. The beaver deceiver will be repaired this week. Richard looked at the potential land in North Windham for use for the salt shed. It is not an ideal location, but might be made to work. An engineer needs to look at it to see how it could be made usable. Andover’s selectboard is still considering changing Christmas Tree Road from a Class 3 to a Class 4 road. We will keep in touch with them. There will not be any chip sealing on White Road. Invasives, especially wild chervil, on the roadsides continue to be an issue without a solution. Mowing, when possible, is only a temporary fix, as the plants grow right back, and spraying with chemicals is objectionable for various reasons. With no solution, this problem will be put to rest unless the Conservation Committee comes up with another approach for controlling the invasives.

Next Steps: Consider what to do about the stream erosion. Get an engineer to look at the

potential property for the highway dept. Consider Andover's decision about Christmas Tree Road.

B) Grant Strategist – We did not receive a MTAP grant for a master plan and facility assessment. Although our proposal received a high rating, the competition was great. There is still a chance that we might receive some MTAP funds for an architect's input if all funds are not used by others. The fire marshal will meet with folks from the Preservation Trust of Vermont and other state officials on June 20 to determine the official safety status of the Meeting House and give advice about the possible installation of the exhaust hood. George said Bob Kehoe looked at the electrical system in the Meeting House and said what he could see of it was in good shape. We just received an audit report on the Town Garage, but Cathy has not reviewed it yet. The Meeting House audit was delayed, as it was not seen as "high urgency." It will probably occur in July.

Grants for the Fire Company would be more likely if there was a "community risk assessment" for it. Cathy is looking into this. There needs to be a list of "high risk" residents. Other towns have sent out a mass mailing to all home owners and residents to get needed information. There could be a card to return with response info, and it could include contact info so they can be reached as they choose. Michael mentioned that Ever Bridge, which has a contract with the state, provides this service. Cathy suggested a task force to pursue this idea. Imme said two mailings have already been sent for emergency info, which had minimal response. Also, if there is no electrical power, it is difficult to contact people even if we have their contact info. Cathy suggested having a table at the Fire Co. BBQ to gather this info.

Cathy spoke with folks with the Mountain Town Recreation District. This group provides activities for children and adults and includes Londonderry, Weston, Peru, Landgrove, and Winhall. Cathy said having regional involvements can help with grant receipt, and the Mt. Town folks offered to send a representative to talk to the selectboard. We were approached about joining in the past, but decided it was too costly. We have a year to revisit this.

Next Step: Announce the June 20th fire safety meeting at the Meeting House at the next selectboard meeting. Cathy and Imme will meet to discuss having a table at the Fire Co. BBQ. Mac will put the Mt. Town Recreation District on the parking lot for future consideration.

C) Treasurer – Kord report that Kathy Scott, town treasurer, has drafted the RFP for an audit, has three potential auditors for receipt of the RFP, and will finalize and send it soon.

D) Listers – Antje reported that the grievance meetings went well. There were six, and all were civil and without contention. It helped that Al from NEMRC was there and had all of the relevant data, including remembering the properties he had visited. The listers have another deadline on June 15th, which will be met. Antje has suggested to Bill Casey, her fellow lister, that they keep track of the tasks they are doing, along with their hours, to be shared with the selectboard at budget time, so wise decisions can be made about the listers.

E) Town Clerk – Ellen was not present. Michael reported that he took care of the physical problems in the Town Office. He suggested to Ellen that she keep a list of needed repairs so the selectboard knows what they need to do.

9) New Business

A) Update on \$9500 Grants in Aid award – This has been received, with many thanks to Imme for her work as grant administrator.

B) Updates on Open Meeting Law requirements – Cathy reported that the state legislature approved new regulations on May 30, 2024 re meetings. There are different regs for advisory groups (those without financial or supervisory decision-making) and non-advisory groups (those with financial and supervisory decision-making power). Advisory groups may meet remote-only, while non-advisory groups must meet in hybrid meetings (both remote and in-person). However, non-advisory groups can meet remote-only if there is a hardship, such as bad weather from November to March. Any resident can request a physical location to join a meeting in-person. All recordings must be posted within 30 days. All groups, advisory and non-advisory, must post agendas and minutes. There are other details.

Next Steps: Cathy will send written information on this to the selectboard to review again at a future meeting to determine how it applies to all town committees and commissions.

C) Regulations/Permit for utilities crossing a town road – This relates to installing utility lines that impact town roads. VTrans sent Kord a document which defers to the national electrical code for specs, and Bob Kehoe (Sparky Electric) found the NEC code.

Next Step: Bob will help update our access permit regarding work in the right of way.

D) Decide who will write the next Selectboard Update for the WN&N – Michael will write the next report, due June 13th.

10) Old Business

A) Update on AV equipment purchases – George found the wanted equipment at a lower price. The main PA has not been ordered. We can set up as we did for Town Meeting.

B) Discuss any SB requirements for June 8 town meeting re school budget – Michael talked to the folks at BCTV, and they will set things up as before. The owl system should suffice downstairs. George will drop off a TV for upstairs. Michael will look at the front pew to see if he can remove it. Ellen will make name tags and prepare materials needed for voting. Michael will come early and help with setup.

C) Discuss Hazard Mitigation Grant opportunity- application due June 21st – Imme said the deadline is actually August 16. This grant can be used for another replacement culvert on Chase Road, replacing a 30-inch culvert with a 60-inch one. This grant does not require matching funds – it pays 100% of the cost.

D) US Talc and their pond's overflow maintenance on White Road – Due to US Talc filing for bankruptcy and concern about the future maintenance of the pond's discharge into town drainage since, Bob Fisher (town attorney) contacted US Talc's lawyer. Bob hasn't received a call back, but he thinks US Talc or whoever buys the property will be obligated to control the pond's discharge.

E) Update on upgrades for phone and internet services with info on CCI and DVFiber – George recommends contracting with First Light for improved internet at the Town Office. They require a three-year contract, and their charge would be \$326 per month. That would be \$2400 more than the annual budget for office internet. George spoke with David Cherry re DVFiber, and David said it is unlikely that DVFiber will be in Windham in less than three years, due to financial cost overruns and the need for additional funding. **Next Step:** George will prepare a written analysis that compares current and possible costs and upload/download speeds, etc. Kord and Kathy will look at budget to see if \$2400 might be available from another avenue in the budget.

11) Executive Session

Mac read the following legal motion: To enter into executive session to discuss pending or probably civil litigation or a prosecution to which the public body is or may be a party and where the Board has determined that premature general public knowledge would clearly place the selectboard or people involved at a substantial disadvantage because discussing the matter in open session would divulge the Town's legal strategy and place the Town at a disadvantage in executing its legal strategy.

Michael so moved, and all agreed. The selectboard entered executive session at 6:48 PM.

12) Return to Regular Session

The selectboard returned to the regular meeting at 7:15 PM. Michael announced that the selectboard would be preparing a letter to the party involved, and that no motions were made.

Next Step: Michael will draft the letter, send it to Mac for her to circulate to the other selectboard members, and then she will incorporate any suggestions for changes.

12. Adjourn regular meeting and stop recording.

Motion: To adjourn the meeting at 7:16 PM. George moved, and all agreed.

**Next Regular Selectboard Meeting is scheduled for
Monday, June 17, 2024 at 5:30 PM**

Respectfully submitted,
Mary McCoy (Mac), selectboard clerk
Approved June 17, 2024