**Minutes of the Windham, VT Citizens Advisory Committee**

**Friday, April 25th 2025 at 5:30 PM**

**Present:** Michael Pelton, Hunt Fales, Al McLaine, Antje Ruppert

**1) Start recording & call meeting to order**

Michael started the recording and opened the meeting at 5:30pm.

**2) Additions/deletions and/or changes to the agenda**

none

**3) Announcements/reminders**

Al noted that he would have to leave the meeting by 6:10pm.

**4) Act on minutes**

The last minutes Michael could find on the town website are from 2017. It would be great if other minutes can be located and posted.

**5) Public Comment: Limit of 3 minutes/comment. Limited to topics that are not on the agenda. Comments should be directed to the chair and order must be maintained.**

n/a

**6) Correspondence: Limited to topics that are not on the agenda.**

Only Michael’s invitation to the meeting.

**7) Treasurers Report/financials**

Michael received very limited information from the Kathy Scott and Cynthia Stoddard (NEMRC): the fund currently consists of $89,789.84 and there has been a loan payment of $1100.00. Kathy believes that there is a folder with more information somewhere in the town office. Al received a note from Pat McLaine that said that the receipts are all in a file in the vault at the town office.

**8) New Business**

A. Committee Reorganization

-Elect a Chair - Hunt Fales

-Elect a Clerk - Antje Ruppert

-Elect a Treasurer - Al McLaine

All nominations passed unanimously.

B. Review and Discuss Committee Bylaws and Policies

  -Clarify any existing rules around membership eligibility, including questions of perceived or potential conflicts of interest (e.g., spousal involvement or family ties).

Discussion ensued about whether the spouse of a committee member should be allowed on the board. According to (name), the previous chair had not allowed that option. Antje felt that there could be potential conflict of interest and would feel more comfortable if that could be avoided. This individual could be consulted in an advisory capacity.

Al wondered in terms of conflict of interest if an individual should be admitted to the board who has a loan out from the CAC. Antje wondered that as well. Michael noted that in a case like that the member with a conflict of interest could just recuse herself/himself like on the Abatement board. Al thought it would be good to get David Cherry’s opinion on that before a decision is made. Antje said that she would gladly accept any decision against her membership because of her loan and does not want to close herself off from potential future needs. Conflicts of interest should be clarified in the bylaws.

  – Discuss whether the current bylaws address these topics or if updates are warranted.

Michael noted that spousal membership and other conflicts of interest should be reflected in the bylaws.

  – Discuss whether the bylaws should allow for broader use of loan funds beyond home improvement projects, in alignment with current community needs.

Al feels very strongly that loan funds should only be granted for home improvements and not go beyond that. Antje brought up that they could perhaps be granted to people who need help paying their property taxes. Al asked if that would not be a case for the Abatement board. Antje replied that if the Abatement board grants relief, the town will need to pay those taxes collectively.

Al wondered if income and employment are considered with loan applications. Hunt said that both parameters are looked at.

C. Membership Review

  – Discuss current membership and the need/potential to recruit an additional member or members to strengthen capacity and ensure diverse perspectives.

Hunt moved to expand the board to 5 members and recruit someone. That person would then be appointed by the Select Board. The motion passed unanimously.

  – Address any concerns about process, communication, or transparency related to how new members are brought in.

After Al left the meeting, Michael, Hunt and Antje discussed the recruitment of potential members for the committee and whether or not they would need to be permanent residents. A member on the Planning Commission is not a permanent resident.

The task of the CAC will be to look over the policy and bylaws and then forward any adjustment suggestions to the Select Board for approval. Bob Fisher, the town’s attorney, may be consulted as well for language recommendations.

Aside from that the CAC will be responsible for managing and administering the funds and for encouraging people to apply.

1. **Schedule Next Meeting**

Hunt noted that he would like to schedule the next meeting sooner rather than later. It was decided to meet again on Friday, May 9 at 5:30pm, both in person at the Meeting House and via Zoom.

**10) Old Business**

n/a

**11) Adjourn regular meeting & stop recording.**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:23pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Antje Ruppert