

**Wolcott Selectboard Meeting
Minutes
November 18, 2020**

Computer/Phone-in remote meeting: 6:00 p.m.

All Minutes are draft until approved by the Selectboard
Please see future Minutes for approval of these Minutes

Present: Linda Martin, Kurt Klein, Richard Lee, Kurt Billings
Absent: Kim Gravel
Employees: Randall Szott, Dillan Cafferky, Bernard Earle, Belinda Harris Clegg,
Deb Klein
Guests: Kate Wanner, Matt Foster
Public: Katie Black, Theresa Snow

Martin called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

Amendments to the Agenda:

The Junk Ordinance petition, and the Glee Merritt Kelley Community Library will be added to Unfinished Business. A request by the road crew will be addressed under Highway Department.

Approve Minutes of November 4, and October 21, 2020:

Motion by Billings to approve the Minutes of the November 4 meeting as written. Seconded by Klein. Voting: All 4 in favor. Motion by Lee to approve the Minutes of the October 21 meeting as amended at the November 4 meeting. Seconded by Klein. Voting: 3 in favor, Billings abstained.

Comments from the Community: None.

Highway Department:

Driveway Permit Approval: Six driveway permits were approved by the Highway Foreman. The property owners include: Steve Young, Darrin Wadel, Steve Hoogasian, Robert Schlosser, Elliot Smith. Motion by Lee to approve all six permits. Seconded by Klein. Voting: All 4 in favor.

Emergency Procurement Policy: Szott discussed with the board the concept of an Emergency Procurement Policy (EPP). An EPP would consist of an approved list of equipment, as well as contracted services, that might be needed in the event of a Town emergency. The advantage of an EPP would be that the Highway Department would be authorized to start securing equipment and/or services according to the Policy before an emergency Selectboard meeting could be convened. The board could review the approved list of equipment and services each year. Following discussion the board asked Szott to work with the Highway Foreman and the Fire Chief on compiling such a list, along with prices. Once completed, the board will review the matter.

Request by road crew: A request by some on the road crew to carry deer rifles in the Town trucks during hunting season, was denied.

New Business:

Salvation Farms: Theresa Snow, Executive Director of Salvation Farms in Morrisville, and Katie Black, proposed that Salvation Farms be included in the Warning for the next Town Meeting seeking an appropriation in the amount of \$500. In the past, the board has required an organization seeking an appropriation from the Town for the first time to present to the board a petition signed by citizens. The board waived that requirement for Salvation Farms due to COVID-19. Following discussion, the board agreed to include Salvation Farms in the list of organizations seeking appropriations to be warned at the next Town Meeting.

Lamoille Housing Partnership: No one from the organization was available to participate in this meeting. The matter will be rescheduled for the December 2 meeting.

Presentation from The Trust for Public Land: Kate Wanner, Senior Project Manager with The Trust for Public Land (TPL), gave a presentation to the board regarding a possible community forest for Wolcott. TPL is a national, nonprofit organization. Wanner works out of their Montpelier office. TPL works to acquire lands so the land can be protected for use by communities. Wanner noted that TPL was involved in acquiring Zack Woods which was added to the Green River Reservoir State Park in 2012. Wanner believes communities want more control over the forests in their towns. There are recreational and economic benefits. A trail network could be developed; revenue could be derived from occasional harvesting; it would provide good habitat for wildlife; and there are many examples of educational opportunities for students. Wanner discussed possible funding sources for acquiring land, and added that some financial resources would come from the Town in the form of grants and donations. Although the land would come off the Grand List, the small loss in taxes would be offset by the many benefits.

Matt Foster, Principal at Wolcott Elementary, gave a presentation to the board outlining the educational opportunities that would be provided by a community forest. Foster's slideshow depicted what teachers have been doing with students in outdoor education. The idea is that the community forest would be within walking distance of the school.

The board agreed to have Wanner make some inquiries to determine whether property owners might be interested in selling a portion of their forest land.

Approve Town's COVID-19 Directive: Martin stated the Directive adopted by the board in March was removed. A new Wolcott COVID-19 Emergency Operations Directive has been created in an effort to comply with the Governor's Executive Order of November 13, 2020. The Directive was read aloud. The Directive includes the following:

- The Town Office and Highway Department are closed to public access. During operational hours, the public may communicate with staff by phone, mail, electronic access, or mail slot.
- At the Transfer Station, only three vehicles will be allowed at the roll offs at a time.
- Town Hall will remain open to Wolcott Ballet and AA with restrictions, but otherwise is closed.
- Gathering places such as ball fields, Town gazebo, and playgrounds are closed.
- Selectboard, Committee and Commission meetings will be held via remote access.
- The public may access Town Wi-Fi from their vehicles.
- The library is closed. Curbside pickup may be available.

Motion by Lee to approve the Directive as written. Seconded by Klein. Voting: All 4 in favor.

Town Office Plowing: At the November 4 meeting, the board had agreed to Bernard Earle's contractual offer to plow and salt the parking lots of Town Office, the Depot building, and Town Hall. Earle now wishes to plow in his capacity as a handyman for the Town. Diane Earle will be hired by the Town on a part-time basis to shovel and salt as needed at a rate of \$15 per hour. The rate for plowing will be \$60 per snowstorm. The cost for shoveling will be deducted from that. The rate to open up the road if needed is \$30.

Transfer Station Operations and Certificate/Custodial Care Responsibility: Bernard Earle will be responsible for inspecting the Transfer Station, and report back to Szott. Brush hogging work will be put out for bid in the spring. The road crew will clean ditches and do other work.

Transfer Station Budget: Belinda discussed with the board the proposed 2021-2022 budget for the Transfer Station. The discussion included the increase in customers, and increases in expenses. It was suggested the fee for compost may need to be revisited in July. The board was asked to consider going to a system of punchcards that could be purchased by writing a check. A cash transaction could be done at Town Office. No decision was made. Motion by Lee to accept the proposed 2021-2022 budget of \$73,020 for the Transfer Station. Voting: All 4 in favor.

Employee Health Insurance: The board discussed the new rates for BC/BS health insurance for full-time Town employees. The increase is not significant. December 7 is the deadline by which the board must decide what plan to go with. It was suggested that MVP has lower rates. Martin pointed out that the board should discuss the insurance issue in the early fall when the rates come out. Klein and Szott will conduct some analysis and present proposals at the December 2 board meeting.

Development Review Board/Planning Commission Member: With the resignation of Bill Cotten, the volunteer position to serve on both boards will be advertised on the website.

Junk Ordinance petition: Earlier this year, the board received a petition asking that the Junk Ordinance not be enacted. In response, the board suspended the Ordinance. Klein stated that typically the Town has 60 days in which to hold a Special Town Meeting and call for a vote once a petition is received. Due to COVID-19, the deadline was extended to the end of the year. Following extensive research, the options are to do a special mail-in vote, or a drive-up vote, which would be very expensive. Legally, it is a grey area whether a vote must be conducted by the end of 2020. The other option is to address the issue at Town Meeting. Discussion ensued. Motion by Klein to include the Junk Ordinance in the Warning for Town Meeting for vote by Australian ballot. Seconded by Lee. Voting: All 4 in favor.

Glee Merritt Kelley Community Library: The Depot building is being prepared to house the library. A plumber was called to look at a water issue. The board agreed that the book shelves should be attached to the walls.

Unfinished Business:

Maintenance job: The Town is still seeking a part-time person for this position.

Budget process: Szott stated he is still waiting to receive written budget proposals.

Signs for Transfer Station: Martin reported the signs have been ordered.

Correspondence: The board will donate \$100 to Front Porch Forum.

Adjourn: Motion by Lee to adjourn. Seconded by Klein. Voting: All 4 in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 8:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Deborah Klein

Next regularly scheduled meeting December 2, 2020