

Wolcott Selectboard Meeting
Minutes
December 16, 2020

Wolcott Town Office/Phone-in: 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, Kurt Billings
Absent: Kim Gravel, Richard Lee
Employees: Randall Szott, Dillan Cafferky, Joey Hoadley, Chan Judd, Sally Gardner, Belinda Harris Clegg, Deb Klein, Jim Holton, Brett Eagan
Public: Eric Furs, Dawn Cochran, Michelle Cortes-Harkins, Rick Harkins, Scott Spencer
Reporter: Doug McClure, *Hardwick Gazette*

Martin called the meeting to order at 6:08 p.m.

Amendments to the Agenda

Motion by Klein to move up the health insurance discussion and move the executive session until later in the meeting. Seconded by Billings. Voting: All 3 in favor.

New/Unfinished Business:

Health Insurance: If the employee health insurance carrier changes from Blue Cross/Blue Shield (BC/BS) to MVP, the Town would see a decrease in cost of about \$11,000. Employees receiving health insurance were asked to compare coverage under the two plans and report to the board. The majority of employees wish to remain with BC/BS. The board thanked the employees for their comments, and will take them into consideration in their decision-making process.

Approve Minutes of December 2, 2020: Motion by Klein to approve the Minutes of December 2 as written. Seconded by Martin. Voting: Billings abstained. Motion failed for lack of votes. Matter tabled to the January 6, 2021 meeting.

Comments from the Community: Eric Furs stated he has been denied the ability to work as a lister despite having been elected at the last Town Meeting. Eric was asked if he has come to the lister office during working hours. Eric said he had offered to work on Saturdays. The matter is referred to the Town Administrator (TA). Eric will supply a letter to the TA which he wishes to be incorporated by reference in the Minutes.

Executive Session: Motion by Klein to enter executive session to discuss a personnel matter. Seconded by Billings. Voting: All 3 in favor. The board entered executive session at 6:35 p.m. inviting Randall Szott, Sally Gardner, Dawn Cochran, and Belinda Harris Clegg to participate. The board came out of executive session at 6:54 p.m. No motion was made.

New/Unfinished Business:

Town Clerk Budget: Belinda presented to the board a proposed budget for 2021-2022 for the Clerk's Office. Discussion ensued. The board accepted the budget as a draft.

Highway Department:

Budget Request: Dillan presented to the board a proposed budget for the next fiscal year. Discussion ensued. The board accepted the budget as a draft.

New Business:

Litter Clean Up: Michelle Cortes-Harkins and Rick Harkins wished to present to the board several ideas they have gathered to address the trash and litter problem in Wolcott. The board thanked them for their interest and their work in bringing together the ideas. The two indicated they would be willing to form a committee that would report to the board. This could be an opportunity to engage residents in finding solutions to the trash issue. Klein volunteered to work with the group.

Town Meeting Australian Ballot Discussion: Martin stated it looks as though there will not be an in-person Town Meeting in March. Voting would then most likely be by Australian ballot. Deadlines will need to be determined. Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT) is offering a virtual information session on this topic tomorrow. Klein will attend and report back to the board. If deadlines need to be determined prior to the January 6 meeting, a special Selectboard meeting will be scheduled in December.

Fire Department Budget: Jim Holton, Chief, and Brett Eagan, treasurer, presented to the board a written proposed budget for 2021-2022. The line items were discussed. The board accepted the budget as a draft.

Casella Rate Increase: Martin reported that as of January 11, 2021 Casella's rates will increase by \$3 per tonnage of trash, and fifty cents per tonnage of recyclables. The Transfer Station budget will have to be revised to adjust to the \$9,000 increase. The board will gather more information prior to adjusting fees to customers.

Transfer Station Shortages: Klein noted that the Transfer Station shortages have been quite sizable, and consistent. It was agreed there needs to be more control over the processing of customers. The board will revisit this issue at the January 6 meeting.

Note Taker for Law Enforcement Committee: Wolcott has joined Johnson and Hyde Park in a study group to discuss a sustainable way for the Towns to continue contracting the services of the Lamoille County Sheriff's Office given the annual increases in cost. Wolcott has been requested to contribute to the cost of paying for a scribe to take minutes of the meetings. They are seeking \$20 per hour for three hours per meeting. The group meets two times per month, so the monthly fee to the Town would probably be \$40. The board thinks that is high. Szott will

contact theTown's representative in the study group for more information before a decision is made.

Unfinished Business:

Maintenance job: An application has been received for the maintenance job that has been advertised. Billings stated it is important for this position to be held by someone who is skilled in building maintenance, and plumbing. The applicant will be contacted.

Mailbox Policy: Szott and Klein reviewed with the board a draft mailbox policy if the board wishes to consider circumstances under which a resident's mailbox will be replaced if it is destroyed by the Town plow. The other option is to not accept responsibility for damage. The policy will be reworked and presented to the board again for review.

Executive Session: Motion by Klein to enter executive session to discuss a personnel issue. Seconded by Billings. Voting: All 3 in favor. The board entered executive session at 8:28 p.m. inviting Szott to participate. The board left executive session at 9:17 p.m. Motion by Klein to retain Blue Cross/Blue Shield (BC/BS) insurance for the next fiscal year and the board will continue to investigate other options. Seconded by Billings. Voting: All 3 in favor.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Deborah Klein

Next regularly scheduled meeting - January 6, 2021