

# Wolcott Selectboard Meeting Minutes July 7, 2021

Wolcott Town Office/Zoom/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, Allen Carpenter
Absent:	Richard Lee
Employees:	Randall Szott, Belinda Harris Clegg, Deb Klein
Presenters:	Christine Hallquist, Michael Davidson
Public:	Ruthanna Demag
Reporter:	Doug McClure, <i>Hardwick Gazette</i>

---

Martin called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**Amendments to the Agenda:** None.

**Approve Minutes of June 16, 2021:** Motion by Billings to approve the Minutes of June 16. Seconded by Klein. Discussion: None. Voting: All 4 in favor.

**Comments from the Community/Correspondence:** None.

**NEK CUD Business Plan:** Christine Hallquist serves as the Administrator for both the NEK Broadband, and Lamoille Fiber Net Communications Union District (CUD). The two CUDs are working together. Davidson represents Wolcott in the NEK Broadband group. Hallquist, who lives in Wolcott, noted the difficulties the town faces when it comes to internet service. All the trees and hills pose a problem for fixed wireless. The answer is to run fiber optic cable, but that is expensive. Federal funds will be available through the Recovery Act, which will help to get started, but it is not sufficient to get the work done. Profit based private utility companies simply are not interested in serving low density areas. The CUDs mission is to connect every home and business to internet. The goal is to keep costs as low as possible. A plan has been developed laying out 23 distribution areas and phases of development. Construction, which can start next spring, may take five years to complete, or seven years, considering potential delays due to labor and material shortages. Executive session was requested to discuss details of the plan that are not yet available to the general public. Motion by Klein to enter executive session. Seconded by Billings. Voting: All 4 in favor. Hallquist, Davidson, and Szott were asked to remain. The board entered executive session at 6:19. Regular session resumed at 6:29 p.m. No action was taken.

**Highway Department:** Once the sand contract with Gravel Construction is signed, the crew will start hauling sand. There has been communication with the engineer regarding the Town Hill culvert. A roadside mower has been reserved to rent.

**Town Administrator's Report:**

Szott informed the board that the Vermont Council on Rural Development (VCRD) has a new grant program: Climate Catalysts Innovation Fund. It is a small grant fund to support an innovative project. Ideas are being considered. The deadline for submission is July 22. Szott discussed another grant opportunity, the Spark Connecting Community grant. The Lamoille County Planning Commission (LCPC) is working on two grants with regard to municipal planning. A letter of intent has been submitted for a \$12,000 VTrans grant program.

VLCT is offering a training program on animal control issues the Town would like to participate in.

Szott discussed with the board a set of rules that will apply to the Department of Corrections (DOC) worker at the Transfer Station. The board also discussed the problem of the DOC workers not showing up, or failing to perform the work required.

### **New Business**

**Library Programming and Green Space:** Ruthanna Demag, Library Trustee, informed the board of upcoming programming at the library to include a story hour and a wellness event. More programs will be set in place following the Trustee Board's retreat. In August, they would like to have a one-year plan of events with the goal of having an event every other month. Damag questioned how the green space behind the library will be used. Over the past several months, the board has discussed a grant application for infrastructure that could be added to the space to make it more enjoyable for the community to use.

Sally Gardner retired from her position as full-time librarian at the end of June. One of the Trustees, Jackie Burgess, will serve as librarian part-time during the month of July. Gardner will return to the library on a part-time basis beginning in August. Martin noted that other towns have an active Friends of the Library group of volunteers. Demag stated the childrens' collection will be moving from the elementary school to the Depot building.

**Use of Conference Room (Girl Scouts):** The Girl Scouts have requested to meet in the boardroom at Town Office on Mondays from 4:15 to 6:00 p.m. The Scouts have agreed to do a community project in exchange for use of the space. The board agreed. A permit for use of the room will be developed.

**Heat for Transfer Station:** The board discussed how the shack at the Transfer Station is heated. It was suggested Richard Lee look at the heating source to ensure it is sufficient.

**COVID Directive:** The Governor lifted Vermont's State of Emergency that had been put in place during the pandemic. Motion by Klein to rescind the board's COVID Directive of November 18, 2020. Seconded by Carpenter. Voting: All 4 in favor.

**AA Meetings Town Office:** The AA group requested to meet at Town Office on Sundays starting July 11 from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. The Selectboard agreed.

**Multiple Town Zoom Accounts:** The board discussed how multiple Town boards and groups can best offer Zoom participation at their meetings. The board determined a single Zoom account for the Town is preferable. If a Town board or group wishes to access the account, that can be arranged through the Town Administrator.

**2021 Audit Update:** Belinda Harris Clegg informed the board that the company the Town usually uses to conduct the annual audit cannot do so this year due to insufficient staff. The

board advised Clegg to seek bids for the audit for one year. Discussion will resume once bids are received.

**Financial Profit vs. Expense:** Clegg provided documents for the board to review. The board discussed the rise in expenses at the Transfer Station. If costs continue to go up, sustainability is in jeopardy. The board needs to consider increasing fees. Further discussion of the documents, as well as the Transfer Station, will take place at the next meeting.

#### **Unfinished Business**

**Sheriff Contract:** Klein reported that the Three-Town Law Enforcement Committee, consisting of Wolcott, Johnson, and Hyde Park, has met with Sheriff Marcoux. The Sheriff has agreed to more detail being included in the contracts with the three Towns. The Committee is working on the language to be included for next year's contract. The board agreed to sign this year's contract for services with the Lamoille County Sheriff's Office.

**Personnel Policy Revision - Adoption:** Szott addressed recent changes to the draft of the Personnel Policy. He also addressed the 17-page Motor Vehicle Operator manual in the Appendix. Motion by Klein to adopt the Personnel Policy as discussed. Seconded by Billings. Discussion: Billings suggested there be a policy regarding possession of guns on Town property. Szott will check on the law and report back to the board. Voting: All 4 in favor.

Motion by Klein to adopt the Drug and Alcohol Policy as discussed. Seconded by Carpenter. Voting: All 4 in favor.

**Asset Management Plan:** Tabled.

**Harris + Allen, Gardner, and Tallman Deeds (Brook Rd):** Tabled.

**Executive Session:** Motion by Klein to enter executive session on a personnel matter. Seconded by Carpenter. Voting: All 4 in favor. Szott and Clegg were asked to remain. The board entered executive session at 7:50 p.m. The board resumed regular session at 7:57 p.m. The board recommended Allison Bigelow receive pay for a two-week vacation, as well as one COVID day.

**Adjourn:** Motion by Billings to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Klein. Voting: All in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 7:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Deb Klein

*Next regularly scheduled meeting - July 21, 2021*