

**Wolcott Selectboard Meeting
Minutes
October 5, 2022**

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: Deb Klein
Public: Dolan Patrick, Monica Cross

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

Amendments to the Agenda: None.

Approve Minutes of September 21, 2022: Motion by Klein to approve the Minutes of September 21. Seconded by Carpenter. Discussion: None. Voting: All 4 in favor.

Comments from the Community: None.

Correspondence: Notice was received of the 2022 State & Local Government Municipal Day. The event will be held October 28 in Montpelier from 8:30 to 3:45. Registration fee is \$30.

Project Manager Report: The contract for the purchase of the new plow truck has been signed. Delivery is expected by October 20. The old truck that was used for trade-in will be towed away. The 10-ton tag trailer has been ordered. The estimated delivery time is 26 weeks, so it should be here by spring. No deposit was required. The 1-ton truck sander has been ordered. The anticipated delivery date is in two weeks. The sander will then be installed on the truck. Winter salt is available from Cargill, although the price is currently unknown.

The Town was allocated Grant in Aid funds to purchase a stone screener. The total award is \$5,900. There is a minimum Town match of \$1,180. The stone screener can be used to ditch roads, and will save on gravel costs. This is equipment that cannot be rented. It is anticipated that it will pay for itself. The grant requires the equipment be delivered to the Town before June 30, 2023.

Craftsbury has confirmed they will be using ARPA funds when building out fiber. That will allow the Wolcott spur to go forward.

The Litter Committee is moving forward on getting textile collection bins delivered to the Transfer Station. The Transfer Station permit need not be modified for the bins.

A schedule has been developed for budget presentations to the Selectboard. Town departments and committees have been notified of the date they are scheduled to present to the board.

A part-time handyman has been hired. A task list is posted in the Town Administrator office.

The board has been in discussions with Johnson and Hyde Park board members regarding hiring a shared Assessor. The Johnson and Hyde Park Selectboards have each approved eight hours per week. Neither Town currently has a Lister. Other Towns might join in as well. The board discussed having the Assessor work four hours per week for Wolcott. The cost would be approximately \$200 to \$240 per week, plus mileage. Board members are to review the matter prior to a vote at the October 19 meeting.

Selectboard review/action

Sheriff budget: Martin and Klein represented Wolcott in a meeting with the Lamoille County Sheriff discussing the future cost for law enforcement services for Wolcott, Johnson, and Hyde Park. Board members reviewed a draft proposal. The proposal from the Sheriff appears to suggest that in order to keep the Town budgets at a 3% increase each year, there would then be a “shortfall” in the Sheriff’s budget of about \$60,000. The Sheriff would like the Towns to make up the “shortfall” by using ARPA funds. The board has several questions regarding the proposal, and would like to see some actual numbers. Concern was expressed that use of ARPA funds to pay for the increase in the budget would create a balloon situation at the end of the three-year contract period, when ARPA funds are no longer available. Following discussion, the board agreed to let the Sheriff know that Wolcott is not interested in using ARPA funds to offset the Sheriff’s Office budget, as that would create too much of an up and down for the taxpayers. The next meeting with the Sheriff will be during the last week of October. Public comment noted small Towns do not get the same State Police coverage as other areas, which is very inequitable. It was suggested Wolcott collaborate with other similarly-situated towns for a louder voice. Martin can write a letter following the November election to let legislators know how the board feels regarding equity in law enforcement services throughout the State.

School Street bridge – conceptual plans: Board members reviewed copies of the conceptual plans created for the School Street bridge. Board members are to review the plans and be prepared to discuss at the October 19 meeting. The Town needs to comment on the plans by October 28, 2022. The board also discussed the need to start upgrading Flat Iron Road since that will be used as a detour during the time the new bridge is being installed.

Brook Road Culvert project: The box culvert has been completed, and the road is now open to traffic. Two issues remain: 1) a newly discovered underground culvert runs into the new culvert, that should be redirected; 2) Jersey barriers were placed along a section of the road, but for pedestrian safety, a railing should also be installed. The cost to redirect the culvert would be approximately \$8,000. The cost to add railing would be approximately \$5,000. These costs will not be covered by FEMA, and would be incurred by the Town.

Grant in Aid – road segments: Next year’s Grant in Aid is being reviewed by the Road Foreman. The board need take no action at this time.

ARPA Funds – planning: The board discussed the need for a long-term spending plan for ARPA funds. A list of how other Vermont towns are spending ARPA funds is available from Vermont League of Cities & Towns (VLCT). The Selectboard has approved several projects where the use of ARPA funds was discussed as the source of funding, but ARPA was not specifically included in the motion as the source of funding. The Selectboard’s intent regarding the use of ARPA funds can be clarified. Motion by Martin to clarify previous motions for the use of ARPA funds that the board approved which includes: prepping and painting of Town Hall and the Town Garage; the contract with CAI for \$13,475.50; the Zoning/Scanning project; both phases of website maintenance; and purchase of the Town Forest for \$25,000. Seconded by Carpenter. No further discussion. Voting: All 4 in favor.

Adjourn: Motion by Klein to adjourn. Seconded by Billings. All 4 in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 6:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Deb Klein

Next regularly scheduled Selectboard meeting – October 19, 2022