

**Wolcott Selectboard Meeting
Minutes
November 16, 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, Allen Carpenter, Richard Lee, Kurt Billings
Employees: Belinda Harris Clegg, Tom Martin, Deb Klein
Public: Dolan Patrick, Michelle Cortes-Harkins, Tim Yarrow

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

Amendments to the Agenda

Klein asked to add a request for a tax payment plan to Selectboard review/action.

The Town received the Brook Field Service maintenance agreement for the generator. A discount is available if the statement is paid by December 5, which is before the next Selectboard meeting. If paid by December 5, the charge is \$398 instead of \$419. Motion by Klein to direct the Treasurer to submit payment to Brook Field Service prior to December 5 to take advantage of the discount. Seconded by Lee.

Discussion: It was determined the State inspection is not required. Voting: All in favor.

Approve Minutes of November 2, 2022: Motion by Klein to approve the Minutes of November 2, 2022. Seconded by Lee. Discussion: None. Voting: All in favor.

Correspondence: The Town received a notice from Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT) that annual dues/service fee is \$1,095.

The Lamoille County Courthouse will hold their preliminary budget hearing on December 1 at 7:00 p.m. Members are invited to attend, but it is informational only, and no vote will be taken.

The Local Cannabis Control Commission received from the State Cannabis Control Board a check for \$100 for work they have done.

NEMRC is offering cloud service for a fee. Office personnel will look into the options. This service may be necessary if the Town employs the services of an Assessor.

Comments from the Community: None.

Budget Hearings

Library: The Library submitted a written budget proposal the same as last year. There are no changes to electricity or fuel costs. The proposed appropriation is \$9,925.

Zoning: Tom Martin, Zoning Administrator, submitted a written budget proposal to the Selectboard. There are some minor changes, for example, publication of legal notices has gone up. Otherwise, the request is pretty much flat at \$10,625. It might be that permit fees will need to be raised to cover the increased cost of publication of notices.

Tom Martin also brought up the issue of reorganizing old building permits so they can actually be located by those who need them for their research. Many of the permits have not been in the correct order since moving to Town Office.

Listers: Deb Klein presented to the Selectboard the proposed budget for next year. There is a small increase over last year's budget for a total of \$25,400. The Selectboard will address the \$11,440 proposed budget for an Assessor when putting the full budget together.

Tom Martin informed the board that it would be prudent to start looking into a Town-wide reappraisal. There are so many towns in the queue, it could take years to complete.

Junk & Litter Committee: Michelle Cortes-Harkins, Chair of the Litter Committee reviewed with the board a written proposed budget. There was a discussion about the many activities the Junk & Litter Committee have going on such as: Bulk Waste Day, Green Up Day in both spring and fall, Lamoille River cleanup, the Helpsy textile bins at the Transfer Station, and the Don't Trash Wolcott signs.

It was suggested that Bulk Waste Day and Green Up Days come out of the Transfer Station budget and go into the Junk & Litter Committee budget. There was a discussion about how to handle fees coming to the Town for textile recycling through Helpsy. Further discussions will ensue.

Park & Recreation: On behalf of the Park & Recreation committee, Kee Gillen requested the same amount as last year, \$1,000. It was noted that of that amount, \$600 goes toward the porta-potty.

Ballet Wolcott – request: Tim Yarrow, President, Ballet Wolcott, asked that a lock box be available at Town Hall so their teachers can have access to a key. This would be similar to a realtor's box. Motion by Klein to allow Ballet Wolcott to fasten a lock box next to the door at Town Hall. Seconded by Lee. Voting: 4 in favor; Martin abstained (as a member of the Ballet's board). Motion carried.

Yarrow indicated that he would like to discuss with the board some housekeeping issues in the new year including adding cubby shelves, updating the bathrooms, and painting.

Yarrow encouraged all to attend Ballet Wolcott's performance of The Grinch on December 18 at the Lamoille Union High School.

Project Manager Report

Klein recently met with Rob Moore, Lamoille County Planning Commission (LCPC) to view work done by the road crew on particular road segments, particularly Marsh Road and East Hill Road. Both Moore and Jim Ryan with VTrans, said the crew did an excellent job. This work paves the way to the Town being awarded a grant.

Klein stated a desktop computer is needed for the Emergency Management desk at Town Office, and a new computer is needed for the Project Manager's office. A quote was received for \$1,025 for the new desktop computer. Lister or Zoning can rotate their computers if they wish. The Project Manager computer can be replaced for \$400. Motion by Martin to authorize purchasing computers for Emergency Management and the Project Manager's office. Seconded by Lee. No further discussion. Voting: All in favor.

The new plow truck is still at Viking waiting for the plow attachment to arrive. Viking has been promising the plow will be delivered “next week” for several weeks now. With the last snow fall, some roads had to be plowed with the one-ton truck, which is not good for the truck. It may be that the Town will need to take delivery of the new truck and attach the old plow to it until the new plow comes in. The handyman has been training with the road crew on plowing and operating the loader.

The schedule for preparing the Town Report will be determined in the next couple of weeks.

Potential school house funders representing several different agencies and groups, recently toured the old school house. Funding for the work would be done in pieces, for example, with one on planning, one on engineering, and one on construction. High interest was expressed for utilizing the space as a café and for the Historical Society. Other positives noted include the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail, the Town Forest, the new School Street bridge, and other changes such as the Town Garden and Depot Park.

The Selectboard had previously authorized \$10,000 for engineering services at the old school house to evaluate the project and set priorities. LCPC sent out Request for Proposals (RFP). Three engineers responded to the recent site visit. Their proposals should be received in early December.

Klein shared with the board a list of appropriation requests that have been received so far.

The Selectboard had recently been approached, along with other Towns in the State, to adopt a Declaration of Inclusion. The board had forwarded the request to the Planning Commission for input. The Planning Commission recommends the Selectboard adopt such a Declaration.

The proposed Declaration of Inclusion states: “The Town of Wolcott condemns racism, sexism, classism, ableism, ageism, religious intolerance and homophobia, in all forms.” “The Town of Wolcott welcomes all persons, regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity or expression, age, or physical and/or mental capabilities, to participate in governance.” “The Town of Wolcott is committed to fair and equal treatment of everyone in the community. The Town of Wolcott strives to ensure all Town actions, policies and operating procedures reflect this commitment.” Brief discussion ensued. Motion by Lee to adopt the Town of Wolcott Vermont Declaration of Inclusion as written. Seconded by Martin. Voting: All in favor. Board members signed the document dated November 16, 2022.

Request for tax payment plan: A Wolcott resident, a single parent, requested to make payments on back taxes in the amount of \$25 per week. With that schedule, the back taxes would be paid before the May tax bill is due. Discussion ensued. Motion by Martin to accept the tax payment plan as proposed with \$25 to be paid each week until paid up. Seconded by Klein. Voting: All in favor.

Employee request: It was suggested that the board consider gift cards for employees for Thanksgiving. Following discussion, the board declined.

Updates from the Chair: Martin stated a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been signed by the Towns of Hyde Park, Johnson, and Wolcott to share the costs of a part-time Assessor. LCPC will advertise the position. Greensboro expressed interest in joining the group, but LCPC will need to discuss since Greensboro is outside Lamoille County. It is hoped other towns will join in.

Kate Wanner provided Martin with information about ecological assessments that have been done at the Town Forest property through Audubon Vermont. A report was provided on bird habitat, as well as several rare and uncommon species of plants especially along the river.

Martin would like the Town to place an order for E-911 signs for all 911 properties in Town. If the signs are ordered in bulk, there should be a ten percent discount. The signs could be produced over the winter and be ready for installation in the spring.

Martin stated there was a communication issue on renting out Town Hall and the ballet was not informed to pick up their gear. The renter told Martin it took her an hour to prepare Town Hall for their use. Martin suggested the renter receive some compensation. Motion by Lee to reduce the Town Hall rental fee for this particular user from \$65 to \$30. Seconded by Martin. All in favor.

Moving forward, Town Hall rentals will be scheduled through Linda Martin. Martin will create a form for better communication between renters and the ballet. The rental fee and key can still be picked up and dropped off at Town Office.

Adjourn: Motion by Lee to adjourn. Seconded by Klein. Voting: All in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 7:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Deb Klein

The next regularly scheduled Selectboard meeting – December 7, 2022