

Town of Weston
P.O. Box 98
Weston, VT 05161

SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES

October 10, 2023 at 7:30pm

Present: Dennis Benson, Jim Linville, Annie Fuji'i and Lisa Yrsha

Public: Shawna Batogowski, Jason Marino, Mehul Dholakia, Stacey Fedele, Donald Hart, Jennifer Probst and Michael Smilovich.

Zoom: Michele Shaw and Charles Goodwin.

Dennis Benson calls the meeting to order 7:30pm

- 1. Almon Crandall Road Foreman:** Almon says that the cab and chassis for the new truck are built and it should be about 8 more weeks before we have the truck for Town use. Almon states that the road crew has started hauling and mixing sand and will check on the price for Dennis Benson. Almon says that most of the flood damage is repaired with the exception of one or two culverts. Lisa Yrsha states that 38 miles of or repairs have been finished. Dennis asked Almon to look into buying some more tires and rims for the trucks with the upcoming winter plowing season. Dennis said it would be a great idea to have a backup on them as it was hard to find and buy them last year. Jim Linville would like to know if the double yellow lines on Park Street will be redone. Almon states that it will need to be repaved next spring/summer and will wait until that time. Lastly Almon states that the Grader wing for the grader is ready to be put on.

- 2. Review and Approve Minutes:** There are a few grammar/spelling corrections to be made to the September 26th 2023 minutes. Shawna Batogowski will make the corrections and repost minutes. *Jim Linville moves to sign, Lisa Yrsha Seconds. Unanimously approved.*
- 3. Changes or additions to the Agenda:** None
- 4. Public Comment:** None
- 5. Interlocal Rec. Director Committee:** Jason Marino came in to address the Selectboard's decision to put the Inerlocal Recreation Director Agreement before the voters at Town Meeting. Jim Linville states that the Selectboard has an issue with section #14 on the agreement. He said that he has spoken with Merrill Bent Esq. and that the voters had held a binding vote approving \$7,500 and that the Selectboard would not be able to unilaterally override that vote. Dennis Benson added that he would like to see more of a financial breakdown for allocation of the funds. Annie Fuji'i would like to know how this program would benefit the Weston Rec. Park here in Weston and the programs that they offer. Annie Fuji'i would also like a copy of the job description to go over. Jason Marino stated that the person who fills this position will help with programs for the all the towns. Jason Marino also says that without a 3 year contract it will be more difficult to find someone to take the position and at the moment Weston will not move forward with signing the agreement.
- 6. State Buyout Programs:** The Selectboard expressed their condolences to the 3 members of the Town who are here and have had loss and damages to their properties with the flooding in July. Three citizens of the Town of Weston have elected to look into Buyout program offered by the State of Vermont. This program allows the owners of flood damaged property to apply for a VEM grant to cover the purchase price and other buyout costs. The purchase price is set at an assessed value. If the buyout is accepted, the building will be taken down, and the site cleaned up and turned in a green space that the Town will then maintain in perpetuity. It is also stated that either the property owner or the Town can back out at any time up until the buyout is financed-usually at least 6 months. Stacey Fedele stated that her house and property remain vacant and she has not started any repairs. She is having a difficult time navigating the FEMA protocols for reimbursement for damages lost. She sates this is the 2nd time she has had flooding at the house. Ms. Fedele states that the house also flooded in 2011 in Hurricane Irene; however she was not the owner at that time. She would like to move forward and participate in the buyout. Michele Shaw, states that her family would like to withdraw their application for this program. She sates that she has moved forward

with repairs to her property and is ready to rent the house out again. She states that she has had very little help and communication from this program and was made aware that she was on the list of applicants by an email from Jim Linville. Mehul Dholakia owner of the Weston Marketplace would also like to be considered for this program. Jim Linville states that the Town will proceed with requesting the applications for Fedele and Dholakia but might withdraw support for Mr. Dholakia's property because he owns a business that is vital for the Town of Weston. *Charles Goodwin moves that the Town get the appropriate paper work and move forward, Lisa Yrsha seconds. Unanimously approved.*

- 7. Street Closure for Christmas in Weston:** December 2nd, 2023 is the date for Christmas in Weston, there is a rain date for December 9th, 2023. Jennifer Probst asks the town to close Park Street during the time of 10:30am until the end of the event. *Lisa Yrsha moves to Close Park Street for the Christmas in Weston Event, the same as the Town approved it the previous year. Jim Linville seconds and is unanimously approved.*
- 8. Wilder Memorial Expansion Project and Financial Status Report:** Jim Linville has printed out an email from Malcom Hamblett; the email is just a quick update on the financial status of the project. Dennis questions the payment to redo the Blue Stone on the handicap ramp leading into the building and feels that should have been the original contractor's responsibility to repair.
- 9. Planning Commission Subcommittee for Lindgren:** *Annie Fuji'i moves to disband said subcommittee on the basis that the land has been sold and the Lindgren subdivision application has been withdrawn, Charles Goodwin seconds and is unanimously approved.*
- 10. MSK Engineering contract extension for Little Pond Subdivisions: Inspections per zoning requirements:** Annie Fuji'i states that the subdivision is going along as planned and requests an amendment to the Owner-Consultant agreement with MSK Engineering to cover "as Built" inspections as required in Town's Subdivision bylaws. This extension of the firm's contract is to cover inspections of Little Pond completed infrastructure in Weston. Annie Fuji'i states that she will add "and verify state permeants" the agreement in section 2. She also says that Will Goodwin will follow up with the required 1% infrastructure fee from Little Pond LLC to be applied towards the Towns engineering costs. *Charles Goodwin moves to approve extension of contract and Jim Linville seconds, unanimously approved.*
- 11. The Little School Signature:** Shawna Batogowski would like to remove the name of Natalie Boston as the Official Water Contact and replace it with her name. *Jim Linville moves to approve Shawna Batogowski as the contact, seconded by Charles Goodwin.*

- 12. The Little School Simon Operations invoice:** Lisa Yrsha would like to know if the PFAS are tested once a year or quarterly. Shawna Batogowski will send an email to her contact and ask for that information
- 13. Review and approve Fuel Bids:** Sealed bids are handed to Chair Dennis Benson. After opening the bids the Town will go with Marcell Oil for the 5600 gallons of oil and the maintenance of the furnaces. Shawna will let the other bidder know of the Town's decisions. A request will be made to Kim Seymour to add a check for the amount of fuel to the vendor schedule. *Jim Linville moves to approve the bid from Marcell Oil, Lisa Yrsha seconds, and is unanimously approved.*
- 14. FEMA Update:** Michael Smilovich is here and reporting that the Weston Volunteer Fire Department still has some questions about the ownership of the land and buildings of the WVFD. Lisa Yrsha states that the information that she has is a Deed from 1972 but recorded in 1979, stating that the Town owns the land and building but leased it back to them. This is from Book 32, pages 81, 82 & 83. The Lease back information was is on pages 32, 79 and 80. Jennifer Probst states that she doesn't mind going and looking through some of the files upstairs in the Town Office. Dennis Benson states that he remembers that when the WVFD wanted to purchase the building in 1971 the interest rates were around 18%-19% and the town stepped in to get a lower rate on the condition that it would go back to the WVFD. Donald Hart has stated that he will do research into this. Michael Smilovich and Lisa Yrsha have worked with the FEMA rep and have RPA's open for land and structures with the due date of having the information in on October 12th, 2023.
- 15. SO#22 Payroll/SO# 22 Vendors:** *Lisa Yrsha moves to approve payroll SO #22, \$7,675.56 seconded by Jim Linville and is unanimously approved. Jim Linville moves to approve SO#22 vendors \$2,279,139.89 Annie Fuji'i seconds and is unanimously approved. Jim Linville moved to approve SO#22B \$59,871.05 Annie Fuji'i seconds and Lisa Yrsha abstains and is unanimously approved.*
- 16. New and Old Business:** Dennis Benson brought up that he would like to see a better system set up for Grants that the Town and its committees apply for. We should be having these grants looked over by the Town before applying to insure the cost to the Town. Shawna Batogowski will send out emails to the committees and ask if this is some we can start doing moving forward. Annie Fuji'i would like to remind everyone that Chris Morrow and the ad hoc energy groups are volunteers assisting the Selectboard including some Grant applications and are not a "public body". Annie Fuji'i also wants to remind the board of Weston's Vendor ordinance and that any food truck application has to through Barbara Lloyd for approval. Jim Linville is looking into companies do a Hydraulic Study for the Town. Dennis Benson would like to make sure that we aren't paying for something that the State provides at no

cost. Jim Linville says he has a recommendation for Jeff Lennox about a firm to use for the study. He will follow up on this. Annie Fuji'i would like everyone to look at the calendar and chose a date for a pizza party to Honor the Road Crew for their hard work on all the flood damaged roads.

9:48pm Jim Linville moves to adjourn, seconded by Charles Goodwin and unanimously approved Meeting adjourned by chair at 9:48 pm.

Dennis Benson, Chair

Annie Fuji'i, Secretary

Charles Goodwin

Jim Linville, Vice Chair

Lisa Yrsha
