

TOWN OF WESTON
P.O. BOX 98
WESTON, VT 05161-0098
SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES
October 213, 2020 7:30 PM

PRESENT: Denis Benson, Jim Linville, Charles ("Tim") Goodwin, Bruce Downer and Ann Fuji'i

ABSENT: None

PUBLIC: Almon Crandall, Ryan Hart, Jake Hart, Cherise Forbes, Kim Seymour and Natalie Boston

Denis Benson called to order at 7:30 PM

- 1. Changes To The Agenda- Almon:** Almon Crandall begins by saying there's not a lot. Pretty much set and ready for the upcoming winter season. He notes that the members would notice on the Vendors that Fuller billed for the paving, his Lawrence Hill price is roughly \$500, almost \$600, less than his original bid. Almon believes he may not have charged for work done in front of the library. Also Fullers Chester Mountain price is \$3,400 less than estimate. Denis Benson asks about the Emerald Ash Borer, asks if still comfortable with plan to have Almon cutting what trees he could and ones he couldn't, hiring someone to take care of. Almon Crandall confirms yes, unless Power Company can do it but yes correct. Almon Crandall brings up the Culvert on Trout Club rd., Jim Linville and himself met with an engineer that may be doing work on it. Denis Benson asks where the problem in the culvert is exactly and Almon explains it's in one of the joints and the bottom. Denis Benson goes on to explain he spoke with another Selectboard member from another town that had a similar issue and the State allowed them to pour in about 4in of concrete once they cut away the rust in 4-5 types of those culverts. Almon Crandall explains that couldn't be done in this situation. Discussion on the issue and what needs to be fixed exactly. Jim Linville brings up he and Almon talked to Everett about appealing the hydraulic study to see if can get a smaller opening. Everett said he has been through it and it's \$9-\$10,000 process, even if they lower the height of culvert the savings in concrete would be less than \$9,000. Also, when you lower the height of the deck you have to build up the side walls to meet the rd. grade. Jim Linville says he believes it would not be worth perusing that. Jim asks Almon if he had any comments on their meeting with Everett and Almon says he seems very knowledgeable and his price seemed reasonable. Jim Linville says he can't speak for price but agreed that he seemed very knowledgeable and showed his bid or final bill for a similar

job done in Andover. Overall impressed and seemed that he knew “all the right players”.

2. Public Comment: None

3. Fire Department: Jake Hart begins with stating as many know and are aware of; the fire house is in the flood plain. Not good situation because when they should be out helping the town recover after a flood they are cleaning up their own space. Also floods some equipment that can't be moved out. Asks the Selectboard for their support the building of a new fire house in the future. Note's that it is not something that would happen overnight. As a first step for this, asks the Selectboard to consider putting an article in the 2021 Town Meeting asking for a sum of money to be placed in a new building fund to be overseen by the selectboard. Could be used as a down payment for a piece of land if it becomes available in the future. Considering the unknown cost of building a new fire house, if it is started now might take some of the “sting” off down the rd. Jim Linville begins saying the way he looks at this is to run the numbers on the cost of buying land and building a new fire house to the cost of after flood remediation at the fire house. Notes that this is a complicated issue and asks if they have any idea for cost on this. Annie Fuji'i recommends to them to look into the cost. If they believe it is important, do research, come up with more concrete numbers and come back with a proposal for a better alternative to what we have now. Denis Benson suggests putting out a flyer for land for sale or donation to the fire department for a new firehouse. Figure out what you will need and a square foot cost. Jim Linville asks if they build a new firehouse assuming it would be on higher ground. Jake confirms yes. Jim asks how much land they would need. Jake says they are currently on less than an acer. Jim Linville goes on to say it's not the land cost that is the driver it is the building cost, need a rough estimate to move forward. Discussion on land needed and figuring out cost. Annie Fuji'i suggests for the fire department to look into it more and possibilities and come back. Recommends starting perusing and then coming back with more information on cost. Charles Goodwin says that he was on the fire department when this issue has been brought up in the past. Notes that an important point in this is the location. When the town floods it divides the village, if it's not in the right location it won't do any good. Denis Benson notes that they will still need to deploy, regardless of how it's built it will be an issue and will continue to do. Charles Goodwin wonders if more than one location may be considered. Unsure if the answer would be yes or no. Bruce Downer says he thinks should find out a better location, notes he would entertain the idea of two locations possibly. May never find the perfect location. Start thinking about this seriously. Denis Benson states it seems the seed has been planted on this and now it's time to nurture it and make it grow. Charles Goodwin adds that one good thought that Jake

brought up, be good for the fire department to work on this from now till set up for town meeting on something to be brought to town meeting just to get people thinking about it. Jake Hart notes when he brought up the funding was this is going to be a hundreds of thousands of dollars, is start fund now and spread out going to be a good thing (sticker shop). Once land does come along will have the fund aside already. Jim Linville mentions that he may be wrong but his guess is with land and firehouse need to add an extra "0" to his estimate. He agrees funding early is the way to go but need a better idea of a target (don't over or under fund). Wonders how big the fire house would have to be. Suggests looking and seeing records of firehouses built in the past year or so for an idea of cost. Denis Benson also suggests coming up with ideas of possibilities for the existing firehouse. Discussion on the current fire house. Jim asks about square footage of the current firehouse. Jake says it is 78x40= 3120. Jim Linville says it is back in their court, figure out how big, trying to get numbers, not trying to bust chops, just need to figure out cost. He thanks Jake and Ryan for raising the issue.

- 4. Internet Options:** Jim Linville moves to have Denis Benson sign the DV Fiber Form, Charles Goodwin 2nd. *Unanimously approved.* Jim Linville goes on to say the state on the internet issue has been (broadly speaking) unhelpful getting broadband internet access throughout VT. Jim Explains the three levels of internet: DSL (through phone), Cable (coper wire, has more speed, 10-20x as fast as DSL), and Fiber optic (Fastest). The DVCUD (Deerfield Valley Communications Union District) costs nothing but will be slow going to get. Believes will be lucky if it is started in 6 years but could be 10 or could be never. Not a lot of confidence in it. Jim and a neighbor of his are working with Comcast about getting a few houses around "us" hooked up. It's very expensive. Jim Linville asks Kim Seymour if can find out how many full time residents are in the town, can give to Comcast to help with the plan. Jim Linville goes on to say there are grants available (not sure if federal or state) to update the relay station on Greendale Rd. that serves 88 houses. Grant would be \$30-\$60,000 to update that relay station. In order to peruse that grant the town would need to put in \$2,500 of "seed money", if don't get the grant will get money back. If they do get the grant the town doesn't get money back but 88 homes will have faster internet. Jim Linville says that he hopes to authorize the seed money for that grant tonight and also notes there is a group getting together to reimburse the town. Charles Goodwin asks on any idea of the student population. Denis Benson says he believes there are 6 students that would be in that area and benefit. Discussion on prospect for cable. Charles Goodwin says that as long as there is no way it will be more than the \$2,500, when thinking about students it doesn't seem like a lot. Charles Goodwin makes a motion to approve the \$2,500 seed money for the grant, Bruce Downer 2nd. *Unanimously approved.*

5. **Library Tank:** Members review the proposal by Cota & Cota to replace the legs of the oil tank in the Library for \$494.72. In the proposal it is also noted that the cost may be reduced by waiting to do, having someone watch the level until it is under ¼ tank. This way would eliminate most of the labor of pumping the fuel. Annie Fuji'i says that since it is not a safety issue thinks should wait. Annie Fuji'i makes a motion to monitor the fuel level and do the job after it is under ¼ full. Jim Linville 2nd. *Unanimously approved.* Denis Benson asks Natalie Boston to leave a sign on the tank saying to not fill will a phone # to call. Jim Linville also asks Natalie Boston to let Deb Granquist know.
6. **Scoping Study Extension:** Discussion on what the original proposal/goal was: identify alternative to improve pedestrian and bicycle traffic. Not looking for more money, just an extension through the end of next year to be able to hold public hearings (Covid restrictions). Charles Goodwin makes a motion to sign, Annie Fuji'i 2nd. Denis Benson wonders why we would continue with that. Already learned that there's no speeding problem, won't extend the rd. Wouldn't be able to do a lot. Jim Linville agrees but not in a position to make that call and since grant money not sure if can back out. Annie Fuji'i says it doesn't cost anything why not? Just need more time. *Yea: Jim Linville, Charles Goodwin, Annie Fuji'i and Bruce Downer. Nay: Denis Benson. Motion Carries.*
7. **FY 2021 Education Funding:** Discussion. Kim Seymour notes that it is up \$175,000 from last year. Annie Fuji'i makes a motion to accept, Charles Goodwin 2nd. *Unanimously approved.*
8. **Culvert:** Jim Linville begins with estimate from Everett Hammond: discussion and breakdown of the estimate. Total design/bidding/legal/permitting Estimate: \$19,000. Jim Linville notes that as Almon Crandall said sounds very reasonable. Jim Linville thinks should move forward with him, can reserve judgement as to having him supervise the construction when that time comes. Charles Goodwin says that he sympathizes with thoughts, matter of fact agrees with his thoughts, but asks if we are bound to getting bids on that job. Jim Linville read thought the policy on this "The bid process shall not apply to the selection of providers of services that are characterized by a high degree of professional judgement and discretion including legal, financial, auditing, engineering, risk management and insurance services." Annie Fuji'i makes a motion to accept Everett Hammonds estimate, Charles Goodwin 2nd. *Unanimously approved.*
9. **VT EAB Update:** Discussed with Almon Crandall earlier, will continue with plan. Was found in a few more places in the state but so far no major problems. Take lead from the State and Electric Company.
10. **Delinquent Tax Report:** Charles Goodwin makes a motion to accept and review the Delinquent Tax Report, Jim Linville 2nd. *Unanimously approved.*

11. Review and Approve Minutes 9/22/2020: Charles Goodwin makes a motion to approve the minutes as written, Jim Linville 2nd. *Unanimously approved.*

12. SO #22 Payroll: Jim Linville makes a motion to approve SO #22 Payroll for the amount of \$7,326.36, Charles Goodwin 2nd. *Unanimously approved.*

SO #22 Vendors: Bruce Downer makes a motion to approve SO #22 Vendors for the amount of \$1,895,415.27, Charles Goodwin 2nd. Kim Seymour asks about paying the paving bill, the fund for highway paving had \$119,032. With this pay order adding to the special funds an additional \$50,000. Gives us \$169,032 to pay the bill of \$286,487. Leaving short \$ 117,455. Kim asks about taking out of the bridge fund (should have \$531,000 after new funds added). Denis Benson says to go ahead and take out of the bridge fund and will have to repay the bridge fund. Jim Linville says should also have the highway paving fund Show a deficit to balance out. Discussion on how it should be in the books/mechanics of it. *Unanimously approved.* Still owe \$100,000 back to bridge fund for the tax anticipation note. Denis Benson says don't complicate things.

13. New/Old Business: Jim Linville asks Kim if received the fuel Deposit back from HB. Kim says that they said they would send a check but have not received it yet. Charles Goodwin asks how things are going with the Knowlton's letter. Jim Linville talked to Knowlton and he is more than willing to pay whatever bill to Rob Woolmington. Sent Rob the Sketch, Natalie Boston worked with Deb Moser to get the tax maps of the property and Rob is working on putting together a letter for Knowlton to sign. Not done yet but in the works.

Charles Goodwin asks if any progress on temporary emergency power to the annex. Jim Linville talked to Nicki **Winger** about this and she is going to try and see if any Little School parents or friends have a line on a generator. Need a smallish generator (Maybe 8-10 KW) and a trailer and if have that we will go with **Mike** and spend the money for the switching gear to get generator hooked up but need a generator.

Kim Seymour brings up another grant opportunity for election support. Don't have anything in budget for election. Not sure what will grant but haven't asked for an amount. Been granting towns money to put in some infrastructure for elections. Kim says her wish list is a laptop or two as they have to operate over at playhouse on personal computers. Will keep posted on that. Denis Benson asks about another grant for funding to deal with COVID 19 costs. Kim says the money spent was very minimal and doesn't believe would qualify.

Charles Goodwin makes a motion to adjourn, Jim Linville 2nd. *Unanimously approved.*

Jim Linville notes before closing that Kim Seymour's work has been doubled: Tax bills, all the absentee ballots, calls etc. Hats off to her.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:57 PM

DRAFT