

Minutes of the Westmoreland Selectmen's Meeting

Tuesday, February 4, 2025

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: John Snowdon, Bill McGahie and Mark Terry

1. The meeting was called to order at 6:00pm by John Snowdon.
2. Approval of Minutes: January 21, 2025. Motion was made by Mark Terry, seconded by Bill McGahie to accept the minutes as printed. Motion passed 3-0.
3. Accounts Payable: Motion was made by Mark Terry seconded by Bill McGahie to approve Manifests for: General Fund \$242,544.58 Motion passed 3-0.
4. Guests: Land Use Boards: Conservation Commission - Perry Sawyer, Zoning Board - Peter Remy & Kaelyn Willette, Planning Board - Lauren Bressett, Bruce Smith, Liana Capra, Alison Fissette, & Kristen Riley, Master Plan Committee - Alan Bell & Lisa Prince, Land Use Administrator - Laurie Burt, Building Inspector - Larry Muchmore
 - A. Amnesty period prior to Town full reassessment - Town to be 100% reassessed 2026. Assessor often finds things on property not listed on tax cards. Boards discussed ways to handle without immediately penalizing residents who failed to follow the permit process. With the current enforcement policy selectboard sends a letter to residents not in compliance with description of infraction and time period to correct. If a resident does not respond or follow through, a second letter is sent warning of the penalty phase outlined by State RSA. In the case of non-permitted structures the property owner would obtain a permit and fix any issues found when inspected. Boards agree no additional amnesty needed as no fines are attached until the 3rd phase of enforcement policy. Alan Bell suggested more informational articles in the Westmorelander to educate residents of Town procedures. Alison Fissett suggested the "When Do I Need a Permit" article be sent with the welcome letter to help inform new residents. Perry Sawyer suggested finding ways to make the process easier when going through multiple boards. Terry added that unlike places that have full time employees to handle zoning issues, Westmoreland has volunteer board members doing the best they can.
 - B. Class VI Roads - Snowdon strongly recommends all board members watch the webinar from January 16, 2025 done by Jonathan Cowall and the Department of Business and Economic Affairs (BEA) Webinar will be posted on the Town website so anyone with questions about building on Class VI Roads can watch. Webinar strongly suggest communication between boards. If passed, upcoming legislation could allow building on Class VI in certain cases with waiver in deed.
 - C. Upcoming Southwest Regional Planning Commissions winter meeting February 11th 5pm at Heberton Hall, Keene. Topic: State Legislation Rundown: Current Bills and Recently Enacted Laws. Signup by February 7th
 - D. Follow up on preconditions to an approval etc. - Residents come to boards with requests that may not mention anything about pre-existing noncompliance issues. Our current permit forms do not specifically ask. Lauren Bressett - Town of Washington has good forms that could help

with this issue. Boards agreed to research to see if Westmoreland could benefit from similar forms.

- E. New Hampshire Municipal Association (NHMA) training outlines the need for defined dates on all decisions, permits, etc. such as “approved if conditions met by date” All documents have to be in writing with conditions, dates, etc specified or considered by court not to have happened. State RSAs lay out specific time frames in many instances and Town can be more restrictive as long as dates are specifically stated on documentation.
- F. Alison Fissette - Town needs to think about digitizing records to make them more accessible. Snowdon - Selectboard has contracted with Greater Nashua Tech for IT services and will contact to see if they can recommend how we would store and access those records securely. Selectboard agrees there is a need to digitize records and will begin researching the best way to work toward that goal.
- G. Snowdon - Boards can submit suggestions for the next Selectboard/ Land Use Boards Meeting May 6, 2025 by email to Town Administrator.

5. Old Business

- A. Route 63 Violation - Peter Heins - Camper has been moved and wants to be sure now in compliance. Snowdon - Appreciate the cooperation and effort made by Heins to vacate and move the camper. It would appear all conditions have been met. Reiterated that the camper cannot be occupied.
- B. Thompson Road - Court denied defendant's motion for reconsideration for post decision relief as untimely. Contempt hearing scheduled in April. It has come to the Town’s attention that an agreement made in August could result in the sale of the property in February. Court granted Motion for Ex Parte Attachment to recoup fees and potential fines by the Town.
- C. Overwatch/.gov - .Terry - Selectboard received assessment results from Overwatch and will begin working with our new IT team and Overwatch to better prepare for cyber incidents like those that have happened to other municipalities in NH. Overwatch works with grant money and will work with Westmoreland for the next 3 years at no cost to the town to ensure we are better prepared. After the 3 years have finished the Town will have to budget 1,200 to 1,700 per year for licences needed to continue the program.
- D. River Road Bridge - Bridge has been red listed for years. Cost continues to climb to replace the bridge. 2 years ago Selectmen worked with Southwest regional planning to evaluate the bridge. State listed the bridge as an E2 with no record of weight limit change to 10 tons. Bridge was built in the 1930s and gifted to the Town by the County.. Selectboard had Cold River look at the bridge to help find ways to keep the bridge operable. Discussed reducing speed, limiting to one lane, reducing weight limit. Cold River also introduced the board to Josif Bicja, a structural engineer who did a weight study through NHDOT in late 2024. Results have not been made available yet but Selectboard does not want to risk putting plow trucks over the bridge. Bridge will be temporarily closed until results are known. The County has been made aware of the closure and as the bridge provides an emergency access route for Maplewood the County will be appealing for the

State's help. Selectmen have written a letter in support of this effort (see attached)

6. New Business

Signature Approval was given for the following:

Payroll 2/4/25	Retirement \$3,384.04	Home Depot \$61.47
Payroll Taxes 2/4/25	HealthTrust \$6,463.92	Tax Forms Filing \$178.50
Pistol Permit (1)	Amazon \$44.32	Staples \$384.86

7. John Snowdon made a motion, seconded by Bill McGahie per RSA 31:95-b to accept and expend \$200 donated to offset the cost of the Westmorelander. Motion passed 3-0.

8. Upcoming: Budget Hearings: February 7, 2025 Town 6pm & School 7pm at Town Hall
February 11, 2025 SWRPC Winter Meeting 5:30pm Heberton Hall
March 11, 2025 Town Election 11am-7pm Town Hall
March 12, 2025 Town Meeting 7pm School

10. 8:06pm Motion by John Snowdon, seconded by Bill McGahie to adjourn meeting. Motion Passed 3-0. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Jodi Scanlan
Town Administrator

NEXT REGULAR MEETING TUESDAY FEBRUARY 18, 2025
1:00PM MINUTES ARE INITIALLY POSTED AS UNAPPROVED
SELECTMEN SIGNATURES DENOTE APPROVAL

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

John Snowdon, Chairman

William McGahie

Mark Terry