

# Minutes of the Westmoreland Selectmen's Meeting

Thursday, November 7, 2024

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

1. The meeting was called to order at 1:03 pm by John Snowdon.
2. Approval of Minutes: October 15, 2024. Motion was made by John Snowdon, seconded by Mark Terry 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 \$269,494.16 Motion passed 3-0.
4. Guests:  
River Road Bridge  
C.R. Willeke, PE Municipal Highways Engineer, Bureau of Planning and Community Assistance with Yashi Zinzuwadia, NHDOT intern; Josif Bicja, Hoyle Tanner & Associates; J.B Mack, SWRPC; and Chris Coates, County Administrator
  - Josif Bicja, PE, Hoyle Tanner, red listed Bridge 089/100 (River Road) is not repairable and needs to be replaced. Wood is holding up better than concrete which is crumbling. May need to consider keeping large loads off the bridge. Replacing it with a timber bridge would be very expensive. Suggests replacing with conventional steel bridge.
  - Snowdon - the Town is concerned about potential liability issues and is considering reducing the bridge's currently posted 10 ton load limit or potentially even closing the bridge. Due to having just built a new \$2.4M fire house, plus our need to consider other Town bridges, we cannot afford, and do not intend, to replace the bridge without significant financial and administrative assistance from the State and/or Cheshire County, and/or grants that do not require us to obtain long-term bonds.
  - Coates - 150 residents and 200+ staff at Maplewood. With the increasing frequency of flooding that makes Partridge Brook Road inaccessible at times not having the bridge will significantly impact the County's ability to safely provide services to the residents and staff of the Maplewood Nursing Home.
  - Another option previously discussed would be to go through the field with a road to avoid the need for a bridge. Bicja - Area prone to flooding and if in floodplain FEMA will not allow.
  - C.R. Willeke is working to provide the Town with a load assessment study and hopes to have the report by the end of the year. If additional safety measures are needed they will be decided once the Selectboard has these reports.
  - Selectboard will review the provided 2023 NHDOT Bridge Inspection Report and consider Mr Willeke's suggestion to invest in a partial engineering/design study that will cost approximately \$220,000, including the NHDOT management fee, with 80% to be reimbursed by the Statemaking the total cost to the Town \$44,000. If the Selectboard decides to proceed, they will reach out to Josif Bicja for assistance as he stated there may be a way to reduce that initial cost.

- Selectboard will continue to work with Chris Coates and J.B. Mack to explore additional grant options including those from the Northern Border Regional Commission, congressionally directed spending (Senator Shaheen), as well as different Federal sources.
- Coates - offered grant writing assistance in 2025, as well as an opportunity to meet with the Cheshire County Commissioners in early December to explain our Town's inability to fund the replacement of the bridge on our own and to explore potential ways to solve this dilemma. Options may include; potentially transferring the ownership of the bridge to Cheshire County, sharing funding, partnering to obtain grant funding, etc.

## 5. Old Business

- A. Bump Road - Following up on the order to vacate the tenant from the camper on Bump Road property by October 31st, Fifield - camper has been moved and no one currently lives in a camper on the property. Health Officer to schedule inspection to close out the case. Snowden - Thanked Fifield for complying with Town Ordinances. Fines would be retroactive to the given vacate date if not in compliance. State RSA 671:17 allows a civil penalty of \$275 a day for first offense.
- B. Thompson Road - Septic Pro tested septic at 95 Thompson Road on October 16th. Flooded system with green dye which then appeared in a test hole on the 8th day indicating with scientific certainty that the leach field is leaking into the ditch and culvert. The last water test performed showed E. coli level of 240 parts per 100ml which is significantly over the State safety limit. Court date has not yet been set for continuance.
- C. Recycling Committee - Committee working on 2 part plan - 1. Pay by the bag. 2. Transform recycling center to better recycle. Next Meeting November 12th. Will vote at that time whether to proceed with pay by the bag as a warrant article. Terry suggested that the committee write an article for the Westmorelander to inform the community.
- D. Motion was made by Mark Terry, seconded by Bill McGahie to readopt Town Purchasing Policy as well as adopt both Cash Handling Policy and Fraud Policy Motion passed 3-0.
- E. Town Hall Renovations  
Sprinkler system pipe installation nearly complete. Wall and ceiling repair upstairs is underway which will be followed by painting and trim. Windows downstairs are restored and installed with new storm windows. Upstairs the new storms have been installed and windows have been taken off site for renovation. Sprinkler system connection was not originally factored in, however the project's contingency fund was not used and is available to use towards finishing. Stage and foyer were not in original estimates but there is money in Capital reserve to finish walls and trim. This would leave only lighting remaining in upstairs renovation.
  - Capital Reserve - Request to use \$14,576 Town Hall Capital Reserve with \$34,074 LCHIP contingency fund to finish sprinkler system connection using pump and reserve tanks at fire station. Sprinkler system would then be complete and functional. Request to use \$8,380 Capital Reserve to finish repair, painting & trim on the upstairs stage, foyer and the stairways. Motion was made by Mark Terry, seconded by John Snowden to use up to 23,000 Capital Reserve for the remaining sprinkler system and upstairs repair and painting. Motion passed 3-0

- Maintenance & Repair - Request to use \$8,800 of remaining \$10,400 Town Hall repair line to restore front doors and fire escape door upstairs. Both doors are in bad shape and best option historically and financially is to restore existing doors. Motion was made by Mark Terry, seconded by John Snowdon to accept Pinnacle Window & Door proposal of \$8,800 to restore main entry and second floor fire escape door using Building Repair Funds. Motion passed 3-0

Lighting - Snowdon to schedule an energy audit with NHSAVES for help with upstairs lighting.

Floors - Moose Grant will allow for all the floors to be refinished/recoated as needed. Downstairs floors are scheduled Thanksgiving week and all offices will be closed November 26th -December 2nd. Remaining floors are tentatively scheduled during the end of December if painting is finished..

#### 6. New Business

Signature Approval was given for the following:

Recycling & Solid Waste Committee Appointment - Dave Poklemba

Payroll 10/29/2024	Elections Moderator - \$400	General Journal Entries
Payroll Taxes 10/30/2024	Elections Clerk - \$400	#872 - Timber Tax
Intent to Cut Timber (3)	Citco - 43.71	#873 Tax Warrant
HealthTrust - \$2665.36	Hannaford - \$30.34	
Retirement - \$4178.49	Amazon \$94.10	

#### A. Complaints

95 Thompson - Complaint filed with aerial photos of numerous unregistered vehicles and campers on the property. Complaint indicates tenant(s) living in at least one of the campers. Photo also shows septic runoff path into pond at 92 Thompson Road.

75 Route 63 - Land Use Administrator notified of camper with tenants living in it on property.

Occupied campers are in violation of Town Ordinance Section 449:C as well as State RSA 147:8. Unregistered vehicles are in violation of Town Ordinances 422:1. A motion was made by Bill McGahie, seconded by Mark Terry, to notify property owners of violations by letter per Zoning Enforcement Policy. Motion passed 3-0

- B. Makinen Road - Road Agent notified of Class VI Road disturbance and Timber being cut and removed from property without permit. Owner has now filed a timber intent, however, does not have written permission from the landowner across the road where timber was also cut. Considerable disturbance on Class VI Road including damage to rockwall on neighboring landowner's property. John Snowdon, Selectmen, Dave Poklemba, Road Agent and Laurie Burt, Land Use Administrator advised the property owner to stop removing stumps and to fix road damage. Also instructed the owner to meet with the Land Use Administrator Monday to discuss permits, permissions, variances, and potential subdivision.

- C. Eversource - Selectmen discussed adding Westmoreland to Eversource's list of towns that require inspection prior to the installation or upgrading of power to help curb building

without permits and unapproved structures. Selectmen agreed to submit a letter to Eversource for Westmoreland to be added.

D. Budget - Meeting scheduled November 12th at 10:30

6. Correspondence: Executive Council State of NH
7. December 3rd Meeting Guest: NHDOT Safety Engineer
8. 4:11 pm Motion by Bill McGahie, seconded by Mark Terry to adjourn meeting. Motion Passed 3-0. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jodi Scanlan  
Town Administrator

NEXT REGULAR MEETING TUESDAY NOVEMBER 19, 2024 1:00PM MINUTES ARE INITIALLY POSTED AS UNAPPROVED SELECTMEN SIGNATURES DENOTE APPROVAL
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#### BOARD OF SELECTMEN

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John Snowdon, Chairman

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William McGahie

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Mark Terry