

Minutes of the Westmoreland Selectmen's Meeting

Thursday, November 4, 2021

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Frank Reeder, Russ Austin, Clayton Stalker

1. The meeting was called to order at 1:00pm by Chairman Clayton Stalker.
2. Approval of Minutes: October 21, 2021. Motion was made by Russ Austin second by Frank Reeder to accept the minutes as printed. Motion passed 3-0.
3. Accounts Payable: Motion was made by Russ Austin, second by Frank Reeder to approve a manifest of \$395,640.03. Motion passed 3-0.

4. Guests:

Bill Fletcher said that in 2003 Phil D'Avanza, a specialist who works with tower clocks, looked at the clock. The clock was purchased by the town in 1916 and is in need of restoration. The restoration process would involve completely dismantling the clock to clean, make and replace parts, and repaint before reassembling the clock. Fletcher recommends moving the clock to the second floor to the area of the second floor landing. Placing the clock in an encased cabinet would allow people to see the historical mechanism while it continued its function. The restoration cost would be between 15,000-20,000. This would not include anything outside the building. The clock capital reserve fund has \$3300. A warrant article will need to be presented to the town for additional funds. Fletcher said that now that obstruction has been removed, he recommends that the clock be wound.

John Snowdon introduced Lisa Murphy of SWRP who explained the Plan NH Municipal Technical Grant Program. Murphy said the town may be eligible for \$5,000 - \$20,000 in grant money to look at zoning, subdividing, and site plan requirements of the town. Town would in effect hire SWRP with grant money and could use participation of volunteers doing the planning process to meet the in kind match therefore costing the town no money. As consultant, SWRP would review and produce a list of things that need to be worked on as well as write up to 2 ordinances tied into housing. Murphy in reply to Russ Austin's question about when things could get started, stated that once the grant application is submitted it takes 30 days for approval. SWRP would begin reviewing ordinances upon approval. Clayton Stalker said that people in town dislike increases in taxes, and there is a need to figure out how to expand the tax base while maintaining the quality of life Westmoreland people are looking for. Murphy replied that while housing is needed everywhere each town is unique in how they choose to meet the need. She added that input from existing committees and town's people would be vital in the process. John Snowdon said that he had spoken with the chairperson from Zoning, Planning, and Conservation. All committees are interested in pursuing A partnership with SWRP. Lauren Bressett asked about money to study an overlay of Route 12 since there isn't much space for business to come in on Route 12 due to natural barriers. Murphy said this type of study may come under another grant and that Todd Horner could work with the town on zoning work outside housing. Frank Reeder asked that the Zoning and Planning boards share their thoughts with the Selectboard before the next meeting.

Tom Finnegan representing the Fire Station Advisory Committee reported the new proposed estimate for the fire station is 2.6 million. The committee has made \$120,000 in cuts to alleviate some of the increase. There is also a possibility that a FEMA grant could help with some of the cost of the box culvert. Finnegan also reported that the Hazard Mitigation Plan is in the works and that the Emergency Operation Plan will follow that as it is due in January. Both plans have to be in order to receive any FEMA money.

5. Old Business:

- A. Cheshire County generator has been picked up and is now being stored at the highway garage
- B. River Road North Bridge - Study has been started
- C. Town Attorney - Gary Kinyon of Bradley & Faulkner was interviewed. Has extensive experience as a municipal attorney representing towns such as: Marlborough, Nelson, Rindge, and Sharon. A motion was made to hire Gary Kinyon as the new Town Attorney effective December 1, 2021 by Frank Reeder and seconded by Russ Austin. Motion passed 3-0.
- D. Daggett Hill - August "Dan" Waters was sent a certified letter with steps to repurchase land, but he did not reply by deadline. Town will proceed to evict the son August Waters
- E. Tower Clock - In response to Bill Fletcher's recommendation to wind the clock and continue use, the selectmen will see if John Lounsbury wants to continue. If not, Selectmen will reach out to town for another volunteer.

6. New Business:

Signature Approval was given for the following:

Payroll: 10/24/2021 & 11/2/2021

Payroll Taxes: 10/24/2021 & 10/30/2021

Eckman Engineering RR North Bridge 10/25/2021

Amazon: 11/3/2021

Invoice Cloud 11/5/2021

General Journal Entry #778, 779, 780, 781

- A. Polling Pads - Town Moderator, Peter Hills, had LHS present a quote for new polling pads for elections that would streamline the election process. Polling pads would make registering the day of election and check-in process easier; eliminate much of the time consuming tasks of the Supervisors of the Checklists; and produce reports needed for the state. Polling pads would be \$6325 to purchase and set up and \$1000 per year contract and maintenance. Moderator needs to write a proposal for the town warrant.
- B. Health Service Request - Selectmen to review requests for donations and determine amounts each to receive at the next meeting.
- C. Paper Recycling Container - Ron Fish talked to Frank Reeder about making a movable plywood barrier that could keep paper from sliding out of the container and increase the amount of paper that could be put in the container. This could save on trucking, and be an inexpensive interim solution to the paper stacking issue. Selectmen agreed it was a good idea and that Ron should try it.

7. Correspondence:

An email was received from the Planning Board Chair about ordinance changes being put on hold again this year. Frank Reeder clarified that it was not the intent of the board to put ordinance changes on hold, but to hold off on the home business changes until there was a clear definition of home business and home occupation. There was discussion about the tasks that have been done temporarily by Jo Ann until another clerk could be found to be resumed by the planning board since they know more about what is needed. Lauren Bressett said that Liana Capra, who is now taking minutes, may be able to take on the clerks tasks. The question of pay was brought up and Selectboard agreed that the pay is to be consistent for both Zoning and Planning clerks. No committee or board pays for someone to take notes at meetings, but zoning and planning clerks are paid \$50 per hearing and \$25 for continued hearing.

8. The meeting was adjourned at 2:42pm

Respectfully submitted,

Jodi Scanlan

Town Administrative Assistant

NEXT MEETING –Thursday, November 18, 2021, 6:00pm

MINUTES ARE INITIALLY POSTED AS UNAPPROVED

SELECTMEN SIGNATURES DENOTE APPROVAL

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Clayton Stalker, Chairman

Russ Austin

Frank Reeder