

Minutes of the Westmoreland Selectmen's Meeting

Wednesday, April 4, 2018

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

Note: This meeting was rescheduled from Thursday, April 5, 2018 due to absence of Russ Austin on April 5th. The procedure for the Board of Selectmen is that, unless an emergency, all three Selectmen be present at meetings.

1. The meeting was called to order at 10:28AM by Chairman Stalker. Chairman Stalker welcomed Frank Reeder to the meeting as a voting member of the Board of Selectmen.
2. Approval of Minutes: March 15, 2018. A motion was made by Russ Austin, second by Frank Reeder to accept the minutes as printed. Motion passed 3-0.
3. Guests (those who have asked to be on the Agenda):
None
4. Accounts Payable: A motion was made by Russ Austin, second by Clayton Stalker to approve a manifest of \$10,228.89 for the Highway Department and \$225,281.48 for all other bills for a total of \$235,510.37. Motion passed 3-0.
5. Old Business:
 - A. Town Hall Survey: In adding the recently purchased land behind the town hall to the current survey of the town hall property, the surveyor was not able to find stone markers for two points. He would need to do additional research on abutting properties to establish accurate boundary lines. The Selectmen approved to have the work done.
 - B. Landfill well testing: the Department of Environmental Services is requiring additional testing in April of four on-site monitoring wells and one surface water location at the old landfill site along with four off-site private wells. The cost will be approximately \$4,075. Funds were put in the budget for this purpose.
 - C. Unsealing of minutes: A motion was made by Russ Austin, second by Frank Reeder, to unseal the minutes taken in non-public session per RSA 91-A:3, II(d) on 8/4/2016, 11/17/2016 and 1/26/2017 in relation to the purchase of land behind the town hall. Motion passed 3-0. As the negotiations for the land have passed, minutes can now become public.
 - D. River Road State culvert update: Following the June 2017 flooding, the State agreed to increase the size of their culvert on River Road near Ferry Road. Permits are being obtained and the work should be done in July or August. The town will also be replacing a culvert on Ferry Road with a larger one.
6. New Business:

Signature Approval was given for the following:

 - Payroll Manifests: March 24 & 31, 2018
 - Balance Sheet & Trial Balance Reports as of: March 31, 2018
 - Budget vs Actual: 1st quarter
 - Bank Statements: General & Conservation Funds of March 2018
 - Payroll Tax & NH Retirement System payments: March 29, 2018
 - Bills: Healthtrust 3/29/18, Payroll Taxes 3/29/18

Intent to Excavate: R9-31, R1-19, R1-20
Intent to Excavate – Supplement R1-19
Current Use: R14-40
Veteran’s Credit (3)
Timber Tax Warrant: U7-12, R19-6, U5-1 & 1B
MS-232 – Appropriations Actually Voted

- A. The Selectmen signed a letter that will be sent to Governor Sununu requesting him to join other states in studying the feasibility of developing offshore wind power in the Gulf of Maine. This is being done per petitioned warrant article #15 that was passed at town meeting on March 14th.
- B. Insurance rates for employees will be amended as of July 1, 2018 as follows:
Health - .9% increase, Dental – 2.3% increase.
- C. Selectmen signed a thank-you letter to outgoing Zoning Administrator David Wirth for his service to the town since 2012.
- D. The Selectmen approved an extension of the Intent to Cut Timber on County property.
- E. Selectmen signed Personnel Action Forms for employee budgeted raises effective April 1, 2018.
- F. New Town Policies: Based on recent information from the town attorney, Selectmen Stalker would like to enact three new town policies: 1) Setting of hours for Town Clerk, Tax Collector and Selectmen’s Office 2) Compensation for Town Clerk and Tax Collector 3) Removal of town records from the Town Hall is prohibited.

In doing research, the Selectmen have found different interpretations of State regulations in regard to the setting of hours and process of compensation for the Town Clerk. The Town Clerk posted on March 12 that she was decreasing her office hours to be open to the public from 15 to 12 per week. Selectmen Reeder will contact the NH Municipal Association for further information. Chairman Stalker stated that as Selectmen, the goal is to improve services for the betterment of the people in town. They would encourage the Town Clerk to appoint a Deputy, upon their approval, when she is not open during her normal business hours.

To address the reasons the Town Clerk has given for decreasing her hours, the Selectmen state:

- 1. Policy Changes: a policy had to be written, per the Auditors, that established adequate financial controls and accountability in order to ensure the safeguarding of town funds.
 - 2. Security: the Town Clerk asked in her budget for a security door and we did research, budgeted for and have made arrangements with Terry Cox to convert the current office doors based on the model that Chesterfield uses in their town offices.
 - 3. Budgeting: the town voted at town meeting to change the compensation from a salary and fee based pay to straight salary – a recommendation of the Auditors. The budget approved at town meeting was based on 15 hours of office hours at the same salary she was earning at the end of 2017 and the total of the fees earned in 2017 - \$25,000 for Town Clerk and \$12,000 for Tax Collector to be effective April 1st.
- G. A motion was made by Frank Reeder, second by Russ Austin, that in keeping with the New Hampshire Right To Know Law (RSA 91-A), a policy is enacted that states that removal of town records from the Town Hall is prohibited. Motion passed 3-0. RSA 91-A states that each public body or agency shall keep and maintain all records in its custody at its regular place of business in an accessible place.
 - H. The Planning Board has requested that the Selectmen authorize the Planning Board to establish an Advisory Committee to research the town residents' views on alternative energy. The Selectmen will ask the Planning Board for a list of names of those who want to serve and they will appoint a committee.
 - I. Frank Reeder would like to see an Advisory Committee appointed to look at ways to keep the community informed of town activities. A request for those who are interested in serving on the committee will be made.

- J. A trim board that fell from the town hall roof needs to be put back on and the bunting on the front of the building will be taken down.
- 7. Correspondence: *All correspondence is available for review in the Selectmen's office.*
Fire Department Facility Advisory Committee minutes of 3/6/2018. Frank Reeder stated that he will be attending the meetings of this Advisory Committee in the future.
- 8. Public Business:
 - A. Mark Terry of Hatt Road thinks that more people should vote and attend meetings. He added that he appreciates the work that the Selectmen do.
 - B. James Clark of Old Moore Road feels that the town website should be a good source of information.
- 9. It was voted, at 12Noon, to continue the meeting until 6PM on April 5th for the purpose of conducting a posted Public Hearing regarding the change of some Town Hall rental fees.

Thursday, April 5, 2018 Present: Clayton Stalker, Frank Reeder, Russ Austin was excused.

- 10. The continued meeting was called to order by Chairman Stalker at 6:00PM.
- 11. Chairman Stalker opened the duly posted Public Hearing. The purpose of the hearing is, per RSA 41:9-a, to amend town hall rental fees.
- 12. Selectmen signed an Intent to Excavate for R17-28.
- 13. Frank Reeder reported that he will be talking to a NH Municipal Association attorney the following day regarding questions about the hours and compensation for Town Clerks.
- 14. The Public Hearing was closed at 6:30pm. There were no residents in attendance.
- 15. A motion was made by Clayton Stalker, second by Frank Reeder, to amend the town hall rental fee for weddings to \$100 per day for residents & \$200 for non-residents and to increase non-resident rent to \$150 per day for all other activities. Motion passed 2-0.
- 16. The meeting was adjourned at 6:33pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jo Ann LaBarre
Town Administrator

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Clayton R. Stalker, Chairman

Russ Austin

Frank Reeder

NEXT MEETING –Thursday, April 19, 2018, 6:00PM
MINUTES ARE INITIALLY POSTED AS UNAPPROVED
SIGNATURES BY SELECTMEN DENOTE APPROVAL OF
MINUTES