

Minutes of the Westmoreland Selectmen's Meeting  
Thursday, February 1, 2018

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Jack Zeller, Clayton Stalker, Russ Austin

1. The meeting was called to order at 6:00PM by Chairman Zeller.
2. Approval of Minutes: January 18, 2018 and January 25, 2018. A motion was made by Jack Zeller, second by Clayton Stalker to accept the minutes as printed. Motion passed 3-0.

3. Guests/Public Business:

Zoning Administrator David Wirth was present to discuss the proposed ordinance changes to be voted on March 13<sup>th</sup> regarding Photovoltaic Systems (an active solar energy system that converts solar energy directly into electricity): Section 432 of the Westmoreland Zoning Ordinances.

As the Selectmen representative on the Planning Board, Clayton stated that the Planning Board, based on the findings of the Westmoreland Master Plan, believed that they needed to initiate ordinances to prevent commercial solar arrays in town. New Hampshire does not have any regulations so towns are taking it upon themselves to write ordinances.

If approved, ground mounted systems would be allowed as long as the ground surface area does not exceed half of the roof square footage on the dwelling unit. Systems larger than that would need a Special Exception from the Zoning Board. David had met with the Planning Board and recommended what Vermont uses as regulations: a system with 15 kilowatts or less would be permitted – anything over 15 kilowatts would need a special exception. He feels, that as Zoning Administrator, using half of the roof square footage will be hard to determine based on roof angles, overhangs, etc. David also does not understand or know how to enforce the ordinance that refers to having to have “natural screening or fencing so the installation cannot be seen from adjacent properties at ground level”. He doesn’t know what would constitute ground level and if that means being seen from *any* location on an adjacent property when taking into account the contour of the property. Dave has spoken with the town’s attorney and was told that what the Planning Board has proposed is legal. Dave questions how reasonable it is. Jack agreed that the ordinance on natural screening wasn’t clear. Clayton added that it was not the intention of the Planning Board to discourage solar systems for residential properties.

The Selectmen suggested that if Dave feels that he cannot enforce the regulations as written, he should go to the Planning Board with his concerns. Dave stated that he will do that and asked if there was any protocol to having the Keene Sentinel present at meeting. The Selectmen informed him that all meetings are open to the public.

4. Accounts Payable: A motion was made by Russ Austin, second by Jack Zeller to approve a manifest of \$12,488.70 for the Highway Department and \$222,394.40 for all other bills for a total of \$234,883.10. Motion passed 3-0.
5. Old Business:
  - A. Financial Audit: Recommendations from auditors, MelansonHeath, continue to be worked on. A draft of the new Deposit Policy was reviewed. Procedures regarding depositing funds will begin immediately. The portion of the policy regarding verification is pending.
  - B. Well testing at landfill site: information on private wells within a 1,000-foot radius of the old landfill site has been obtained and sent to the Department of Environmental Services. The DES will determine if and what wells need to be tested further.
  - C. Selectmen signed the title application and registration for the recently purchased 2011 International dump truck for the highway department.
6. New Business:

Signature Approval was given for the following:  
Payroll Manifests: January 30 & 31, 2018  
General Journal Entries – 639  
January Bank Statement: Conservation Fund  
Payroll Tax payments: 01/31/2018  
Health Insurance payment: 1/31/18  
Westmoreland Post Office payment: 1/19/2018  
Veteran’s Tax Credit  
Intent to Cut Timber: R9-1 (Bond required)

  - A. Town Report: following the Budget Hearing, the Town Report will be ready for printing.
  - B. John Snowdon, JJ Prior and Chris Ballou have been working on what options there are for improving broadband access in Westmoreland. John will attend the next Selectmen’s meeting.
  - C. Jack reported that he saw someone taking an excessive amount of sand from the pile left for residents to use at the highway garage. Households are allowed three pails of sand per storm. He will talk to the road agent about putting cement blocks in front of the pile to deter trucks and tractors from taking the sand.
  - D. Cathy Laine was present to inform the Selectmen that there has been an influx of rats on her property in the last month. She added that they have not had any rats in the past, they do not have food or grain out and she has put out poison. Jack told her to see if her efforts help in the next month and if not, to report back to the Selectmen.
7. Correspondence: *All correspondence is available for review in the Selectmen’s office.*
  - A. E-mail from Lauren Bressett commending the road crew on the work they have been doing.
  - B. Thank you from Maplewood Activity Department for receiving funds from the Starkey Christmas Fund to support their holiday programs for residents.

8. 2018 Budget: The Budget Hearing will be held Thursday, February 8 at 7pm in the Town Hall.
9. The meeting was adjourned at 8:10pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jo Ann LaBarre  
Town Administrator

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

---

Jack Zeller, Chairman

---

Clayton R. Stalker

---

Russ Austin

NEXT MEETING – Thursday, February 15, 2018, 6:00PM  
MINUTES ARE INITIALLY POSTED AS UNAPPROVED  
SIGNATURES BY SELECTMEN DENOTE APPROVAL OF  
MINUTES