

Minutes of the Westmoreland Selectmen's Meeting  
Thursday, November 21, 2019

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

1. The meeting was called to order at 6:03PM by Chairman Russ Austin.
2. Approval of Minutes: November 7, 2019 Motion was made by Russ Austin, second by Clayton Stalker to accept the minutes as printed. Motion passed 3-0.
3. Guests:

John Snowdon, JJ Prior and Chris Ballou, members of the Broadband Advisory Committee were present. Upon a review of the three bids received for the improvement of internet service in Westmoreland, the Committee is recommending Consolidated Communications (CCI). If approved at town meeting in March 2020, the town would be getting a 20-year bond for 1.2 million dollars which will be guaranteed/paid by CCI. CCI will also pay the fee for the bond attorney. *There would be no money raised by tax dollars.* Along with the set-up cost to have the fiber brought to their house, there would be a user fee of \$11.00 per month for each resident who wants the service. There is no minimum number of sign-ups required. CCI was the only proposal of the three received with no tax impact. A motion was made by Frank Reeder, second by Clayton Stalker to, upon the recommendation of the Broadband Advisory Committee, award the bid to Consolidated Communications. Motion passed 3-0.

An informational meeting will be held on Monday, December 9<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm in the Town Hall. Representatives from CCI will be present to answer questions.
4. Accounts Payable: A motion was made by Clayton Stalker, second by Russ Austin to approve a manifest of \$11,212.68 for the highway department and \$15,525.38 for all other bills for a total of \$26,738.06. Motion passed 3-0.
5. Old Business:
  - A. The Town Administrator attended the Fire Department Advisory Committee meeting prior to the Selectmen's meeting. Architects Randall Walter of Bensonwood and Michael Petrovick of Catlin & Petrovick were present at the meeting. The goal of the meeting was for the architects to develop a list of what the Committee wanted to have in each area/room of the proposed future station. The list would give them something to start with in doing a design.

The Selectmen will meet with Steve Horton of Walpole on Monday, November 25 at 4pm to discuss the position of Owner's Representative for the project. Having an Owner's Rep has been previously discussed and was recommended by the town attorney that it was important to have someone in that role.

Richard Paul, who was present at the meeting, agreed that having an Owner's Rep was a good move on the Selectmen's part.
  - B. Richard Paul stated that he thought the Highway Department should be trucking the aluminum cans from the Recycling Center when they need emptying. Selectmen told him that we have an agreement with Buffums to take the cans with no cost for trucking. They added that the highway crew taking the time and use of the dump trucks was not cost effective.

Richard Paul expressed his belief that the town should have added onto the existing highway garage to house the new grader instead of buying a fabric building. Frank Reeder stated that the fabric building had a 20-year warranty and was less expensive than building a wooden structure.

Richard Paul asked the Selectmen if there was a plan to rebuild any of the dirt roads in town to make mud season easier. There is no plan in effect, but it has been discussed to work at paving some of the dirt roads. In either case, the road would have to be rebuilt from the base and would be an expensive endeavor. The Selectmen will talk to the Road Agent about future plans.

6. New Business:

Signature Approval was given for the following:

Payroll: 11/19/2019

EFTPS: Payroll taxes 11/19/2019

Amazon (supplies): 11/20/2019

Intent to Cut Timber: R7-34, R8-3 & 38

2019 Equalization Municipal Assessment Data

Cemetery Deed

- A. The Road Agent has received a quote to put vinyl siding on the remainder of the highway garage that was not finished prior. As the cost would be more than \$5,000, it will need to go out to bid. Selectmen will consider it during the 2020 budget process.
- B. Selectmen received a Notice of Probable Violation from the Public Utilities Commission regarding underground utility wires that were damaged during excavation at a site on River Road. The violation was due to not having a Dig Safe certificate in the name of the Town. Upon talking to the Road Agent, he stated that the town did not do the excavation; that it was done by the property owner. A letter will be sent to the PUC.
- C. A Letter of Intent was received by a leasing company on behalf of the US Post Office to renew the lease for the post office location. The current lease does not expire until 9/1/2021. Due to a Leasing Company being involved now, there would also be a broker's commission, which would be paid by an increase in the rent. The Leasing Company will be called to confirm information.

7. Correspondence: *All correspondence is available for review in the Selectmen's office.* None

8. The meeting was adjourned at 7:58pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jo Ann LaBarre  
Town Administrator

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

NEXT MEETING –Thursday, December 5, 2019, 6:00PM  
MINUTES ARE INITIALLY POSTED AS UNAPPROVED -  
SIGNATURES BY SELECTMEN DENOTE APPROVAL OF  
MINUTES

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Russ Austin, Chairman

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Frank Reeder

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Clayton R. Stalker