

**TOWN OF WILLISTON
SELECTBOARD
MINUTES OF MEETING
November 4, 2020**

APPROVED – November 17, 2020

***Meeting held by teleconference.**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Terry Macaig (Chair); Ted Kenney, Gordon St. Hilaire, Jeff Fehrs. (Joy Limoge was absent.)

ADMINISTRATION: Erik Wells, Town Manager; Shirley Goodell-Lackey, Finance Director; Bruce Hoar, Public Works Director; Matt Boulanger, Planning Director; Patrick Foley, Police Chief; Aaron Collette, Fire Chief; Bill Hinman, Town Assessor.

OTHERS PRESENT: Participants in the meeting included Jason Starr (Williston Observer),

1. Call to Order

Chair Terry Macaig called the teleconference meeting to order at 7 PM.

2. Minutes

October 20, 2020

MOTION by Gordon St. Hilaire, SECOND by Jeff Fehrs, to approve the minutes of 10/20/20 with correction of the spelling of “covenants”. VOTING by roll call: 3 ayes, one abstention (Ted Kenney); motion carried.

October 26, 2020

MOTION by Jeff Fehrs, SECOND by Gordon St. Hilaire, to approve the minutes of 10/26/20 with the amendment to remove the extra occurrence of the word “on” in Item #3. VOTING by roll call: unanimous (4-0); motion carried.

3. Public Comment – General Issues

None.

4. Regional Dispatch Capital Cost Share

There was discussion of Williston’s share of \$34,000 for upfit of the regional dispatch site. A decision is needed as to whether regional dispatch is the best option for Williston. Police Chief Foley urged looking at all the variables including stand-alone dispatching and expanding daytime dispatch in Williston. Fire Chief Collette spoke in support of regional dispatch which has been used by fire departments for a while. Chief Collette believes regional dispatch helps reduce response time and will help fire departments collect accurate data. The Selectboard wanted additional information on recouping the investment if the town changed its mind and postponing the decision until after the budget process. Staff will gather more information at the next CCPSA Board meeting. The Selectboard took no action at this time.

5. Errors & Omissions 2020

Town Assessor, Bill Hinman, reviewed errors and omissions in the 2020 Grand List determined by the Listers Office. The impact from errors and omissions is a decrease in municipal property taxes billed totaling \$1,534.25.

MOTION by Ted Kenney, SECOND by Gordon St. Hilaire, to approve the corrections to the 2020 Grand List as proposed by the Listers. VOTING by roll call: unanimous (4-0); motion carried.

6. Grand List Potential COVID Impacts

Bill Hinman briefed the Selectboard on the potential loss in revenue on commercial valuations (\$50 million) due to COVID impacts. It is hoped increases for residential and commercial projects in town will help offset the impact. Also, the high prices of property sales that have been occurring will potentially impact the town's CLA moving forward.

7. Emerald Ash Borer Update

Public Works Director, Bruce Hoar, reported the emerald ash borer is here and infestation can occur so staff is recommending the removal of ash trees in town be accelerated. Public Works will do the removal which will save money. Due to the impact of the COVID pandemic on the budget there are limited funds to replant all the trees at the time of removal, and some replanting will have to occur over time.

The Selectboard concurred with the staff recommendation to proceed with removal of ash trees in town.

8. Holland Lane Acceptance Discussion

Bruce Hoar stated Holland Lane has become a through road at this point and staff recommends that the town take over ownership of a portion of the road as it reviews accepting infrastructure at Finney Crossing in the coming months.

The Selectboard will discuss the matter further at a future meeting.

9. Health Insurance Plan Renewal

Erik Wells stated the recommendation is to continue with the MVP Healthcare Gold 3 HDHP plan for eligible employees. A 4.5% increase across all plans is anticipated and deductibles are going up slightly.

MOTION by Ted Kenney, SECOND by Jeff Fehrs, to offer the MVP Healthcare Gold 3 HDHP plan to eligible employees for calendar year 2021. VOTING by roll call: unanimous (4-0); motion carried.

10. Town Manager's Report

In addition to the written Manager's Report, Erik Wells noted:

- Lamplight water line bond was passed by the voters.
- Appeal of the DRB decision on a subdivision in town was filed last week.

- COVID could impact staffing in Public Works for winter operations. Different options are being discussed to address potential staff shortages.
- The town will be receiving an additional \$43,000 as part of the CARES ACT from VTrans which will be used to lessen the deficit projected for the fiscal year.
- Finance Report:
 - Shirley Goodell-Lackey reported penalties, interest, and other tax are at 6%. There are some billings to go out which will increase that number. The town will be receiving \$30,000 for the state PILOT payment and \$30,000 for the state hold harmless payment.
 - Public safety revenues are at 5%. This number is usually higher, but there are many services not happening due to COVID.
 - Rec revenue is down due to smaller camps, smaller revenue.
 - Highway revenues are at 57% of budget because a lot of stormwater work was done. Highway expenses are high due to road retreatment.
 - Selectboard expenses are at 39% of budget mainly due to payment for government access meeting coverage.
 - Technology expenses are up due to connection of the Police Station, Annex, Town Hall, and Library.
 - Regional/Social Services/Health expenses are up because they are only paid twice a year.

11. Other Business

None.

12. Executive Session and/or Adjournment

Erik Wells explained the need for an Executive Session to discuss a contractual agreement for the construction of Trader Lane.

MOTION by Ted Kenney, SECOND by Jeff Fehrs, to go into Executive Session to discuss a contractual agreement with private sector parties under the provisions of 1VSA313(a)(1)(A) where premature general public knowledge of the town's potential contract to share costs with private entities to construct Trader Lane would clearly place the town at a substantial disadvantage because the Selectboard risks disclosing its negotiation strategy if it discusses the proposed contract terms in public, and to invite the Town Manager, Public Works Director, and Planning Director to attend. VOTING by roll call: unanimous (4-0); motion carried.

The regular meeting was adjourned and Executive Session convened at 8:36 PM.

There was no action as a result of Executive Session.

12. Adjournment

With no further business and without objection the meeting was adjourned at 8:57 PM.