

**TOWN OF WATERVILLE VALLEY
BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

DATE: February 12, 2020

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mike Aronson, Chairman, Margaret Turner, Vice-Chair and Richard Rita.

MEMBERS ABSENT: None.

OTHERS PRESENT: Katie Smith, Tim Smith, Rob Diehm, Gale Adams-Davis, Mark Decoteau, Chris Hodges, Jim Mayhew, Brooke Wakefield and Sharon Charron

1. The meeting was called to order at 3:05 p.m. by Chair Mike Aronson.

2. Privilege of the Floor I

Tim Smith addresses the Board concerning an issue at the school which occurred yesterday during the Primary Election and involved access to an area by an adult to where children were participating in an after-school program. He expressed concern about school security and communications between the Select Board and the School regarding the after-school programs in general. Tim stated he believes that the parents of school children are not being heard in the community with respect to the need for the after-school program (ASP). Rich Rita responds and states that both the WV School District and the Town of WV have proposals in their 2020 (2020/21- School) Budgets for the ASP. Rich and the School Principal, Gale Adams-Davis, had previously met and discussed options where both entities (School and Recreation Dept) shared in the running of the ASP. The program, as discussed with the Principal, would offer an Enrichment Program from 2:45-4pm and the Recreation Department would cover the last hour until 5pm. The school's Enrichment Portion of the program has seen success in participation numbers. Low participation numbers and the pricing of the program are both factors in determining the ASP's future.

Katie Smith referred to earlier discussions regarding the continuation of the ASP offered by the Recreation Department and communication to parents. The Town Recreation Department had provided a commitment to offer the ASP through the remainder of the 2020 school year. The status of the program for the next school year was undetermined. The Board stated that the Town made the commitment to run the program for the current school year, and it would honor that commitment. Tim Smith expressed concern with a shared operation of the program and stated he lacked faith in the Recreation Department to continue the program, and as a result will not enroll his children, who've attended for years.

Mark Decoteau asks Tim Smith what event or action of the program gave him this concern. Tim recaps the events from yesterday, in which an individual gained access to an area during regular ASP times where children and an adult were present. As a result, the adult supervising the children felt threatened and has since resigned her position as an aide in the ASP. Tim believes

the ASP should be operated by the school solely to bring stability to the program. Rob Diehm added that the year-to-year uncertainty of the program, operated by the Recreation Dept., due to low participation numbers, gave the School PTA reason to explore other alternatives. Katie Smith expressed that she feels dissension in town in general with respect to the School and its future. She wished to have a common goal between both the school Board and the Board of Selectmen to grow the town and the school by offering free after school programs.

Discussion continued involving many matters but not limited to the after-school programs and their operation, dwindling elementary school enrollment (17 students currently), how to create growth in student numbers, the newly proposed Preschool School, and, if passed, the building renovations and their effect upon the Recreation Department current programs and summer camps. Communications between the School Board and the Board of Selectmen should be better and the need to work together on issues and challenges facing a small school in a small town. Mark Decoteau commented communications between the two Boards has historically been challenging, and both groups always have had the best interest of the school and town. Mark expressed that the School and Select Board should have 2-3 joint meetings each year to discuss ideas that have a great impact upon both entities operating out of the same building. This year, the Select Board was informed of the pre-school proposal only when the School Board posted their 2020 Warrant. Tim Smith asks for the Select Board to support the School Board's proposal and their initiatives in increasing school enrollment to create a better environment for the children. He also asked for access to the Recreation Department. Gale Adams-Davis, Principal of WVES, adds that Town officials were present during public School Board Meetings when these proposals were presented and discussed. She further added that the School Board Meetings are all public and those dates and times are posted and these items, having been discussed for the last 2-3 years; there were no secrets. The school expressed the need to have a key to access the gymnasium, by WVES staff through the Recreation Department doors, for parents to pick up children in the ASP. Mark replied that a key would be given to the school for this purpose after a signed MOU was in place, by request of the Select Board. The reason being is that both parties have different insurance companies now. Additionally, concerns were expressed about the security of the gymnasium for the children and which doors are locked. Yesterday, due to the Primary Election, a door normally closed and locked, was left open so election workers could access restrooms. Mark commented that in some communities, when elections occur in school buildings, there is no school on election day. He offered that if parents have concerns about school security on election days, they should inform the School Board, which can decide if it wants elections held in the school building, either in the multipurpose room or the gymnasium. The Board thanked those present who shared their concerns.

Gale Adams-Davis, Principal of WVES, who was not present for the majority of the earlier discussion, spoke on behalf of the employee who resigned after the incident in the gymnasium with an individual. She expressed that the interaction made the employee feel unsafe. She expressed her dissatisfaction with the Board of Selectmen and stated that they were unsupportive and disrespectful of the school and the school employees.

3. Approval of Minutes

There were no draft minutes for review and approval at this meeting.

4. Department Heads Updates

- **Public Works/Municipal Services**

Jim Mayhew reports another storm is forecasted for tomorrow and his crew is ready. The electrician who installed the lights is scheduled for next week to come and work on the lights on the Corcoran Pond bridge to reduce the brightness of the lights.

- **Public Safety**

Chris Hodges reports that he was away last week and nothing major occurred in his absence. The ski area is gearing up for February vacation and Chris is anticipating a the next few to be busy, as snow conditions are very good.

- **Recreation**

Brooke Wakefield reported that there is extra programming for the upcoming vacation period. She added that Special Olympics begins on the last weekend of the NH vacation. SO-NH will have a BBQ and a dance at the Recreation Department.

5. Calendar Review

- Bond Informational Meeting – February 12, 2020 6pm.
- Regular Planning Board – February 13, 2020
- School District Bond Hearing – February 20, 2020
- School District Annual Meeting – Monday, March 9, 2020
- Town Meeting/Special Select Board Meeting – Tuesday, March 10, 2020

6. New Business

- **Review 79-E Tax Incentive Program**

Mark provided the Board with the details of the program. He explained that the purpose of the program is community revitalization by offering tax incentives to property owners for underutilized structures. This includes both tear down and rebuilding, as well as refurbishing, in the designated area or zone and is inclusive of both historical and culturally important buildings. The minimum amount to qualify is \$75,000 in assessed value and is available for up to a 5-year time frame, with an extension available up to 4 years. The area which would qualify was recommended to be in the center of town. The boundaries of this area still need to be identified by the Board, but could include the inns.

7. Old Business

- **Final Warrant for Signatures**

The Town Warrant was reviewed and presented for the Board's signatures.

Mike Aronson motions to approve the 2020 Town Meeting Warrant.

Margaret Turner: 2nds. Motion was carried by a unanimous voice vote.

- **Dam Project Update**

Mark states that that there is nothing to report upon at this time.

- **Engineer Services RFQ**

Mark asked for the Board's availability for the next few weeks to set up interviews with the engineering firms regarding their submitted RFQ's for engineering services. It was decided that the 1st week of March would be best. Mark will set up dates/times and inform the Board.

- **After School Program**

- **Recycling Options**

Mark reviews the site visit report of North Country Council Planner Danica Melone regarding recycling options for town. Jim is awaiting a response from Casella regarding zero-sort recycling options and acceptable contamination limits. It is possible to leave a container in the transfer station area and used to collect and transport items, as opposed to being loaded into the town owned trash truck. Once the contaminated limits are known, further discussion will take place on options available. Mark noted that there are extra charges for contamination materials, and are beyond the normal fees for trash.

8. Correspondence

None.

9. Privilege of the Floor II

None.

10. Board Concerns and Directives

Rich Rita asked about the status of additional signs at the transfer station regarding residents and property owners use only. These are on order. There is signage posted that states video surveillance is in use.

11. Non-public Session

The Board goes into Non-Public Session under RSA 91-A: 3, II (c) Matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person, other than a member of this board, unless such person requests an open meeting. This exemption shall extend to include any application for assistance or tax abatement or waiver of a fee, fine or other levy, if based on inability to pay or poverty of the applicant, and (d) consideration of the acquisition, sale or lease of real property which, if discussed in public, would likely benefit a party or parties whose interests are adverse to those of the general community, (l) Consideration of legal advice provided by legal counsel, either in writing or orally, to one or more members of the public body, even where legal counsel is not present. The Motion was made by Mike Aronson and seconded by Margaret Turner followed by a roll call vote as follows: Selectman Aronson – aye, Selectman Turner – aye, Selectmen Rita – aye and the Board went into Non-Public Session at 4:07pm. The Board came out of Non-Public Session at 4:40pm.

Upon return to the public session a motion was made to seal the minutes by Rich Rita and seconded by Mike Aronson because it is determined that divulgence of this information likely would affect adversely the reputation of any person other than a member of this Board. The motion was passed by a unanimous voice vote.

13. Adjourn

Margaret Turner motions to adjourn the meeting at 4:42pm.

Rich Rita: 2nds.

Motion was carried by a unanimous voice vote.

Respectfully Submitted,
Sharon Charron

Town Clerk/Town Office Assistant