

**Waterville Valley Selectboard
Minutes of Selectboard Meeting
Thursday, March 21, 2024 @ 3:00 pm
Downstairs Meeting Room – Town Offices**

DATE: March 21, 2024

MEMBERS PRESENT: Richard Rita, Chairman; Bob Fries, Vice-Chair; and Wendi Rathgeber, Member.

MEMBERS ABSENT: None.

OTHERS PRESENT: Mark Decoteau (Town Manager), Dylan Tucker (Municipal Services Mgr.), Megan Boober (Public Works Director), Charles & Rebecca Hastings, Jennie Lucas, Alan Berko and Sharon Charron (Executive Assistant).

1. Call to Order – Rich Rita, Chair of the Selectboard, states that this is an in-person meeting, and YouTube LIVE is also being used. The public may call 603-236-4730 or email scharron@watervillevalleynh.gov to ask questions or if they have problems accessing the video services. The Chair called the meeting to order at 3:00 pm.

2. Privilege of the Floor • 00:00:53

Solid Waste Revenue and Capital Reserve

- Alan Berko asked about the revenue source for the roughly \$350K of solid waste fees and if it could be increased and funds put towards the future costs of a Trash Truck.
- Mark Decoteau answered that the revenue comes from the quarterly fees collected from property owners and are currently used to offset property taxes and general town operations.
- A discussion followed on raising the fees to cover solid waste operation costs, use of capital reserves expenditures, and rental/purchase options for the trash truck. It was noted that a Solid Waste Working Group was recently created to explore solid waste operations and future options.

Purchase of Tyrell Property

- Alan Berko asked what the price was for the Tyrell property adjacent to the Transfer Station that the Town purchased, and Mark Decoteau answered that the cost was \$400,000. Mark added that the purchase is exempt from Tax Stamps as a municipality purchased it.

3. Approval of Minutes • 00:11:09

- The Board reviewed four sets of meeting minutes:
 - January 24, 2024, Budget Info Session
 - January 31, 2024, Budget Info Session
 - February 6, 2024, Special Meeting
 - February 15, 2024, Regular Meeting

- Bob Fries offered a motion to approve the minutes of 1/24/24, 1/31/24, 2/6/24, and 2/15/24, as amended, which Wendi Rathgeber seconded, and the Board unanimously approved.

4. Financial Report • 00:11:413

- Mark Decoteau explained that there were no substantial changes from the last report two weeks ago.
- Mark Decoteau shared information on the bond issues for the Ambulance and the Fire Truck and deposits for each vehicle. He recommended bonding the \$250K for five years for the vehicle deposits, \$50K for the Fire Truck, and \$200K for the Ambulance with the power cot.
- The decision was made to proceed with a \$250K bond issue for both vehicles.

5. Department Updates. • 00:18:34.

Public Safety Department

- Chief Dave Noyes presents the Board with a bi-weekly report of activities and adds that the replacement radar trailer has been ordered.
- The drains on the fire bay floor have been scoped, and there are issues with broken pipes. Further assessment is needed, along with additional quotes for repairs.
- Dave shared that Occupancy Permits were issued for units in the Villas at Waterville and preparation for short-term rentals.
- Bob Fries asked if the employee housing at the Snowstar Inn has more calls for aid by Public Safety than other inns, and Dave replied that it's about the same.
- Permitting (all types) has been busy, along with inspections and certificates of occupancy for new construction.
- Dave also cited recent challenges with code interpretations and builder-homeowner disputes.

Public Works Department • 00:29:34.

- Megan Boobar reports that cleanup from late-season snowstorms has gone well.
- She states that she attended the Pemi-Baker Solid Waste District Meeting and shared that the Bethlehem landfill is still looking at closing, and all but one permit was submitted for the Dalton landfill.
- Megan also attended the New Hampshire Road Agents Association meeting and will be actively participating in the association.
- She proposed a contest to name each vehicle in the Public Works fleet (trash truck, backhoe, plow truck, etc.). She asked that the Selectboard pick four of the submissions for each vehicle and allow the public to vote for the favorites. The Board requested Megan to include in the contest announcement that the name submissions be "Waterville-themed."
- Megan shared that the Trash Truck will need to go to the dealer for service and is looking to schedule this for mid-April when Town is slower.
- Mark Decoteau added that the Transfer Station Permit-by-Notification (PBN) is still tracking and we are waiting for the engineering plans for the work.
- The Transfer Station hours for the weekend will remain unchanged due to the incoming winter storm and will be open regular hours of 9 am to 5 pm on Sunday.
- Later in the meeting (1:03:10), Megan Boobar shared that the NH House of Representatives just passed a bill to stop the approval of landfill permits until 2028.

Municipal Services Department • 00:36:45

- Dylan Tucker shared that a water main break on Windsor Hill Way was successfully repaired with a collar band around the pipe, and service was restored within a day.
- He explained that water Lead/Copper testing for 2024 will occur in the year's second quarter. The following lead/copper test will appear in quarter three of 2025.
- Dylan Tucker informed the Board of the completion of the annual Consumer Confidence Water Report (CCR). Notices will go out with the 2024 quarter one water/sewer bills, explaining where users can locate the report on the Town Website. He noted that fluoride levels naturally occur due to the large granite stone in the area. Any amount over 2mg/l is considered a contamination, and the CCR report reflects the level of 2.1mg/l. Dylan assured the Board that the fluoride levels have been consistent over the last few years and that the Town has not added fluoride to the water system. Customers with questions are welcome to contact the Water Department for more information. Property owners with concerns can use carbon filters to remove fluoride from their water.

Recreation Department• 00:43:47

- Wendi Rathgeber shared information on Holiday Lights that was presented to the Waterville Valley Resort Association (WVRA) to share with the community. The vendor who has installed the lights as part of the existing program through WVRA, which the Town has participated in, is now offering their services independently to business or residential properties who want to participate.
- The town-owned locations include the Packard's Field Shed, the Boat Shed, and the Recreation Dept. entrance. Other town-owned locations can be added, and once all locations are identified, a complete plan will be presented to the Selectboard for input.
- Wendi added that WVRA has committed funds to light up the bridge over the dam at Corcoran Pond. Other locations, such as the entrance-to-town sign, the ice arena, and the public works garage, are also possible for the Holiday Lights.
- Mark Decoteau stated that registrations for Summer Camp are very busy, as expected.
- Mark shared that a Pickleball Tournament is scheduled for March 24, and the Easter Egg Hunt is scheduled for March 30 on Packard's Field (if there is good weather) or the Recreation Department gym (if there is poor weather).

Administration Department• 00:48:05

- Mark Decoteau shared that Megan Boobar is working with vendors on developing the new Public Works Department logo design.
- Mark shared that Steve Royer is preparing for the transition to a new financial management package and planning for the live launch date on May 20. He explained that parallel accounting systems will run before and after the transition to ensure no bugs and consistent financial reports.
- Rich Rita initiated a discussion about the "No Thru Truck" sign on Tecumseh Road and asked if the sign's size and location were suitable. Megan Boobar explained that the sign's location and size are intended to ensure visibility and compliance by larger trucks. The area will allow trucks to reverse direction in the parking lot on the right if needed.

6. Calendar Review• 00:57:05

- Next Regular Selectboard Meeting – April 3, 2024, 3 pm
 - Rich Rita noted that the Selectboard's 2024 schedule would be to meet on the first and third Wednesdays of each month at 3 pm.
- Next Planning Board Meeting – April 11, 2024, 8 am

- Joint Selectboard/Schoolboard meeting – April 17, 2024, 2 pm Location TBA.
- Strategic Planning Meeting – 4/24/24, 9 am – 2 pm. Location TBA.

7. New Business

Review and Sign MS-232 • 01:00:50

- Mark Decoteau presented the MS-232, the annual report of appropriations following the Town Meeting, for review and approval.
- Rich Rita made a motion to accept and sign the MS-232 as presented. Bob Fries seconded the motion, and the Board unanimously approved it.

Northern Borders Grant Opportunity

- Mark Decoteau shared that the Town is applying for a \$250K grant through the Northern Borders Commission. If the grant is awarded, the funds will be used for engineering and video capture of wastewater lines for the CMOM requirements as required under our new permit. The total project cost is estimated at \$500K, and the grant is a 50-50 cost-sharing arrangement. The \$250K portion from the Town is part of the Wastewater Treatment Plant Project budget.
- The grant is part of an economic development initiative and requires a pre-application, with a decision expected within two weeks.

Review Worklist Items Developed from Passed Warrant Articles• 01:10:17

- Mark Decoteau presents the Board with the worklist for tracking projects and tasks, and offers that it will be updated monthly.

Road Regulations Update • 01:19:24* (*this is out of time sequence)

- Megan Boobar shared that she has reviewed the current regulations and provided her proposed edits to the Board. The updates include a new regulation (winter maintenance) for snow/ice removal for the Board to consider.

8. Old Business • 01:14:23

State Education Funding Bill

- Mark Decoteau stated that House Bill 1583 has been amended to increase the Statewide Education Property Tax (SWEPT) by \$88 million, affecting donor communities and facing bipartisan support. There is a public hearing scheduled for 3/26/24 before the State House Finance Committee, and Mark is planning to attend and testify on behalf of the Coalition Communities.

Road Regulations / TCWG Update • 01:22:52

- Wendi Rathgeber reports on the recent Town Core Working Group (TCWG) meeting, which discussed the proposed road work on Boulder Path Road. Engineers from HEB joined the meeting and shared that more research is needed to accurately map the Town's right-of-way (ROW) to determine the boundaries for creating the road design plan.

- The Board discussed concerns about the transition between the sidewalk and the multi-use lane from Snows Brook Road onto Boulder Path Road.
- Road markings for lanes and crosswalks will be done in spring when the weather permits.
- A discussion on an additional permanent digital speed board on Valley Rd will be revisited in a future meeting.
- Megan Boobar shared that discussions are underway to adjust the guardrails and widen the sidewalk on the approaches to the bridge on Valley Road to allow for more clearance for snow removal equipment on the sidewalk.
- Jennie Lucas questioned if the costs of adjusting the guardrails and sidewalk approaches to the bridge are greater than acquiring new snow removal equipment without making physical changes. Megan answered that a new piece of equipment used for this purpose in the past is not fully operable and that new equipment would be more costly than the adjustments discussed.
- Wendi Rathgeber shared that the Town Core Working Group has expanded beyond their original scope of work and will now provide public notice of its meeting and meeting minutes.
- Public comments have been received about the roadwork.

Land Donation

- This agenda item is tabled for a future meeting as discussions with the landowner are ongoing.

9. Board Concerns and Directives

- No discussion.

10. Correspondence • 01:39:26

- Jennie Lucas addressed the Board about recent emails and her concerns for pedestrian safety on the multi-use lane and asked if the design plans for Boulder Path Road will use the same design as those for Valley, Tecumseh, and Snows Brook Roads.
- The Board expressed that the survey work being done by the engineers to determine the boundaries of the ROW is vital to the road design.
- Jennie disagreed with the Board and shared comments from emails she received from property owners who had the same opinion.
- The Board expressed the need to wait for the engineers' input before making decisions. It provided a commitment to look at all options after the engineer completes the survey. The Board agreed that having options before making a final decision was very important.
- Charles Hastings expressed that he preferred a sidewalk as more aesthetically pleasing and interesting overall over a multi-use lane. He acknowledged that the Board has agreed to consider all design options after complete surveying.
- The Board discussed the need to balance safety with other aspects of the project, such as aesthetics and traffic flow. Some concerns were raised about the potential impact of proposed changes on the overall look and feel of Boulder Path Road.
- The relocation of the gazebos to locations where they will be more accessible to pedestrians was briefly discussed.

11. Non-Public Discussion. • 01:52:08.

- The Board goes into Non-Public Session under RSA 91-A: 3, II (a) The dismissal, promotion, or compensation of any public employee or the disciplining of such employee, or the investigation of

any charges against him or her, **unless** the employee affected (1) has a right to a public meeting, and (2) requests that the meeting be open, in which case the request shall be granted, and (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. A motion was made by Wendi Rathgeber and seconded by Rich Rita and followed by a roll call vote as follows: Select Board Chair Rita – aye, Select Board Vice-Chair Fries – aye, Select Board Member Rathgeber – aye and the Board went into Non-Public Session at 4:54 pm. The Board came out of the Non-Public Session at 5:55 pm.

- Upon return to the public session, Rich Rita motioned to seal the minutes, seconded by Wendi Rathgeber, because it was determined that divulgence of this information likely would adversely affect the reputation of any person other than a member of this Board. A unanimous voice vote passed the motion.

13. Adjourn

Wendi Rathgeber made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:58 pm.

Bob Fries: 2nds. A unanimous voice vote carried the motion.

Respectfully Submitted,
Sharon Charron, Executive Assistant