

**TOWN OF WATERVILLE VALLEY  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

**DATE:** November 18, 2015

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chairman Mike Aronson, Bill Larsen, and Margaret Turner (via speaker phone)

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** None.

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Reggie Breeckner, Mark Decoteau, Jim Mayhew, Chris Hodges, Bryan Sopko, Ellie Knight and Sharon Charron.

**1. The meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m. By Chairman Aronson.**

**2. Privilege of the Floor I**

Pat Kucharski addresses the board and explains that she was extremely offended by the recent letter concerning behavior that was mailed to property owners with the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter water/sewer billing. Specifically, she was offended by the tone of the letter and by the statement in the letter regarding tipping to service employees and town employees. Margaret Turner responded that the tipping portion was not intended in regards to town employees, and that the reason town employees were mentioned was that they are part of the work force in town. Bob Guilbert asks if complaints had been received regarding poor behavior. Bill Larsen responded that there had been complaints and they mostly concerned guests who were acting inappropriately. The lodges and inns have also received this letter and have been asked to distribute to guests when checking in. The attitude of some guests is that they are entitled act poorly because they are vacationing. The intent of the letter was to inform people that while this is a resort community and we want them to enjoy their time, it is also a residential community and they need to be respectful.

Aggie Guilbert addresses the board regarding recent property tax rate increase and the continuation of funding of non-profit organizations, specifically the Rey Center and WVAIA, and would discontinuation of funding of non-profits be considered for the 2016 budget. She then asked what needed to be done to present a warrant article to the selectmen if this was not the case. Mark replied that at least 10 signatures from registered voters are required, and they need to be verified by the Town Clerk. The wording of the petition, which is signed by the voters, is the exact wording which will be on the warrant and no changes can be made by the Selectmen. Bill Larsen mentions that the budget hearing is another way for people to voice their opinions on the proposed budget prior to town meeting. He stated that if people spoke up sooner regarding budget matters, before the Town Meeting itself, it would be helpful to the selectmen in finalizing the budget which is presented at the Town Meeting. Margaret Turner comments that small amounts removed from the budget have a very small effect on the tax rate, and if affecting the tax rate itself is the primary goal, removing funding to non-profits will have little impact. Terry Roper commented that dates of meetings are all public and notices are posted. She mentions that registering for email notification through the Town's website is a great reminder of times and dates of upcoming meetings. She added that over time, it has historically been larger items which

have had a great impact to the budget and the tax rate. Specifically, she mentions the acquisition of Corcoran's Pond and projects such as the ice arena and town infrastructure upgrades. Mike Aronson reminded those present about the upcoming public comment session with the Selectmen on Saturday of Thanksgiving weekend (11/28/15 at 3pm) at the Recreation Department. Discussion followed regarding the proposed date of budget hearing, as well as deadlines for submission of petitions for warrant articles.

### **3. Approval of Minutes of 11/04/15**

Bill Larsen motions to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of the Selectmen of 11/04/15 as amended.

Margaret Turner: 2nds.

Motion was carried by a unanimous voice vote.

### **4. Financial Update**

Mark reports that we are at 90.4% through the year and we are 82.7% spent. Revenues are showing at 74% collected, and while this is below where we are in the year, all departments are tracking as expected. Those with less than 90% received can be found in collections of the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter water/sewer invoices, which are not billed until the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter. Also State fees which are outstanding are expected to be received at the end of December. November and December are typically higher months for Motor vehicles registration fees based upon renewal dates and are expected to be above the budgeted revenues at this time. For expenditures, the Town Buildings amount was questioned and details provided by Mark D. and Jim Mayhew for these expenses including the additional use of outside contractors for mowing, and electrical work completed to the Town Offices.

### **5. Department Head Updates**

- **Public Safety**

Chief Chris Hodges reports that overall the last few weeks have been quiet. He and his staff are preparing for winter and completing in house training. He also reported that there is a new home being built in North Face on Jomica Way.

- **Recreation Department**

Recreation Director Brooke Wakefield reports that they hosted a private function for a group for a team building event and it went very well. The group was in town for a conference and rented the facility for an entire day. The revenue from this facility rental was \$550 for the full day. She also reported that Tai Chi classes have been going well and people have signed up for the entire 6-week session. Another new activity scheduled is indoor soccer on Tuesday nights and has seen attendance at 6-10 people each week. There is also a cardio-core class on Monday's at 3pm, and volleyball on Thursday nights. For Thanksgiving weekend, there is a Turkey Shoot free throw contest, as well as dodge ball, ice cream social, and the climbing wall will also be available. Brooke mentions that Special Olympics NH will be using the facilities 12/3-6 (Thurs. thru Sun.). She is working with the school regarding the Friday events. Schedules for December vacation period are being finalized and will be made available shortly. She also commented that scheduling arrangements with the school has been going well. The afterschool program has seen very light attendance, and this program will be reviewed for continuation in 2016.

- **Public Works**

Public Works Director Jim Mayhew reports that the 550 truck should be back very soon with the new body installed and will be back in service by Monday the 23<sup>rd</sup>. The verbal price quote for the trash truck body and paint work is \$10K, and the recreation bus is also scheduled to be assessed for repairs and that amount is not known yet. The work on River Rd will be starting soon and is expected to be completed as scheduled. Beanbender Rd paving is nearly complete with a very small amount remaining to be done.

## **6. Calendar**

The public comment session with the Selectman is on Saturday 11/28/15 at 5pm at the Rec Dept. The next regular Selectmen's meeting is 12/9/15 at 3pm.

Budget meetings will begin on 12/7, 12/8 and 12/11 from 1pm-4pm each afternoon.

The next Planning Board meeting is on Thursday, 12/10/15 at 8am.

There is a ZBA meeting to act upon a Special Exception Application which is forthcoming, but the meeting date was unknown.

It was noted that the Town was one of the abutters of a property on subdivision and site plan applications before the Planning Board in the event the selectman wanted to speak at the meeting, on behalf of the town, either in opposition or support of the applications.

## **7. New Business**

- **Cemetery Regulation Review**

Ray Kucharski reports that he has been working with Chairman Aronson regarding a common memorial marker for those whose ashes have been spread. The current cemetery regulations state that a common marker is to be placed at the north end of the cemetery and laid flush with the ground. They are looking to amend the regulations that so the marker can be a memorial wall so that and be placed closer to the entrance for accessibility. Discussion followed regarding whether or not casketed remains and cremated remains are allowed by state law to occupy the same grave lot. Jim Mayhew commented that physically there is room between a casket and the ground surface to place cremated remains. The eligibility of the cemetery was also discussed and the criteria as written into the current regulations.

- **WVAIA Request for Support Funds**

The Board reviews the request received from WVAIA for the disbursement their 2015 funding by the town. The amount was \$3,000.

Bill Larsen motions to approve the disbursement of \$3,000 to WVAIA for the 2015 funding by the town.

Mike Aronson: 2nds.

Motion was carried by a unanimous voice vote.

- **FY2016 Guaranteed Maximum Rate – Health Trust**

Mark presents the Health Trust notice of the Guaranteed Maximum Rates for the town's health insurance plan for employees, which will be effective as of 7/1/2016. He noted that the rate increase is capped at an average of 7.1%. The Board discussed the various plans and expressed the desire to review the various plans being offered to employees.

## **8. Old Business**

### **• Water System Update**

Mark updates the board on the water on the new well and waterline project. There is an upcoming meeting with the Forest Service to review the final plan. Additionally, once a contractor is selected we are ready to move forward with the installation of the electrical line.

#### **1. Lead and Copper Testing**

Mark reviewed the 14 locations tested for lead and copper levels in their water. 12 of the 14 locations passed, but 2 did have levels out of the normal range. Notices of the test results were sent to all of the 12 homes which passed, and Mark will be meeting with the owners of the 2 who did not pass. Two of the contributing factors to the higher levels are 1) older homes with lead solder in pipes 2) stagnant water in pipes prior to testing. Discussion followed concerning testing at the well sites themselves, and this has been done to ensure that there are no abnormal readings at those locations.

#### **2. Sanitary Survey Follow-up**

Mark informs the board of a follow-up need to the sanitary survey, which is a basic inspection of the town's water system. The item yet to be done is an internal inspection of the of the reservoir tanks by a certified diver. This is required to be done every 5 years. The cost for the service is about \$8,500 and we are trying to schedule this in early 2016. Additional quotes are being sought as comparisons.

### **• Public Comments on Speed Limit and Bicycle Markings**

Chairman Aronson opens the public session for comments.

- Harry Notowitz comments in favor of the 25 mph limit and for improvements to the bicycle markings. He feels that the markings are hard to identify and their purpose is overlooked as a result. He also felt that many of the commercial vehicles, be it contractors or delivery trucks, are the worst violators of the 25mph limit. He suggests more police patrols during commercial driver's busiest hours of early morning, lunch, and late afternoon.
- Rich Rita comments in favor of retaining the 25 mph speed limit. Additional observations include that the majority of vehicles are traveling above 25mph but the overall speed has decreased. Two areas of concern which he felt routinely see higher rates of speed were mentioned. The 1<sup>st</sup> location was Valley Rd., after turning right from Village Rd., going towards Noon Peak Rd. He noted that there was no speed limit sign in this stretch of road. He recommended a 25mph sign be placed along the guardrail, as is the case for the opposite side of the road. The 2<sup>nd</sup> location was Valley Rd, heading west out of town after the Tecumseh Rd intersection. On this downward grade cars accelerate easily, as well as the presence of the 50 mph sign in the distance beyond Tripoli Rd. Mr. Rita asks if the Selectmen would be potentially looking at a speed board at 2016 March town meeting. Chairmen Aronson, said at this time, it was not being considered, though a warrant article can be petitioned to the Selectmen by the voters.
- Bob Guilbert asks, referencing Mr. Rita's comment, where does the speed limit change in relation to a posted sign? Chief Chris Hodges responds that technically it is at the sign itself. Mr. Guilbert continues to comment that he is in favor of the 25mph speed limit. He also comments that many bicyclists, with the exception of young children, are still riding on the sidewalks as opposed to the streets. They are not seeing the street markings or the posted signs.

- Chief Chris Hodges comments that the Town Core Working Group has been discussing the concept of an off road bicycle infrastructure. This will lead bicyclists away from the roadways altogether, and it would be suitable so that a novice level biker can navigate it easily. The instructions given at the bike shop to guests would be to direct people towards this trail system. The bike shop itself needs to be more proactive in informing guests of the bicycling lanes, and to stay off sidewalks.
- Terry Roper asks if any consideration has been given for a speed bump after the 25mph sign. Chairmen Aronson replies that something similar was tried in the past and was unsuccessful. He encouraged discussion with public safety officers for additional speed calming tactics.
- Bill Larsen commented if the 50mph speed limit sign be moved further down the roadway on route 49? Jim Mayhew will look into this with State DOT.
- Additional comments from social media and email were also read for the record.
  1. Wendi Rathgeber comments that she likes 25mph and hopes it stays.
  2. Tom Gross comments in favor of 25mph limit, but under no conditions make it a one-way road system in town.
  3. Nancy Knight comments that she likes 25mph, but asked if it can go back to 30mph when tourist season is over.
  4. Patty Furgal: She stated she believed that 25mph is too slow, and suggested an unusual speed limit of 29mph to get people's attention (1829 was the year Waterville was founded).
  5. Paul Sullivan: I will be out of town tomorrow otherwise I would attend. I was planning on coming to the next meeting to discuss this so thank you for putting it on your agenda. It is irresponsible to have young children riding their bicycles on the street regardless of the speed limit. I propose that children under 12 years old ride on the sidewalk. Adults should always be on the street. I'd like to see a bicycle lane on Rt 49 and the speed limit go back to a normal 30 MPH. Thank you for your consideration
  6. Kristen Mulcahy: I'm a condo owner, and feel strongly that small children should be riding on the sidewalk. More importantly, the town rules need to be reviewed by all bike renters to ensure they are aware of them. This summer we saw an increase in bike traffic by inexperienced riders who weren't aware of the town's road rules. This posed more of a danger than the 30 mph speed limit in my opinion.
  7. Linda Coleman: The 25mph is slower than needed, unheeded and unenforced. Is there any data that it promoted safety? Fewer collisions? The 30mph speed limit is more realistic. The new markings are visible but children still ride bicycles on the sidewalks for safety (which is ok). Perhaps painted bike lanes may be considered for adults bicycling.
  8. Jennifer Saffran: I am a condo owner, non-resident. In my opinion, the 25 mph is slower than is needed.
  9. Jane Kadis: I am a condo owner non-resident and the 25 mph is slower than needed.

The BOS were appreciative of all the comments made. Common themes expressed were that there is a need for separation for bicycles from auto traffic and that bicycling rules need to be communicated more clearly. The bike shop is the critical point for delivering this information and we need to work with them to ensure the information is getting to guests. Having posted

signs, which guests should read but many don't, is not sufficient in getting the information to them. The current rules are that young children, up to age 12, are allowed to ride on the sidewalk if necessary. This includes young novice riders and those on tricycles or with training wheels, to remain on the sidewalk if they feel uncomfortable in the road, as long as they yield to pedestrians. Chief Hodges stated they will work to educate families regarding these rules. Additional discussion followed involving available funding options by grants. The Town Core Working Group has been working with a grant writer who is researching the availability of grants and matching grants for the suggestions in the Pedestrian Village Study which was completed last year by the SE Group.

Mark Decoteau reminded the BOS that the motion made reducing the speed limit 25mph expires upon 11/30/15. Bill Larsen commented that he was willing to make the motion to maintain 25mph as the speed limit. He felt that this is necessary to promote biking, and felt that this change was beneficial to the community.

Bill Larsen motions to keep 25mph as a permanent speed limit on town roads effective immediately.

Mike Aronson: 2nds.

Motion was carried by a unanimous voice vote.

## **9. Correspondence**

Chairman Aronson review correspondence received from the WV Planning Board concerning the 1-way traffic pattern. Brief discussion followed regarding the Board of Selectmen being the board that has authority to makes changes to the town road traffic patterns.

Mark presents the abatement request for the Addison's for their 1<sup>st</sup> 2015 Property Tax. The reason given for the request is that the property tax bill had been confused with a Tap Fee bill. Once the error was discovered, they paid the bill immediately, and have requested that the interest in the interim period be removed.

Mike Aronson motions to grant the abatement request for Bruce & Wendy Addison for interest fees upon their 1<sup>st</sup> 2015 Property Tax bill.

Bill Larsen: 2nds.

Motion was carried by a unanimous voice vote.

## **10. Privilege of Floor II**

None.

## **11. Board Concerns and Directives**

None.

## **12. Non-Public Session**

None.

## **13. Adjournment**

Bill Larsen motions to adjourn the meeting.

Mike Aronson: 2nds.

The meeting was adjourned on a unanimous voice vote at 4:34pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sharon Charron

Town Clerk/Town Office Assistant