

Waterford Selectboard Regular Meeting Minutes

Monday, December 9, 2024 @ 6:00 PM

Davies Library

In Attendance: Sue Hayes, Ron Gray, Kevin Gillander, Sukey Watson, Marcia Martel.
Attendance list attached.

Ron Gray called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Modifications to Agenda

- Kevin Gillander motioned to recess the Regular Meeting. Sukey Watson seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0. Meeting entered recess at 6:01pm.
- Chair Ron Gray reconvened the Regular Meeting at 6:05pm.
- Add Bonus for Road Foreman Jim Hayes (Discussion/Action)

Approval of Meeting Minutes

- Sukey Watson motioned to approve the meeting minutes of November 25, 2024. Kevin Gillander seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0.

Errors and Omissions for the Lister (Discussion/Action)

- Town Clerk Deb Benoit explained that the listers made an error and undervalued a property by about \$94k. They have fixed their mistake and need the Board to sign the corrected forms.
- Sukey Watson motioned to approve the reevaluation by listers to the correct and current amount. Sue Hayes seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0. All members signed.
- Marcel Lapierre will issue a new tax bill tomorrow.

Bonus for Road Foreman Jim Hayes (Discussion/Action)

- Marcia Martel asked Town Treasurer Heather Gonyaw if the remaining funds in the 2024 Highway Dept could cover a bonus for Jim. Heather confirmed that there is remaining funds in the Highway Dept 2024 budget, so if a bonus is awarded it will not increase the budget for 2025.
- Sukey Watson Motioned to approve a \$1500 bonus for Jim Hayes if it is within the remaining budget for 2024. Sue Hayes seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0.

Final 2025 Budget (Discussion/Action)

- Town Treasurer Heather Gonyaw explained the two changes made since the 2025 budget was last discussed with the Board.

- NEK Learning Services went from \$200 to \$250.
- NVDA dues went from \$1159 to \$1205.
- Sue Hayes commented on the Truck Purchase line item under the Fire Dept. She spoke with Fire Chief Colin Fucci who confirmed the new truck won't be delivered until at least August 2025, so the loan payments will not start until then.
- Heather said the amount she listed is what the Fire Dept suggested based on what Colin knew then and what the rates were at that time.
- The current budgeted amount is about \$51,300, but Sue suggested it be reduced to \$48,865 considering the payments will start later than previously anticipated.
- Sue noted that the budgeted amount for delinquent tax collection was budgeted at around \$19k in the past, but since Marcel Lapierre was hired it has been reduced to \$4,590. She expressed her gratitude to Marcel.
- Ron Gray asked if the time Marcel spends on delinquent tax collection is within his regular 16 hours per week. Heather confirmed that it is, but his hours will be increased to 20 hours per week in 2025.
- Heather answered some clarifying questions from Sue Hayes about the contracted services line item under lists.
- Heather announced the new totals of the budget including the change Sue suggested about the Truck Purchas amount. The total 2025 Town budget is \$1,423,085.78 which is a 0.392% increase from 2024.
- Marcia Martel motioned to approve the amended 2025 Town Budget. Sue Hayes seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0.

Highway Department Update (Discussion)

- Road Foreman Jim Hayes was unable to attend.

Warning for ATV Australian Ballot (Discussion/Action)

- Dave Morrison believed Marcia Martel was in error to suggest using Australian Ballot for voting on the ATV ordinance because the Selectboard doesn't have the authority to specify how the public vote. He shared the most recent examples he could find.
- Ron Gray communiacted with VLCT and discovered Dave is correct. Ron read the question he asked and part of the reply he received.
- The Board decided to remove the ATV ordinance from the Town Warning for the next Town Meeting. Instead, they will dedicate the January 27, 2024 Working Meeting to determine whether the ATV ordinance will be revised/amended and guage voter sentiment. This working meeting will be held at the school.
- Dave Morrison pointed out that new BCA members need to be sworn in before Jan 31 and suggested combining it with the Jan 27 meeting for convenience. Town Clerk Deb Benoit agreed to a Special Meeting being held at 5:30pm on Jan 27.

- Deb offered to post a warning for the Jan 27 Working Meeting on Facebook and the town website.
- Dave Morrison asked about presenting the results of a survey that was done about ATV usage. Sue Hayes agreed to bring the results of the survey.

Town Meeting Warning (Discussion/Action)

- Town Clerk Deb Benoit said she has no new information to give. She will finish typing it up tomorrow with the changes made tonight and they will discuss it at the Jan 13 Regular Meeting. She will double check with the auditors that it will meet the deadline.
- Ron Gray volunteered to send the warning to Morris to get his opinion.

Zoning Administrator Contract (Discussion/Action)

- Sue Hayes said a contract with a three year term (Jan 1, 2024- Dec 31, 2027) can be issued if Chris Brimmer continues as ZA. The Planning Commission still has the opportunity to make a proposal for a difference nominee. The contract can be broken by either party. The Board will vote on it during the Jan 13 Regular Meeting.
- Ron Gray volunteered to reach out to Howard Remick, PC Chair, to ask if they have any nominations.

Citizens' Concerns

- Dave Morrison expressed his concern that he hasn't heard the Board discuss the town's contract with Great River Hydro. He recalled that it used to be a common topic for the Selectboard to discuss.
- Dave Morrison noted that he believes Road Foreman Jim Hayes should be making the same wage plus inflation as the previous Road Foreman. He does not understand the Board's resistance to paying Jim what he's worth. Ron Gray said he believes Jim receives a fair wage. Marcia Martel said Jim's benefits are better than what is offered by other towns and he has been receiving cost of living increases.
- Paul Hayes brought up the bridge that connects Littleton and Waterford. The Board said that bridge is managed by the state, but Paul thought it may be decommissioned. The Board said they will look into it and thanked Paul for bringing it to their attention.
- Robin Migdelany asked about the new member of the Highway Dept. Ron Gray responded that Sean Gilbert started last month.
- Clem Gray asked to respond to his employee evaluation. Ron Gray agreed. Clem explained that he fired a previous Transfer Station employee because the individual wasn't doing his job. Clem believed it was a time sensitive issue and couldn't wait to let the Selectboard decide. Ron said he does have the authority to fire personnel and must come to the Selectboard. Ron asked why Clem didn't utilize the backup attendant. Clem said he tried, but the backup attendant was unavailable. Ron asked for Clem to communicate better with the Selectboard.

- Clem discussed the petition he had at the transfer station and said he was unaware that it was not allowed. He said he would have stopped immediately if he had been made aware. He gave examples of past events that led him to believe it would not be an issue. Ron said he is unfamiliar with the past instances and cannot comment on them. Ron noted that he recused himself from Clem's evaluation.
- Robin Migdelany asked how it would work if an employee was doing something dangerous or offensive. Taking time to wait for Selectboard approval could be hazardous. The Selectboard agreed to look into the rules in the future.
- Clem confronted Sue Hayes for not attending the days she had volunteered to help explain the new card process at the Transfer Station. Sue apologized and agreed that it was a mistake.
- Deb noted that the Transfer Station cards can be bought online now. She offered to arrange using the school for the ATV meeting.

Agenda Items for Next Meeting Jan 13

- Town Warning
- Highway Dept Update
- ZA Contract

Adjourn

- Sue Hayes made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Marcia Martel seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0. The meeting was adjourned at 7:22pm.

Waterford Selectboard Meeting December 9, 2024

Sign In Sheet

Name

David E. Morrison

Glen Gray

John Magolda

William Jones

Signature

David E. Morrison

Glen Gray

John Magolda

William Jones