

# Waterford Selectboard Regular Meeting Minutes

Monday, February 12, 2024 @ 6:00 PM

Davies Library

In Attendance: Gary Allard, Mike Barrett, Rob Begin, Sue Hayes, Warner Hodgdon. Attendance list attached.

Mike Barrett called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

## Modifications to Agenda

- Add Liquor License for Rabbit Hill Inn Approval
- Sue Hayes motioned to approve the liquor license. Rob Begin seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0.

## Approval of Meeting Minutes

- Rob Begin made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of the January 22, 2024 meeting. Sue Hayes seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0.

## Mowing Contract (Discussion/Action)

- Sue Hayes suggested adding a clause to the annual mowing contract that if their performance is satisfactory, three extra years are approved with price negotiation. Warner Hodgdon noted that last year they only got one bid and he did an outstanding job, so he suggested reaching out again. Sue Hayes will meet with Town Clerk Deb Benoit to look at last year's contract and scope changes. Bids are planned to be opened at the end of March.

## Trash Tour (Discussion)

- A local folk band, Rake Factory Union, that works with Catamount Arts is looking to play informal, acoustic concerts at recycling centers and transfer stations. They reached out to see if they need Selectboard approval. Gary Allard suggested having them sign a contract to avoid undue liability on the town. The Selectboard approves the performance as long as the band presents a COI (certificate of insurance).

## Highway Department Update (Discussion)

- Road Foreman Jim Hayes reports that their biggest concern is the situation with the Powers. Jim recalled two incidents with their fence that blocks the right of way by their property. The Powers' ducks are still regularly found roaming in the road and one has been hit. He suggested writing a letter to tell them to remove their fence from where it's

blocking the right of way and reminding them of the ordinance that animals need to be kept out of the road. Jim witnessed the accident of a town truck sliding into their fence and took pictures showing the fence was scuffed but not broken. The Powers filed a police report and sent their own pictures to Deb Benoit. Mike Barrett has a letter drafted and will send it to Jaime Murphy, the town lawyer, for approval along with the pictures Deb received.

- Jim expressed his difficulty dealing with all of the mud, but he is pushing through. He is having trouble with ruts being made on the side of the road preventing proper water drainage. He answered some questions from citizens.

#### Cemetery Committee Surveying (Discussion/Action)

- The Cemetery Committee is requesting the Riverside and Lower Waterford cemeteries be surveyed to lay out more plots. Howard Remick recommended Bill Willis. Warner Hodgdon says he and Bill spent time at the Riverside cemetery last fall knowing they'd need at least a few more lots. At that time, they had 5-6 lots available. They later laid out roughly 12 more lots. Deb Benoit said if they go after RFPs, they can include it in the budget for the summer of 2025. Warner noted they need a plan before they hire a surveyor, but Sue Hayes recommended asking the surveyor to build the design to make the most efficient use of space. Warner will connect with Bill to use the notes from their previous visit. Cemetery Committee member Jen D'Agostino spoke with Nate Nadeau and said he may be willing to help. Warner and Jen will both reach out to their contacts and return with an update in the future.
- Local funeral homes sent letters to cemeteries reminding them that funeral homes no longer take care of hiring people to do site work and asked for information from the cemeteries on how they will accommodate the policy change. Warner Hodgdon said we could use our previous contractor Weaver, but Weaver wants exclusive rights to digging. Waterford's current ordinance allows individuals to choose to dig holes themselves so that requirement cannot be met.
- Gary Allard suggested having that discussion on another date. The group decided the cemetery committee should go after RFPs from various contractors and see what happens. Rob Begin suggested giving them data from the last 5 years so they know what sort of numbers to expect.

#### Town Clerk Update (Discussion)

- Town Clerk Deb Benoit reported that postcards reminding residents to renew dog licenses will be going out this week. The town report will be here on Friday. Town Meeting requests tables for the library and Historical Society. The town's website has a new election page. The town has received a petition from T Mobile for a Certificate of Public Good. There will be a dinner before the Town Meeting, and they are looking for

volunteers to cook and serve. They are working on putting a notice on the website for dog licenses.

#### Report from Delinquent Tax Collector (Discussion)

- Marcel Lapierre handed in the report to the Selectboard. He reported 12 properties are out right now. One is a 4-year delinquent- the old owner passed away and the new owner is discussing payment. There is one other multi-year delinquent who is making payments. There are 10 from last year who are making monthly payments. There is \$31,631.77 outstanding currently. This year the estimated average house tax payments will increase \$340 per \$100,000 in value assuming the current municipal and school budgets are approved.

#### Fire Department Update (Discussion)

- Fire Chief Colin Fucci reports the department has received 22 calls year to date. They are doing a training course this weekend with 13 members taking the whole course and 4 members doing a CPR certification. Their annual pancake breakfast fundraiser is this Sunday, February 25, 8am-11am by donation. They have one new member, Adam Banes, who has property in Waterford and is in the process of moving there. Officers of the department are working with Town Treasurer Heather Gonyaw to apply for various grants. The Selectboard confirmed that the Fire Department does not need approval to apply for the grants and they can proceed as planned.

#### Voiceover IP Phone Update (Discussion/Action)

- Mike Barrett reported he worked with four companies and got four bids. The town currently spends an estimated \$200 per month on phones, and upgrading the system to connect all of the phones in the town would provide significant savings and better service. Valhalla Group gave the most competitive bid with the best customer service and they offer onsite setup and service. Deb Benoit will reach out to the town of St. Johnsbury who uses Valhalla Group to get an honest review before we commit. Mike answered questions from citizens.

#### Signatures on Cemetery Deed (Action)

- All Selectboard members signed the contract for a plot sale.

#### Sign Off on 2023 Grand List (Discussion/Action)

- All Selectboard members signed the Grand List.

#### Citizens' Concerns

- Dave Morrison asked for a reminder of the date and time of the pre-town meeting, which is Tuesday, February 27, at 6:00pm at the school. BCA starts at 5:45pm. He and Howard

Remick agree with Warner Hodgdon that they don't feel Weaver's requirement of having exclusive rights to cemetery site work is fair. He also noted the town bought a computer for building a map of the cemeteries. Deb Benoit said there are a couple of extra computers in the Town Office but she's not sure what they are for yet.

#### Agenda Items for Next Meeting

- Pre Town Meeting
- The next Selectboard meeting is March 11 at 6:00pm at Davies Library. The meeting will primarily be Town reorganization by the new Selectboard.

#### Executive Session 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(B) & 313 (a)(1)(F)

- Rob Begin motioned to enter Executive Session. Sue Hayes seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0. The group entered Executive Session at 7:54 PM.
- Warner Hodgdon made a motion to invite Brice Simon, Esq. to Executive Session. Mike Barrett seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0.
- Group exited Executive session at 8:24 pm. No action was taken.

#### Adjourn

- Sue Hayes made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Rob Begin seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0. The meeting was adjourned at 8:26 pm.



Waterford Selectboard Meeting February 12, 2024

Sign In Sheet

Name

Signature

~~Paul Thoms~~

~~Howard Remick~~

Marcia Martel

Clement Gray

Mark Harp

KEVIN G. HANDEE

Debra Bennet

Jim Hays

Robin Mudgett

David Morrison

Cora Fucci

Helen PIKE

Jenn Barrett

~~Paul Thoms~~

Howard W. Remick

Marcia Martel

Clement Gray

Mark Harp

Kevin G. Handee

Debra Bennet

Jim Hays

Robin Mudgett

David E. Morrison

Cora Fucci

Helen Pike

Jenn Barrett