

Wilmington Selectboard/Sewer Commission
July 3, 2013 at 6:00pm
MINUTES

Selectboard Members Present: Margaret Streeter, James Burke, Diane Chapman, Susan Haughwout and Jacob White

Others Present: Scott Murphy, Mary Towne, Jack Deming of Deerfield Valley News, Tom Consolino, Nicki Steel, Isaac Wagner, Alice Richter, John Gannon, Adam Grinold, Alice Herrick, Mark Herrick

1. **Minutes:** Burke moved and White seconded to accept the minutes of June 19, 2013. Discussion: Haughwout asked for an addition to item #6 regarding the Budget Committee to add the following bullet point: "Publish their recommendations in the Town Report". The motion maker and seconder agreed to the addition. Vote: All in favor of 6/19/13 minutes as corrected.

Burke moved and Haughwout seconded to approve minutes of June 26, 2013. Vote: four in favor, and White abstained since he had recused himself.

2. **Visitors and Public Comments:**

- a. Tom Consolino: Expressed concern regarding the town being presented with a purchase and sale agreement for town-owned property in the Haystack development and it has been discussed in executive session as it should be. His concern is that the board should consider the ramifications of what happens after the land sale, since it will affect every resident in Wilmington. He thinks the public should be involved and hopes the board comes up with conditions if the sale is made. Once sold, any questions would go to the Development Review Board but he is concerned there are things the DRB would not have jurisdiction over. He asked the Selectboard to consider the issue as an agenda item at a future meeting.
 1. Streeter commented that this is land that went to tax sale and has been available for sale for 7 years. She feels it is the obligation of the Selectboard to consider the tax base of the town and get properties back on the tax rolls.
 2. Haughwout commented that the majority of the land was taken from a developer and the Selectboard has not taken any action to change any permits for the land. A new owner would have to do any permit changes needed. Consolino is proposing adding conditions that were not on the property before. She agreed that the Selectboard goal is to get property back on the tax rolls.
- b. Nicki Steel: Inquired whether an email she sent was received, since she did not get a reply. The board confirmed it was received but not answered because it concerned a personnel matter. Steel suggested that it would be a good idea to simply reply to acknowledge that it was received.

3. **Action Items:** None

4. **Set FY 2014 Tax Rate:** Murphy went over a spreadsheet prepared by treasurer/finance officer Christine Richter. After discussion, Burke moved and Haughwout seconded to set the Town FY 2014 Tax Rate at \$ 0.4838 making the combined town and residential education tax rate \$1.9841 and the combined town and non-residential education tax rate \$1.8493. Vote: All in favor.

5. **Street Closing Request for Blueberry Festival Block Party:** Chapman moved and Haughwout seconded to approve Special Traffic Regulations to close a portion of South Main Street from Route 9 to its intersection with Beaver Street on August 3, 2013 from 4-10 pm for the annual Blueberry Festival Block Party. Vote: All in favor.

6. **Sewer Commission Meeting:** Haughwout moved and Burke seconded to recess the Selectboard Meeting and open a Sewer Commission meeting. All in favor and sewer meeting opened at 6:24 pm. An application was received from Peter Wallace for preliminary allocation of 100 gallons per day sewer allocation at 33 West Main Street for a coffee shop. Haughwout moved and Burke seconded to approve preliminary allocation of 100 gallons per day at 33 West Main Street. Vote: All in favor. Sewer Commission adjourned at 6:27 pm and Selectboard meeting resumed.

7. **Correspondence to/from Selectboard:**

- a. Reviewed Act 250 log and no action taken.
- b. Other: Haughwout asked how the public is notified about flood threats? Who alerts the public and what is the town's role? White said the fire department has a list of West Main Street properties to be notified. Burke concerned about telling people every time we get a weather report – would raise anxiety and cry wolf too often, so should only alert when flooding is imminent.

8. **6:30: Public Hearing for CDBG Grant Application for Implementation Grant for Windham and Windsor Housing Trust:** Isaac Wagner, director of Housing Development at Windham Windsor Housing Trust (WWHT) gave a brief description of the application that the Town is sponsoring for funding for renovations to the Laterre House at 24 East Main St. through a regular Community Development Block Grant. The grant is not to exceed \$268,000 and they hope to start the renovations this fall. Comments and discussion included the following:

- **Nicki Steel:** The Laterre House rehabilitation in 1998 was a major improvement since the building was really rundown before that. Asked if they will hire locally or have their own crews.
 - Wagner: They hire a general contractor who seeks proposals from subcontractors.
 - Steel: Asked that they encourage hiring of local subcontractors.
- **Alice Richter:** Has WWHT considered taking on more buildings in Wilmington?
 - Wagner: They are open to suggestions. The rule of thumb is that it be big enough for a minimum of 4 apartments.
- **Jack Deming:** As a tenant of the building, he asked how the process works for when the tenants have to move out during construction.
 - Wagner: Explained the notification process and that tenants will receive at least 30 days notice. They will try to help tenants continue to work with them during the relocation.
- **Tom Consolino:** After the renovations do they anticipate more demands on public services?
 - Wagner: No – there will be the same number of bedrooms.
- **Adam Grinold:** Clarified that he is speaking for himself as a property owner, and not in his capacity as Director of the Chamber of Commerce. He owns several buildings in town with rental apartments. Since the building was renovated in 1998 at a large cost, he questioned the cost of approximately \$700,000 for renovations now and said it seems like a waste of money. He encouraged the Selectboard to find a way for private enterprise to do similar projects. He also mentioned that there is not much parking there and that should be considered. If the Selectboard supports the project, they should assure that local contractors are used. In Vermont, developers are often required to provide affordable housing as part of their permits and this inflates the value.
 - Wagner: The majority of the funding for the project is local. The CDBG grant is public funds.

There being no other comments, Streeter closed the Public Hearing at 6:45 pm.

Next steps: The Selectboard has already given support to the project. These minutes will be sent to Isaac Wagner for inclusion in the final application.

9. **Quarterly 1% Option Tax Use Discussion:** The Selectboard had decided to review applications and discuss ideas for use of the 1% Local Option Tax Fund on a quarterly basis. There are currently no applications from the public. Discussion included:

- **John Gannon and Alice Richter of Wilmington Works presented the idea of creating a Historic Walking Tour of the Village.** The project would include research on buildings to be included in the tour (estimate 22 buildings), publication of a brochure and map, plaques for the village buildings, and signs. They showed copies of a brochure for similar tour of the Town of Norwich VT and price quotes for preparing a brochure and printing it. There would also be costs for the plaques and signs. Wilmington Works had voted to recommend that the Selectboard allocate \$10,000 from 1% funds for the Walking Tour.
 - They will work with Historical Society of Wilmington
 - Suggestion that someone from Wilmington could be hired to do the work.
 - The person that sent a price quote has experience and is ready to go.
 - They would like to see it up and running by this fall.
 - Signs discussed – would need to be checked out by sign administrator.
 - Can Selectboard treat this as a request even though verbal. Yes, but prefer the process next time to be proposals submitted in writing in advance to the Town Manager.
 - The board asked them to submit more information on the overall cost and a firm budget.
 - Selectboard will take up at their next meeting on July 17th.
- **Process:**
 - Will an application form be created? No, just submit the information to the Town Manager and requests will be taken up quarterly.
- **Review of Previous Quarter:** Fiscal Year 2013 money
 - \$75,000 was set up as a revolving loan fund and so far one loan has been committed. Others have asked for information. Adam Grinold said it is good to have it available.
 - The events fund has funded several events so far including The Moving Wall, the village strolls, 8th Annual Independent Television and Film Festival, and Village Trash Receptacles.
 - Event approvals are not in Selectboard minutes. They are awarded on a first-come first-served basis and approved by the Town manager if they meet the requirements including a 50/50 match.

SELECTBOARD project Suggestions:

- **Jake White:** Money for trails? There is money remaining that has already been allocated for the Valley Trail Link.
- **Diane Chapman:** At Wilmington Works they discussed getting Wi-Fi in the village area and the cost would be about \$1000 for a year to Fairpoint.
 - Need to discuss with Gretchen since there is ongoing work on this with the Vermont Digital Project grant.
 - What area would be covered?
 - The Wi-Fi at the library is on all the time now, not just when the library is open.
 - Wilmington Works has agreed to provide the Wilmington Works website as a portal. The website is under construction now.
 - IF there is money needed outside of the grant, this could be considered for 1% funding.
 - As technology advances, there may be different needs so do not recommend more than a one-year agreement.
 - The Town Hall Wi-Fi has a problem when too many people try to use it at the same time.
- **Diane Chapman:** The Historical Society wants to build a shed to house their sleigh and other large items. Would that be eligible for the 1% funding as Economic Development?

- **Susan Haughwout:** Pursuing whether possible to bring high speed internet to areas of town that are not served now. Several roads were listed.
- **Susan Haughwout:** Rehabilitate the crumbling bridge railings on the Route 9 state bridge in the center of town by Dot's. Also lighting.
 - Murphy said he met with Rob Faley of the state who said they have examined it and found it structurally sound so do not plan to do any repairs. Murphy will ask if the Town could do the repairs.
- **Meg Streeter:** Like to see more benches downtown.
- **Meg Streeter:** Lake Raponda – Green Mountain Beach is heavily used. Could use improvements and more benches.
- **Meg Streeter:** Replenish event funding if needed. Murphy said we still have \$10,000 available for FY 14.
- **Meg Streeter:** Air conditioning at Memorial Hall. There is a possible donor for this.
 - **Scott Murphy:** Contractor is now working on a design for Memorial Hall improvements and will have numbers next month.
 - Susie Haughwout: If doors are left open for cooling, there should be a child protector gate at the door to keep children from going out on the handicapped ramp.

Nicki Steel has ideas for Green Mountain Beach and will send to Streeter. Others will write up their projects in more detail for discussion at the July 17 meeting.

10. **Other Business: Selectboard Members Comments and Other Action Items:**

- a. White: Valley Trail is very close to opening Wilmington section. Signage has been ordered. Hoot, Toot, and Whistle Trail is being worked on – bypassing DVTA during their construction. Still waiting for wetlands permit, but can work on other sections. Board thanked Jake for all his work!
- b. Haughwout: Need to put on a future agenda to review language for DRB waivers.
- c. Streeter: Thanked Burke and Murphy for help with the process for a new roof for the library. A bidder was chosen and work will begin in about a month. Also noted that Franklin Reeve passed away. He was a library trustee, on the BCA, and served in many other ways.

11. **Town Manager's Updates:**

- Annual employee reviews have been completed.
- Park And Ride Project Completion: The Dixon lot has been paved, striped, and landscaped. Lighting and signage still need to be installed and a bus shelter is being constructed. There may be money left over from the \$41,000 grant, but it needs to be returned if not spent.
- West Main Street Parking Lot: Lights are being ordered.
- The contract for Whites Road bridge was awarded to Alpine Construction and work should start in about 2 weeks.
- Town Owned Land Sale Update: A signed contract was received today.

12. **Possible Executive Session to discuss Real Estate Contract and Personnel Matter:** Alice Herrick asked to speak to the Board before they went into executive session since the personnel issue concerned her.

- She requested to be present for the part of the executive session about her.
- She said she has letters from people she has worked with that she wants the board to see. (She was told to give them to Town Manager)
- She requested that Susan Haughwout recuse herself from the issue for several reasons:
 - Haughwout is a fellow worker for the town

- There is an appearance of impropriety due to the multiple positions Haughwout holds including Selectboard, Town Clerk, and Ex-Officio to the Planning Commission.
- There is a deep-seated and long-standing animosity between the Town Clerk's office and the Administration offices and she does not think that Haughwout is able to be objective in this case.

Streeter moved Chapman seconded that the board go into executive session with the Town Manager and Alice Herrick present for evaluation of a public official and subsequently for a real estate contract with the Town Manager present. All were in favor and they entered executive session at 7:45 pm.

The board came out of executive session at 8:21 pm. Burke made a motion to appoint Alice Herrick as Zoning Administrator for a three year term effective July 5, 2013. Streeter seconded the motion. Vote: four in favor and Haughwout voted no.

The board went back into executive session for the real estate contract portion at 8:25pm. White recused himself.

The board came out of executive session at 8:32 pm. Haughwout moved and Streeter seconded to authorize the Town Manager and/or town attorney to continue negotiations. Vote: All four in favor. White recused.

Meeting adjourned at 8:32 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Towne, Administrative Assistant

Approved by Wilmington Selectboard:

Margaret L. Streeter, Chair

James R. Burke, Vice Chair

Diane Chapman, Clerk

Susan Joy Haughwout

Jacob White