

Wilmington Selectboard/Sewer Commission
May 15, 2013 at 6:00pm
MINUTES

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

Selectboard Member Absent: Diane Chapman

Others Present: Scott Murphy, Mary Towne, Jack Deming of Deerfield Valley News, Tom Consolino, Vince Rice, Wendy Manners, John Bennett, Doris Horton, Cindy Hayford, Christine Reilly, Jennifer Nilsen.

1. **Minutes:** Burke moved and White seconded to approve minutes of May 8, 2013. Vote: All in favor.
2. **Visitors and Public Comments:** None
3. **Action Items (5 minutes)**
 - a. Approve addendum language to “Sale of Town Owned Land” Guidelines: Murphy read the changes to the previous document. Haughwout moved and Burke seconded to approve the Guidelines as presented. Vote: All in favor.
 - b. Set date for Vicious Dog Hearing: Tuesday, May 21, 2013 at 8 am at the Town Hall Meeting Room.
4. **Interview:** The Board interviewed applicant Doris Horton for the Memorial Hall Board and thanked her for her interest. Burke moved and Haughwout seconded to appoint Horton to serve the remainder of a 1 year term that expires in March 2014. Vote: All in favor.
5. **Windham Regional Commission’s John Bennett Presentation:** Bennett said he was here for a Municipal Consultation and went over ways that the Commission can further assist the Town. He has been working with the Planning Commission on the Municipal Planning Grant and wants towns to understand the various functions that WRC offers. He listed all the projects that WRC has assisted the town with. The board discussed issues such as why WRC weighed in on a cell tower in Wilmington that the Selectboard did not have an issue with. Also not weighing in on the Searsburg wind turbines that the town was against. Bennett said that WRC tries to stay neutral, but considers issues that have regional impact. He agreed better communication is warranted for the future. The Board thanked him for the assistance from WRC.
6. **The Status of Town Roads:** Passed over until next meeting.
7. **Smoke Free Zones at Town Owned Parks:** Cindy Hayford of the Deerfield Valley Community Partnership, Christine Reilly of Twin Valley High School Pride Prevention Group, and Jennifer Nilsen, who has been working with local workplaces, presented a request to the Board to designate the Town owned parks as “Smoke Free Zones” and post them accordingly. They are concerned with second hand smoke, especially for children using the parks for activities such as T-Ball. They have funding to provide signs for the park and said it does not need to be an ordinance but could just be signs asking people not to smoke like “Thank you for keeping this a smoke-free zone”. That way no enforcement is needed, but people at the park would be empowered to point the signs out to people who are smoking. Hayford said a survey at Town Meeting of 72 people showed that 86% residents would support smoke-free parks. Hayford said that several other Vermont towns are doing

this. In discussion, two Board members were opposed, stating they don't feel right telling people they can't do a legal activity and it is not town government's role to stop smoking in public places. Encouraging no smoking is ok, but not prohibiting it. One member was in favor of the idea. One member said they do not want to infringe on rights, but possibly voluntary would be ok. The panel asked if it would be possible to try the idea out at Buzzy Towne Park because of the T-Ball games held there. Hayford will send some possible wordings for signs and the Board will discuss again in the future.

8. **Budget Committee's Future:** Murphy said The Town's Budget Committee, which has been an elected position for many years, has been determined by State Statute to be a Selectboard appointed committee. This committee has largely been eliminated around the state as Selectboards have the authority to vote on and recommend budgets for the voters to decide. Discussion included:

- a. The Budget Committee has been redundant and after the fact, since they do not attend the Selectboard budget process and all of the departments and committees have to come in again to present to them. Perhaps if they attended the Selectboard process then they would be up to speed and able to discuss and make recommendations without everything having to be done again for them.
- b. There has been a time constraint – trying to get the process completed in order to be in the Town Report.
- c. People are used to seeing the recommendations in the town Report. It is sort of an accountability matter.
- d. Possibly: stop electing members; it could be an ad hoc committee or citizen's advisory group appointed by the Selectboard.
- e. But what about the school budget?
- f. Have advisory group come to Selectboard budget meetings in order to be aware of how the budget is decided, and give input.
- g. Burden would be on the Selectboard and Town Manager to provide more information to the public during the budget process.
- h. The Selectboard has already planned to start the process earlier than in the past.
- i. Changing the model could be reinvigorating.

Next steps: Murphy to get in touch with current members to see if they are interested in a new group.

9. **Correspondence to/from Selectboard:** Reviewed Act 250 log and no action taken.

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

- a. White gave an update on the trails.
- b. Streeter said the headlines said the State would not do a tax increase, but they raised the gas tax, education tax, and a tax on phone bills. Perhaps invite our legislators to come in and speak to the Board?

11. **Town Manager's Updates (5 minutes)**

- a. Pedestrian Footbridge Installation: The bridge has landed! It is very attractive and flowers will be added by the beautification committee. Dedication and official opening will be June 1st at 11 am.
- b. CDBG-DR Application: The application was approved for possible co-location of fire and police departments. Once the official notification letter is received, we will do an RFP and then choose a contractor/planner.
- c. Health Insurance update: Attended a meeting in Bellows Falls yesterday. By October 1st, the State will be open for business and Murphy will bring to the Board for a decision on employee insurance. Rates will be finalized July 1st so Selectboard will discuss in August.

12. **Executive Session:** Burke moved and White seconded to go into executive session with Murphy present to discuss a Real Estate Contract. All were in favor and they entered executive session at 7:40 pm. They came out of executive session at 8 pm and adjourned with no action taken.

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