

Worcester Selectboard Regular Meeting Minutes

Tuesday January 16, 2024 at 6:30 pm

Selectboard members present : Roger Strobridge, Carter Stowell and John Kaeding

Guests present: Jennifer LeStat, Katie Miller, Will Sutton, Connie Riggs, Will Baker, Mark Johnson, Suzanne Mancinelli, Fred Jones, Wayne Wojtyna and Brian McWalter

Housekeeping

- John called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm
- Roger moved to accept the draft minutes of January 2, 2024 as written, seconded by Carter and unanimously approved
- Additions/Deletions - Roger moved to have an executive session at the end of the meeting for a personnel matter; seconded by John and unanimously approved

Public Input - none

Department Reviews

Town Clerk Report

- July 4th celebration port-o-let's reserved including one handicap unit that will stay through November first
- a copy of the Trail Right of Way Ordinance was sent to the JUD as required
- Local Hazardous Mitigation Plan (LHMP) process to be updated and renewed. This occurs every 5 years.
- Received information about Comcast internet offer (Affordable Connectivity Program Internet Essentials). This information is available but not endorsed, the Town does not endorse any individual businesses.

Town Treasurer Report

- Town audit is complete and came out to the penny. The draft for SB review will be available in 2 weeks
- Treasurer reports are ready for Town Report
- FEMA Bond Application is completed and submitted. We hope to hear back within the next month
- Town's FEMA Representative has been reassigned. As he departed he sent a letter celebrating Worcester's organization and competence. John, Roger and Carter congratulate Katie Miller, Brian Powers and Jennifer LeStat for their outstanding work in guiding the Town through the July storm FEMA process.

Fire Department Report

- Wayne Holland stepped down as president and treasurer. Peter Fitz is now the president. Will Sutton will be the treasurer
- there will be a Capital Mutual Aid meeting tomorrow in Barre

New Business

- Suzanne Mancinelli from the Green Mountain Druid School notes a winter celebration will occur at the Town Hall February 3. She requested a concurrent bonfire near the basketball court. The SB was unable to give an OK at such short notice but recognizes that finding an appropriate, safe, well prepared location for a winter bonfire for future similar events is a good idea.

- Discuss permitting requirements in Town of Worcester - This as a response to a private solar provider
- The Town of Worcester has no permitting requirements for the installation of roof mounted solar arrays, battery storage or heat pumps. However, the Town center does have "Village Center Designation", Vermont Land Trust restrictions and Two historic buildings overseen by the Worcester Historical Society, making large scale ground mounted solar arrays unacceptable in the Town center. Additional details are available on the Town website.
- Flood Plain consideration for site on North Branch of the Winooski - buildings on the Daniel Chaplin property north of Town exist in a flood plain. They have been flooded many times including this most recent July. The Town is attempting to help the owner access assistance to demolish the damaged structures and turn the area into a perpetual flood plain. Brian McWalter (State Hazard Mitigation Planner) was present to clarify the process.

Old Business

- Emergency Watershed Protection Program Update - this is a program that aims to prevent extensive erosion after flood events. There are two properties in Worcester that are eligible. We need further information before deciding how we can move forward on this issue. Decisions must be made before February 28.
- Update on Proposed Town meeting with Agency of Natural Resources - the ANR made it clear they had no intention of joining the Town for an in-person question and answer opportunity concerning the proposed "Worcester Range Management Unit". They are comfortable with their declared plan for receiving questions/comments via their on-line communications system. After several conversations, they agreed to a FPF post with "easy" contact information including a phone number for those preferring to speak to a human. John moved to publicly distribute the message provided to the Town by ANR in the format of a FPF posting, putting it on the Town website and posting in the usual Town locations; seconded by Roger and unanimously approved.
- Connie Riggs representing the Worcester Fire District update - Connie notes the water system has overdue infrastructure upgrades. The water board failed to qualify for grants through Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission. Therefore, the board is requesting assistance from the Town via ARPA funds to procure a needed emergency generator to assure power for a constant water supply even during prolonged power outages. John moved the Town allocate \$10,682 from ARPA funds to the Worcester Fire District No. 1 Prudential Committee for an emergency generator for the Worcester pump house located at 64 Worcester Village Road; seconded by Roger and unanimously approved.

Executive Session personnel matter

- Roger moved to enter executive session at 8:48 pm; seconded by John and unanimously approved.
- exited executive session at 8:55 pm
 - No action was taken

Correspondence - none

Announcements

- the next regularly scheduled Selectboard meeting will be held at the Office Complex on February 5, 2024 at 6:30 pm. The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 pm.

Bills were signed as presented

Attest. John Kaeding

DRAFT MINUTES

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