

WAITSFIELD SELECTBOARD

February 24, 2020

Waitsfield Town Office

6:30 P.M.

Board Members Present – Paul Hartshorn, Chair; Sal Spinosa, Vice-Chair; Darryl Forrest, Jon Jamieson

Board Members Absent - Kellee Mazer

Others Present: Christine Sullivan, Kaiya Korb, Fred Messer, Marie Leotta, and MRVTV.

Staff: Trevor Lashua, Town Administrator

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

Item II.1. Agenda additions, removals, or adjustments per 1 V.S.A. § 312 (d) (3) (A).

An adjustment was made to add a 1st Class Liquor License for the 1824 house under item 7.

Item II.2. Public Forum

None.

Item II.3. Discussion with HUUSD Board Representative(s).

At the 2/10 meeting, the Board decided to invite Christine Sullivan, one of two Waitsfield representatives to the Harwood Unified Union School District (HUUSD), to the 2/24 meeting. The email Christine provided earlier in the month, along with the FY21 budget summary provided by the District’s 10 business office, was enclosed.

Last year the school board decided to look at stabilizing the tax rate. The board looked at where to cut things such as programming but they did not want to do that. The board decided to look at the budget with more long-range goals. There would be two operational elementary schools, Moretown would be K-4, Crossett Brook would be 5-8 (5th and 6th would be from Thatcher Brooke and Moretown) with the 7th and 8th coming from all schools in the district.

There created eight budget scenarios. Most scenarios cut programs, which the school board did not want to do. They then asked administrators to cost out moving all middle school students to Crossett Brook which would be the most impactful. The addition of an annex (temporary classrooms) at Crossett Brook would be needed. There would ultimately be only a small number over the capacity of the existing school building. The cumulative effect of the budget on the tax rate is less than \$0.015. This can change slightly after the legislature concludes and the state fully determines what’s needed for the Education Fund.

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Paul asked about trade programs and whether or not they could come back to the programming, especially shop and home economics. In response, Kaiya admitted that when in existence, program enrollment was declining but they do now have an internship option at the technical center in Barre, which is currently used for the programming by current Harwood students.

Jon praised the school board for keeping the programming, keeping in mind the per-pupil spending. He believes the students will have more positive peer groups being together on one campus as well as directing resources.

The long-range plan for the students is much sounder, sustainable and pays full attention to the middle school. Kaiya also talked about better programming when there are more kids to build robust and lively programs (58 band students vs 10 band students, for example).

The biggest concerns have been closing the schools, the transportation and the general tension of change and some think the change is solely the result of money. If the budget does not get approved then the process is that the board will need to reconvene and decide what new dollar amount will move forward. There would need to be another properly warned vote.

Motion:
No motion made.

Item II.4. Presentation of Dog and Enforcement Ordinance Revisions

From the 2/10/20 TA’s report: “The enclosed revision to the dog ordinance, and a proposed enforcement ordinance, are the product of a working group comprised of the Town Health Officer, Dog Warden, and Town Administrator. The Town Health Officer, Fred Messer, was present the ordinances to the Board for initial review and discussion.”

This ordinance has a new philosophy on how to handle problems. The dog is not the one responsible it is the owner. Previously dogs were taken and impounded. The board went through the ordinance and asked questions related to ticketing, dog on livestock issues, dog on dog violent incidents, dogs running at-large, cruelty and the definitions of cruelty and the communication between owners and possibly the state. The board thought overall the ordinance looked great. Roy Hadden is still the kennel and he determines whether or not to waive a fee for a dog being held there or charge the fee.

There was a question about the enforceability of owners picking up dog waste as it is in the ordinance as well.

There were corrections and updates that will be made to the ordinance.

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Motion:

No motion made.

Item II.5. Consider Approving the Town Treasurer’s Request re Due To/From Accounts.

The enclosed memo from Town Treasurer Sandy Gallup explained the issue in greater detail. As the Board recalled from the past three fiscal year audits, there are due to/from balances (meaning simply that one fund “owes” another fund) between the Water and General Funds and the General and Sewer Funds.

The Treasurer’s recommendation, which is the recommendation of the Town’s auditors, is to reduce the balance owed by the Water Fund to the General Fund (\$49,527) by the balance owed to the General Fund from the Sewer Fund (\$27,207). This would leave a balance of \$22,320, which Town staff and the Water Commission are working to resolve as well. As the memo indicates, prior accounting and financing challenges associated with the water and wastewater projects likely led to the balances.

Motion:

Jon moved to reduce the Water Fund’s due to a balance of \$49,527 by the Sewer Fund’s due from balance of \$27,207, as recommended by the Town’s auditors. Sal seconded. Motion passed 4-0.

Item II.6. FY21 Budget Scripts and Assignments (for Town Meeting).

The FY21 budget scripts are undergoing final edits (addition of page numbers in the annual report, for example) and were handed out. The board considered which of the following budget “assignments” (one member of the Board will need to take two) to assume responsibility for at Town Meeting:

- General Government - Darryl
- Road Department - Jon
- Fire Department - Sal
- Capital Improvement Program, Capital Reserves, and Non-Capital Reserves - Sal
- Debt Services - Kellee
- Revenues - Kellee

The current plan is to open the budget discussion at Town Meeting with a PowerPoint presentation; Board members would then be responsible for answering any questions within the areas of budget assignment with staff backup if/when needed.

Motion:

No motion made.

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Item II.7. Consider 2nd Class Liquor License Renewal.

The Board acted in its capacity as the local liquor control commission. Representatives of the applicants were not required to attend. The renewal applications were enclosed.

Motion:

Jon moved to approve the following renewal applications first and third-class liquor license:

- *1824 House, doing business as Constance Mendell’s catering.*

Darryl seconded. Motion passed 4-0.

Jon moved to approve the following renewal applications for a second-class liquor license:

- *Wesco, Inc., doing business as Champlain Farms*

Darryl seconded. Motion passed 4-0.

Item II. 4. Bills payable and Treasurer’s warrants.

Motion:

Approval and signature, where appropriate

Item II.9. Minutes of 02/10 and 02/17/20.

The draft minutes of 02/10 and 02/17 were enclosed for review

Motion:

Sal moved to approved the amended minutes for 02/10 and 02/17. Darryl seconded. Motion passed 4-0.

Item II.10. Selectboard Roundtable

None

Item II.11. Town Administrator’s Report.

Annual reports are available at the Town office, post office, and library. There is a digital version online and they were mailed to those who attended last year.

III.1. Other Business.

None to report.

Item III.1. Correspondence/Documents/Reports received.

None, in addition to packets.

Motion:

162 *Darryl moved to adjourn at 8:28 pm. Jon seconded. Motion passed 4-0.*

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164 Respectfully submitted,

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166 Deanna Sellars

167 Recording Secretary

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