

**Minutes of the Select Board Special Meeting
Monday December 23, 2024
28 North Main Street and via zoom**

Attendance: Alyssa Johnson, Kane Sweeney, Roger Clapp, Karen Petrovic, Tom Leitz

Public Attendance: Owen Sette-Ducati, Sandy Sabin, Chris Viens, ORCA Media, Alex Showerman - WATA

Zoom: Ian Shea, Michael Bard – Select Board members; ORCA Media, Elisabeth, Tom Leitz
Lisa Scagliotti – Waterbury Roundabout, Logan Shuman

Approve Agenda: A. Johnson moved to approve the agenda as written with the addition of short-term lending to WASI following Animal License Fee Schedule. K. Sweeney seconded the motion; a vote was held and passed unanimously.

Consent Agenda: K. Sweeney moved to approve the consent agenda as written. A. Johnson seconded the motion. A vote was held and passed unanimously.

Public: R. Clapp thanked A. Johnson for chairing the Select Board meeting on December 16, 2024

Letter of Attestation for the Upcoming FY25 Downstreet Vibrancy Fund: O. Setti-Ducati presented the Board with a letter of Attestation which is required to receive State Funding for Downtown programs. Waterbury is receiving funding for downtown vitality which is to supplement and not develop vitality in the downtown. A. Johnson moved to approve the Municipal Letter of Attestation for the Town of Waterbury and Revitalizing Waterbury dated 12/23/2024. K. Sweeney seconded the motion. A. Johnson stated funding is built into the Town budget acknowledging the generosity of the budget. A vote was held and passed unanimously.

Discussion of funding request from the Waterbury Area Trails Association: A. Showerman is the Trail Director of WATA, the organization in charge of Perry Hill and Little River State Park Mountain bike trails. According to FPR the Perry Hill trails see 20,000 users per year and day visits to Little River State Park have tripled. Volunteerism has been declining which is essential for the stewardship of the trails. Weather storms have also negatively impacted the trail system. The Pump track which is popular with kids has flooded a few times and needs to be restored. WATA is asking for funding in the amount of \$5,000 for the pump track and \$7,000 for the Main Climb and Campfire Climb rebuilds. Membership peaked during COVID and has declined but not dramatically since 2019. WATA is not increasing their membership dues despite the roughly 500 member losses. There are 1,258 current members in the WATA organization. WATA is working with Katarina Lisaius from the Recreation Department to further their outreach, the pump track is the best target for the kids in Town. The pump track is beloved when it is in good shape but when the maintenance is deferred it's not. WATA would like to continue building community programs in collaboration with the Town of Waterbury and Recreation Department. Without Town funding the Main and Campfire Climb trail work will not be scrapped but the Pump Track will be. S. Sabin asked why the Town should make up this deficit, why not raise the membership fees and force members to volunteer on trail work. A. Showerman stated this local chapter cannot raise the rates without the entire organization doing so. WATA trails are free public good for the Town of Waterbury and supports local businesses bringing in revenue. C. Viens stated he is worried if the Town opens the gates

for this funding it will never get closed. The LOT revenue should take care of what the Town already has and not begin funding new initiatives. WATA hopes to begin the work as soon as the ground is thawed and dry, best guess is April 2025. **A. Johnson move to allocate \$7,000 of 2024 LOT to rebuild the lower sections of the Main and Campfire Climb trails. K. Sweeney seconded the motion.** A. Johnson stated continued discussion of the Pump Track can take place with future funding. M. Bard expressed concerns about organizations that come to the Board with decreased volunteerism and lower membership fees without doing due diligence. **A vote was held and passed 4-1.** Follow up question from K. Petrovic, the funds will be distributed when the work is performed and WATA supplies the Town with an invoice.

Local Options Tax (LOT) Spending: T. Leitz conservative estimate is that the Town will receive \$750,000 in LOT per year. T. Leitz met with an architectural firm regarding the design and feasibility of a Recreational Building. C. Viens asked if the LOT must be spent each year, they do not. The plan for gravel roads is to hire contractors to haul materials to the Ice Center storage, when staff time permits staff will perform the work on gravel roads such as overlays and laying material. The 2025 LOT Capital Plan of \$150,000 is essentially for gravel road material.

Have your Say Day Update: The Town has confirmed the Legion for Saturday January 11, 2025 10am-12 and the Grange Hall on Monday January 13, 2025 from 7-9pm. Several Board members will bring pie. The advertising should include to bring a pie. This exercise is a trial run with the intent to have a question on the Town Meeting warning to change the format of Annual Town Meeting. Each Board member should attend being able to speak to an area of the budget. Staff will draft a Front Porch Forum after Christmas with FAQ's.

Adoption of Section 125 Health Plan Documents: This is an IRS requirement necessary for employees to set aside pretax dollars for the purpose of health care expenses. The only reason this would need to be revised is if changes are implemented. **K. Sweeney moved to adopt the Health Reimbursement resolution as presented by the Town Manager. I. Shea seconded the motion. A vote was held and passed unanimously.**

Animal License Fee Schedule: The fee structure adopted at the previous meeting stands.

WASI Short Term Borrowing: T. Leitz presented a late and unusual request from WASI. There is concern about the Waterbury Ambulance Service ability to get their paperwork in order in the next two weeks. One of the requirements for the grant money is that they must demonstrate they are fully funded. The Federal government does not want to pay for a project that does not get completed. T. Leitz will attempt to get a legal opinion in time Monday 12/30 and attempt to get an EFUD Loan Committee meeting scheduled later this week.

Next Meeting Agenda:

Draft Front Porch Forum for Have your Say Day

WASI Short Term Loan Request

Add Planning and Conservation to the Budget discussion

Executive Session: A. Johnson made a motion to enter Executive Session for the purpose of a personnel discussion and invited the Town Clerk to join. K. Sweeney seconded. A vote was held and passed unanimously.

K. Sweeney made a motion to exit Executive Session. A. Johnson seconded the motion; a vote was held and passed unanimously.

No action taken

Adjourn: K. Sweeney made a motion to adjourn. A. Johnson seconded the motion; a vote was held and passed unanimously.

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