

**Minutes of West Fairlee Selectboard Regular Meeting  
May 3, 2010**

**Present from the Selectboard:** Bonnie Cray, Nate Pero, Jim Brigham, David Butch Moore, Sharon Petersen

**Visitors:** Don Phoenix, John Blake, Jonathan Blake, Andy Petersen, Jackie Isaak, Roger Bailey

**The meeting was called to order at 6:00pm at the Community Building multi-purpose room.**

**Visitors:** The Trust for Public Land meeting to discuss the potential purchase of land from Bradford for the Brushwood Community Forest has been postponed and will be placed on the agenda for the next regular selectboard meeting scheduled for May 17, 2010. Cray indicated that the board will continue to obtain information regarding the potential purchase of land.

**Minutes:** Motion by Brigham to approve the minutes of April 19, 2010 as amended by Cray, Petersen, and James Hughes. Pero seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor.

**Hear and Act on the Reports of Town Officers and Committees:**

*West Fairlee Clean Up Day:*

Cray reported that the first clean up day around the community building included 20 volunteers and lunch provided by Betty Dixon. Cray also indicated that all board members were present. The road crew donated their time and the use of their tractor for the clean up effort. Cray thanked everyone for their time and efforts. Cray also suggested holding another clean up day with additional community notification. The West Fairlee Improvement Club has offered to purchase items including mulch and stone to fix up around the Community Building. Jonathan Blake offered to help.

Last Saturday Delsie Hoyt cleaned out the storage space for the new food shelf location. Cray thanked Hoyt for her service.

**Roads:** *Scrutton Hill:* Residents have contacted Cray and asked when repair work would be completed on the road. Culvert repair work was discussed with the Blakes. The cost for new culverts was discussed for replacement work. The Blakes indicated that there are a few culverts that will also need to be repaired on Wild Hill.

*Wild Hill Road Slide:* The road crew is working on obtaining more information from the State on the project. Cray and the Blakes discussed the potential for obtaining a grant for the work. Additional road work and grants were discussed. Jonathan Blake discussed the timeline for applying for grants in anticipation of road work. Cray mentioned that the Town roads for repavement will need to be entirely reclaimed based on feedback obtained by the board from the State instead of just paved over due to the condition of the roads.

Rebecca Chalmers from the Vermont wetlands bureau met with Cray, Petersen, and Blake and approved the relocation of the slide materials to stabilize road side ditches adjacent to wetland areas. Chalmers indicated to the board where appropriate boundaries were with relationship to the wetlands and the materials. Blake discussed the benefits of road stabilization via the relocation of the materials. Pero suggested using any other road materials to stabilize similar locations. Blake suggested that the board obtain permission in writing. Pero suggested writing a letter for the State. The board clerk will draft a letter.

*Beanville:*

Moore asked if the road crew intended performing repair work on Beanville. Blake discussed the necessary shoulder work on the road and suggested waiting to perform all of the work at once.

Blake discussed drainage issues on the roads with driveway access and questioned who was responsible for the cost of installing necessary culverts where driveways have already been approved. Petersen discussed a similar situation on Mill Street where the State provided a culvert during road work. The board will revisit the issue.

**Old Business:** None.

**New Business:**

*Police Coverage From Thetford:*

Pero spoke with Jim Lanctot, the Thetford police chief, regarding the potential for West Fairlee to obtain police services from the Thetford police department. Ordinances for stop signs and speeding were discussed as a potential revenue source. The Orange County contract is up in June. Pero will meet with the Town Clerk to obtain documentation regarding the ordinances and Orange County contract and will revisit the issue. Pero has heard several complaints for speeding. Pero suggested that the board set an example with setting a safe driving example. Cray suggested that the speed limit signs be revisited to ensure that adequate signage is provided. Road signage was discussed. Blake discussed the potential for emergency service confusion if road signs are on either end of a road without access through the central portion of the road. Phoenix asked if the selectboard would authorize pedestrian signs on either side of West Fairlee Center. Phoenix discussed the risk with recreation and speeding in the area. Phoenix offered to purchase the signs. The potential sign locations were discussed. Phoenix requested a quote for the signs. Cray indicated that the Town Clerk could price out the sign. Moore moved to approve the placement of pedestrian signs at West Fairlee Center if purchased by Phoenix. The motion was seconded and the vote passed unanimously. Pero indicated that the Orange County bill has been received at the Town offices for their most recent services (billed hourly). Cray discussed the request by the board to Orange County to focus on Town roads when patrolling West Fairlee. Pero will ask the Thetford police chief to attend the next board meeting.

*Recycling and Scrap Metal Collection:*

Cray discussed issues with unlocking the collection dumpsters at 8:00 am on collection days. Cray also discussed issues with unauthorized access to the dumpster servicing the community building. Cray suggested relocating the containers to prevent access to the dumpsters. Petersen discussed issues with persistent unauthorized dumping. The benefit of moving the dumpsters to land owned by West Fairlee in Thetford was discussed. Cray also discussed the benefit of relocating the dumpsters prior to the temporary relocation of the Town offices. The use of the property located in Thetford will be discussed with the Fire Department who also uses the property for training. Pero indicated that the dumpsters would still need to be opened and closed by the Town. Cray suggested looking into the issues and offering once a month scrap metal collections following an offer for pick up services at no cost to the Town. Moore moved to accept scrap metal the first Saturday of every month during solid waste collection beginning in June. The motion was seconded and the vote passed unanimously. Bailey will include the information in the West Fairlee Newsletter.

*Foodshelf Relocation:*

Moore asked Phoenix if he would continue to operate the food shelf if the space is relocated to accommodate the Town offices. Phoenix indicated that it was his intention to continue to run the food shelf. The board addressed a Valley News newspaper article discussing the Community Food shelf and addressing the food shelf relocation. Cray indicated that the article was offensive due to the implication that the Town officials do not hold the food shelf as a high priority. Cray explained the importance that the food shelf holds in the Town and discussed her continued support of the food shelf. Cray contacted Phoenix regarding the article in an attempt to ensure that the article was not misleading. Pero discussed the process of the office relocations including the food shelf relocation and indicated that the food shelf was never given a lower priority. Moore suggested contacting the author of the article, Jim Kenyon. Phoenix indicated that reporters seek out an angle to build the story around and indicated that Kenyon found that angle in the discussion with Petersen. Phoenix indicated that the article sends a positive message and suggested that the Town focus on the community effort. Phoenix frowned on the negativity in the community. Moore indicated that the efforts of volunteers should not be subject to criticism. Bailey indicated that the story was written in a negative light and indicated that the article should have highlighted the community and board's efforts. Phoenix disagreed. Moore suggested ending the issue and expressed dismay at the resulting community distress. Brigham suggested avoiding pointing fingers and bring the community together. Brigham also clarified that Petersen's quote was not representative of the conversation that Petersen had with the reporter. Brigham indicated that Petersen intended to convey that the food shelf relocation had temporarily been overshadowed by discussions regarding the relocation of the Town offices and had not been indicative of the devaluing of the food shelf. Isaak discussed the context of Petersen's comment and indicated that the food shelf has always been a community effort. The board expressed their support for Phoenix and the community volunteers.

**Sign Orders:** Cray moved to sign orders. The motion was seconded and the vote was unanimous in favor.

**Correspondence:** Correspondence was reviewed by the board. The board reviewed the bill from the Orange County Sheriff's department. Petersen noted that the cost of electricity for the mobile unit was almost half of the entire electric bill for the community building. It was noted that the extra cost for the mobile unit was due to the electric heat used in that unit.

Pero obtained an estimate for the replacement of a hot water heater in the community building for \$1,012. Pero noted that the estimate was much higher than anticipated. Cray explained that there are two hot water heaters in the building with one servicing the majority of the building with the second servicing a bathroom and kitchen. The board will continue obtaining estimates. A tankless water heater was discussed by the board and Andy Petersen and deemed ineffective due to the water quality.

Moore moved to barter for electrical work in exchange for a grill in the community building. Brigham seconded the motion and the vote passed unanimously.

Cray moved to sign the Cartiographic contract after it has been reviewed by the Listers. Moore seconded the motion and the vote passed unanimously.

Moore moved to request that the board clerk notify three residents with expired animal licenses requesting immediate registration, and to have the town constable address the issue if necessary. The motion was seconded and the vote passed unanimously.

Pike provided a new estimate for reclaiming the roads for \$88,500. A letter of interest for road side mowing was also reviewed. The Blakes performed a site visit to view the Graham driveway for the final approval for the work.

The April 30, 2010 Town financial statements will be reviewed at the next board meeting.

**Agenda Items for Next Meeting:** Town Employee Contracts, Thetford Police Coverage, Katherine Cooper from VTPL regarding the Brushwood Forest, Road Signs, Executive Session for Community Building Rent Increases and Lease Renewals Discussions

**Community Building Leases:** Sharon Petersen recused herself from the discussion as a tenant of the Community Building. Cray asked the public if there were any suggestions. Andy Petersen provided the board with documentation outlining proposed changes he would like to see in the leases. Cray asked for clarification on proposed language regarding the disposal of solid waste in the dumpster. Petersen clarified that the trash disposal costs have been included in the rent and the language clarified that agreement. Cray suggested that the board review the proposed changes. The leases are due June 30, 2010. Moore suggested decreasing the lease period to 6 months due to the unknown building situation. Cray suggested continuing with the annual lease with a clause that construction may require use of the space for short periods of time with advanced notice. Cray also clarified that the Town would not be responsible for loss revenues or time in

the proposed annual agreement under discussion. Petersen agreed that an annual lease with a clause would be preferable. Cray indicated that the tenants were important to accommodate due to the necessity of the rental income for the Town. Pero expressed concern that the year contract could prevent the Town from moving forward with Town Office relocation work once a final decision has been made on the Town office location. Cray indicated that the timeline for building work would allow plenty of notice for an annual lease. Prior to the meeting, Cray discussed the potential building work with the Town Clerk who preferred the use of the Community Building space to the mobile unit. Petersen indicated that the uncertainty presented by a shorter contract could cause tenants to relocate. Pero discussed the necessity of notifying the tenants far in advance of any changes. Jonathan Blake suggested that the notice not be extended as an additional timeline extension if work is planned towards the end of the contracts. Cray discussed the necessity of the annual lease for grant opportunities for Creative Spirit. Bailey indicated that parents need to rely on the long-term security of the availability of child care services with regards to Creative Spirit. Pero suggested that the board meet with the CDC for an update on the Town office relocation discussions. Bailey agreed and indicated that the Committee has been working through four options:

1. Rehab the Community Building for Town Offices
2. Install a modular unit, keep the Community Building, and tear down Bean Hall
3. Construct a new building and tear down Bean Hall and/or the Community Building
4. Keep both buildings and renovate Bean Hall

The four options will be presented to the Town for input on the selection. Bailey encouraged board members to attend meetings or discuss the process.

Petersen reviewed the proposed changes:

- Identify specific bathrooms for use by tenant
- Rent payment by the first of the month in the hands of Rhonda Cook, the Town Clerk, should be expanded to include the Town Clerk or anyone standing in her place should she be unavailable. Petersen discussed the complication with rent payment with the Town Clerk office hours. Petersen expressed a preference for a post mark or hand delivery on or before the first day of the month. Bailey suggested clarifying it to the first working day of the month to accommodate the office hours.
- Assignment of the Building Maintenance Manager. Cray indicated that she has been serving as the contact.

The building maintenance and necessity for assignment of tasks was discussed. Pero suggested also clarifying the supply responsibilities. Cray indicated that the board would have to discuss the percentage of rent increase. Moore clarified that discussions on rent increases were not personal to tenants. Petersen provided figures addressing rent increases. The board discussed the utilization of storage space in the Community Building and applicable rent for the spaces. Petersen indicated that storage was included in the lease at one point in time although there is evidence of that in the existing lease language. Petersen expressed an interest in keeping the space even if additional costs are necessary.

**Upcoming Events:**

A second West Fairlee Clean Up Day has been scheduled for Saturday, June 5, 2010

**Motion by Pero, at 8:00 pm, to adjourn the meeting. Moore seconded the motion.  
The vote was unanimous in favor.**

Respectfully submitted,

Holly Lewis-Poulin  
Selectboard Clerk