

Select Board  
Martin Memorial Hall  
5259 Route 5, Ascutney VT  
Monday, April 22, 2024  
6:30 PM  
REGULAR MEETING  
Draft Minutes

**Select Board Members Present:** Kelly O'Brien, David Fuller, Michael Todd, Rika Henderson, Nathan McNaughton

**Select Board Members Absent:**

**Brandon Gulnick, Town Manager**

Others Present:

Olivia Savage	Wendy Smith (remote)	Ronald Snide
Ray Stapleton	Joseph Bublat (remote)	Martha Harrison
Ryan Gumbart (remote)	Christopher Rivet- DuBois & King	
John Arrison	Malia Conrdero- MARC	
Mailia Condro (remote)	Christopher Charest	

**1 Call to Order**

Mr. Todd called the meeting to order at 6:30pm.

**2 Pledge of Allegiance**

Ms. Henderson led the pledge of allegiance.

The Select Board had a moment silence for Ascutney Fire Chief, Darrin Spaulding, who had passed away a few days after the last Select Board meeting.

**3 Agenda Review**

No changes.

**4 Comments from Selectboard members, Town Manager, and Citizens on Topics Not on the Agenda.**

Representative Arrison gave a legislative update. He spoke on a [Transportation Bill](#), [Capital Bill](#), [H. 629](#), which relates to tax abatement, and a bill regarding [ghost guns](#).

=

**5 Review Minutes of Previous Meeting: 4/8/24 & 4/12/24**

**Motion:** To approve the 4/8/24 minutes.

**Made by:** Ms. Henderson      **Second:** Mr. McNaughton

**Vote:** All in Favor

**Motion:** To approve the 4/12/24 minutes.

**Made by:** Ms. Henderson      **Second:** Ms. O'Brien

**Vote:** All in Favor

**6 Public Hearing: Article 2 Zoning Districts and District Standards, & Article 7 Definitions**

The Land Use Administrator took a moment to reiterate the purpose and the proposed changes to Article 2 Zoning Districts and District Standards, & Article 7 Definitions.

At the last Select Board meeting, it was concluded that an amendment may needed in section 7 in regards to the use of hot air balloons, hang-gliders, ultralights, drones, and other small crafts. It was sent back to the Planning Commission, where it was revised to require an [FAA number](#) designation in the language.

The Select Board discussed the changes, expressing concern about unanticipated future technologies and the inclusion of language to address it. It was concluded that the bylaw could be amended in the future need be.

Mr. Todd closed the hearing at 7:01pm

**Motion:** To adopt the Zoning Bylaws for private airstrips and helipads:  
Article 2 Zoning Districts and District Standards, & Article 7 Definitions.

**Made by:** Mr. Fuller      **Second:** Ms. Henderson

**Vote:** All in Favor

**7 Draft Local Hazard Mitigation Plan**

Malia Cordero from Mount Ascutney Regional Commission (MARC) presented the Town of Weathersfield 2023-2028 [Local Hazard Mitigation Plan](#) (pgs. 31-118). This plan plays a crucial role in safeguarding the community against potential hazards such as floods, severe storms, wildfires, infrastructure vulnerabilities, and public health emergencies.

The Select Board discussed areas in Town that seem to be a priority, particularly the Amsden Schoolhouse area and concluded that they would take some time look over the materials in depth and that they would also document the amount of time it took them to look over the materials.

## 8 Salt Shed Alternatives

Weathersfield is exploring options to construct a new salt shed facility at the Town Highway Garage, due to inadequate size and condition of the existing structure and concerns about water quality.

Thus, a presentation was given to the Select Board on the [Weathersfield Salt Shed Scoping Study](#) (pgs. 119-124) by Christopher Rivet from DuBois & King, Inc. He went over several different options (below), the different features, their pros and cons, and their costs.

The Select Board discussed grants for the project, how there would be a 20% match to \$500,000.00, and how the Town may be able to save money by doing some of the prep work for the project, which may count as in-kind if the grant allows it. The Select Board discussed the how much salt it would need to hold and inquired about the frame and how it would hold up during storms overall and it was pointed out how Springfield has a similar shed and how it can last up to 40-50 years.

Full capacity shed with loading area





Half capacity shed with loading area.



Full capacity shed with no loading area.



**9 Wheeled Excavator Bid Award**

On March 19, 2024, the Town advertised an Invitation for Bids to purchase a Wheeled Excavator for use on Town Highways. The IFB was advertised in the Valley News, Town Website, and the Vermont Business Registry and Bid System.

The Question period ended on April 12, 2024, and bids were due on April 17, 2024, at 11am. The Town held a public bid opening on April 17, 2024, at 1pm and received 2 bids. The first bid was from Quality Fleet Services Incorporated, and the second was from Wood's CRW Corporation. The two (2) bids received include the following:

Company Name	Excavator Bid	Trade in Offer	5-Year Warranty	6-Year Warranty	7-Year Warranty	5-Year Service	Est. Delivery	Service Address
Quality Fleet Services	\$326,125	\$28,000	Included	-	-	-	4-6 Months	South Hadley, MA
Wood CRW Corp	\$225,900	\$27,000	Included	+ \$850	+\$1,635	+\$12,537	5/20/24	Williston, VT

The total cost after trading in the 2009 Cat Backhoe and including the warranty and service agreement is \$213,072.35. Up to \$150,000 of which will be financed, and the net difference from the Highway Equipment Acquisition reserve account, which currently has a balance \$223,432.60.

**Motion:** To accept the bid for Wood CRW Corp, with the 7-year warranty option and 5 year service agreement.

**Made by:** Mr. McNaughton      **Second:** Ms. Henderson

**Vote:** 3 yay, 1 nay (Mr. Fuller), 1 abstention (Ms. O'Brien)

The Select Board discussed the details of the service plan. Mr. Fuller stated that he was against these bids because he was concerned about the fairness of the bids, and he spoke about the specs, particularly with minimum and maximum weights being too specific.

## 10 Town Manager Update

### a. Upcoming Meetings

The Town Manager shared a list of [updates and upcoming meetings](#) in town (pg. 155).

### b. Upcoming Events, Meetings, and Notable Information

The Town Manager shared a list of [events, meetings, and information](#) deemed notable (pg. 156).

### c. Ascutney Basin Bridge Project RFB

Bids are due on 4/30 at 11am, and the bid review will take place at the 5/13 Select Board meeting.

### d. Shared Services Assessment

The Town continues to work on the assessment to share services with neighboring towns.

### e. Town Audit

The Town received the draft audit and anticipates an audit presentation to the Select Board in May.

**f. Year-End Projections**

During the first meeting in May, we will be presenting our year-end projections for all funds.

**g. Bike & Pedestrian Grant**

The Town did receive notification that it has been awarded the grant and will advertise an Invitation for Bids, and once bids come back, the grant and bids will be presented to the Select Board to determine whether to move forward with the grant or not.

**h. Year-End Projections**

During the first meeting in May, the year-end projections will be presented.

**i. Water District Updates:**

**a. Asset Management Plan:** The Town has been awarded \$49,925 to develop an Asset Management Plan for the Water District. The plan will include asset inventory and condition assessment, mapping assets, analyzing life cycle costs, risk assessment/prioritization, and funding strategies.

Generally, this is a comprehensive capital plan for the Water District, which also increases our scoring on future funding applications.

**b. Review & Assessment of PFAS contamination impacts:**

The Town applied for funding to develop an Alternative Analysis Report for PFAS in the Water District. The purpose of the report is to review operational changes, potential source replacement, potential water system consolidation, potential treatment systems. Each alternative will assess overall protection of human health, compliance with legal requirements and the water supply rule, long term effectiveness, ability to reduce toxicity, short term effectiveness, implementation, cost/schedule, environmental impacts, community acceptance, and available funding options. The total funding requested to do this is \$16,075.

**c. Water Line Replacement & Stabilization Project:**

The Town received notification that the application for the Water District Stabilization project made it on the funding list. This is a 1.7M project that requires a bond vote. The way the bond works is that the Town takes out a bond for the project, and then a subsidy is granted to offset up to 50% of the project cost. There are various other grant opportunities to potentially cover the remaining 50%. The first effort failed with the Healthy Homes Initiative due to the number of applications received and the limited funding availability. However, the Town has been working closely with Otter Creek and new funding options are becoming available for which to pursue.

**j. Grant System**

The Town is working on a Grant System in Town. Over the years, the Town has significantly increased the receipt of grant funding and have decided to

create a proactive grant system. Creating a system like this will further increase the odds of receiving funding and enable the Town to build off the grants we received in the past and are currently managing. There will be updates when the system is developed and goes into effect.

**k. Vermont Town & City Managers Conference**

The Town Manager will be at the Town & City Managers Association Spring Conference on May 16th & 17th. Topics include River Corridor Management – State and Local Partnerships, Helping Municipalities Recruit, ICMA Update, VLCT Legislative Update, Housing Discussion, and Addiction Recovery Advocates.

**l. Website Migration**

Drupal 7, the core software supporting the Town website will reach the end of its useful life in 2025. Civic Plus has developed a migration process to create a transition of the website. Some of the changes include new back-end updates that will make it easier for the Town to make revisions to the website, and the ability to further modify the website to present information more clearly and organized. The Emergency Alerts mechanism the Town currently has, has been upgraded. There will now be the ability to manage mega menus on the homepage of the website, there's improved page creation abilities that include more flexibility on designing the layout of pages and the presentation of information. The Town will also now have a tab for email notifications, to grant the ability to send out "email & text blasts" as needed. Although the Town currently has this feature, it has a lot of kinks that makes it difficult to use.

**m. ARPA**

During the Selectboard meeting on April 8th, the Select Board decided to grant \$18,000 for the Hoisington Field, \$15,000 for Trail Improvements, \$2,500 for the Gardening Club, and \$15,000 for Tree Maintenance for a total of \$50,500, with the associated monies be allocated according to a plan pending approval. Each of these parties has been notified, and are in the process of developing a plan to present to the board.

The Select Board discussed paying for part of the excavator with ARPA funds and that this issue should be discussed at the next meeting. The Town Manager will include a finance option with ARPA funding and including a debt schedule.

**11 Future Agenda Items**

- a. Meadow Lane
- b. MMH Rules and Regulations
- c. 1879 Schoolhouse Rules and Regulations
- d. Policy for Conduct of Meetings and Hearings

- e. Local Emergency Management Plan
- f. ARPA

**12 Appointments**

Mr. Todd read the list of vacancies out loud to the public.

- a. Board of Listers (2 Vacancies)
- b. Budget Committee (4 Vacancies)
- c. Conservation Commission (1 Vacancy)
- d. Energy Coordinator (1 Vacancy)
- e. Health Officer (1 Vacancy)
- f. Parks and Recreation (2 Vacancies)
- g. Veterans Memorial Committee (2 Vacancies)
- h. Zoning Board of Adjustment (1 Vacancy)

The Town Manager is going to advertise these vacancies more intensely on social media.

**13 Approve Warrant**

**Motion:** To approve the warrants for 4/22/2024 as followed:

General Funds	Library
Payroll: \$17,050.51	Payroll: \$2,366.29
Operating Expenses: \$34,038.25	Operating Expenses: \$0
Highway Fund	Grants: \$305.93
Payroll: \$9,560.98	Fundraising: \$157.05
Operating Expenses: \$23,581.11	Temp Bridge: \$1,500.00
Solid Waste Management Fund	Reserves: \$23,103.41
Payroll: 1,907.33	Total: \$25,066.39
Operating Expenses: 13,739.24	Grand Totals
	Payroll: \$30,885.11
	Operating Expenses: \$96,424.99

**Made by:** Ms. O'Brien  
**Vote:** All in Favor

**Second:** Mr. Fuller

**14 Any other business**

None.

**15 Adjourn**



**Motion:** To adjourn.

**Made by:** Ms. O'Brien

**Second:** Mr. Fuller

**Vote:** All in Favor

The meeting adjourned at 9:05pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Nichole Gagnon

## WEATHERSFIELD SELECT BOARD

---

Michael Todd, Chairperson

---

Rika Henderson, Clerk

---

Nathan McNaughton, Vice-Chairperson

---

Dave Fuller, Selector

---

Kelly O'Brien, Selector