

**TOWN OF WHEELOCK SELECTBOARD MEETING  
MINUTES  
March 18th 2025  
At Wheelock Town Hall upstairs and via Zoom Meeting**

Present: Selectboard members Ann Lawless, Mike Richardson, and Chuck Dill. Russell Ruff and Meaghan Rinehart as recorder. Enis Ellis, Erin Swigart Town Clerk, Theresa Stimpson and Eileen Boland via Zoom.

6:02 pm Call to Order

Any changes to agenda; Adjusters report came in for garage repair and will require executive session. Eileen Boland is here on Zoom to ask Selectboard to write a letter of support for a federal broadband grant (BEAD). Enid has turned in her resignation from the Wheelock Planning Commission.

**ADOPT MINUTES OF PRIOR MEETING**

Adopt Selectboard minutes of 3/11/2025: Chuck motions, seconded by Mike, to adopt minutes of 3/11/25. All in favor, so voted.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**MERP Implementation Grant – approve bid specifications**

Ann, Russell Russ and Erin are on the sub-committee for the MERP Implementation Project. They met on 3/18 and decided to ask the Selectboard to approve draft specifications on window project, however it was found that the additional attic insulation would not be worth it. At this time the Town missed the window of opportunity on getting St. J Academy to update electrical and complete the upgrades, but will try again. Chuck motions, seconded by Mike to accept the draft Request for Proposal for windows. All in favor, so voted.

Proposal will be going out right away; deadline May 6.

At this time Eileen came onto the Zoom to discuss the support letter for the NEK Broadband BEAD grant. It is for funding for up to \$127 million first given to the State then distributed to areas of need. Due to changes at the federal level, the draft proposal is being rewritten to better comply with the new grant guidelines. Eileen is asking the board to sign a letter of support she drafted for this endeavor. There is no financial commitment required from the town. Mike motions, seconded by Chuck, to sign the draft letter of support for BEAD grant. All in favor, so voted.

**Plowing Policy draft**

Tabled at this time.

Chuck motions, seconded by Mike, to go into Executive Session to discuss the adjuster's report following the damage to the garage. All in favor, so voted at 6:27pm.

6:41pm the board came out of Executive Session, indicating no action will be taken at this time.

### **LEMP (Local Emergency Mgmt Plan) update**

Tabled for now.

## **TREASURER'S REPORT**

### **2023 Audit management letter response**

Members reviewed treasurer Erin's response to the 2023 auditors' management letter, and that of the town's volunteer auditors, and all their suggestions were discussed. Some are being implemented but others may not be a good fit for a town of our size, create more work and come with a cost. The Selectboard agrees but is glad this discussion was had. At this time the treasurer's recommendations will stay as is.

### **Set pay rates**

The 2025 pay rates were put in the budget but the budget was not adopted until Town Meeting. Employees will be paid retroactively to Jan 1, the beginning of our fiscal year. Chuck motions, seconded by Mike, to set pay rates as posted in the budget. All in favor, so voted.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Animal Control Ordinance drafts**

Dog ordinance drafts from the VLCT template and one drafted by Meaghan were discussed. and what needs to be included for our town. The difference between policy and ordinance was clarified (SB can adopt policy; ordinance requires adoption, then a waiting period, followed by SB adoption). Meaghan's offer to work up a second draft based on the VLCT template was much appreciated.

### **Discussion – Disaster planning & mitigation**

Towns are doing what they can to manage disasters. Ann brought up the town's option to enroll in NFIP, the national flood insurance program. There are two paths to adoption. One is by voters, one is by selectboard. This was turned down before by the voters prior to the recent flooding events. The flood maps have not been updated. Enid pointed out that enrolling in this program comes with additional administration work for the town. Others in town not living in designated flood areas will also be eligible to purchase this insurance. Ann believes it's at least worth exploring all options, in case flooding happens again.

## **ROADS**

### **Truck update**

Mike reports that the 6 wheeler sales agreement was cancelled with no penalty. Funding is ready to go for the new truck and arrangements just need to be made to pick it up.

### **Road Report**

As of this time Stannard Mountain road is closed to through traffic. The road is still settling from recent flood repairs and is going to take some time to harden up. Crews are doing their best to maintain roads.

### **Damage to garage**

The Selectboard viewed the scope of work draft to be included in bid proposal, Erin will be putting this together. It will include a viewing day and bids will need to be received by 4/15/25.

### **Driveway permits**

Permits were discussed and policy reviewed. The list of pending permits and at what stage of the project the applicant is in will be given to Mike.

### **FEMA 2024 update**

Meetings have been held weekly and a new rep was introduced. Paperwork is close to being ready to submit, except site inspections. Requests for all work completed have been submitted. There is still more work to do for the applications for projects that were not completed in 2024.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE**

### **Review and sign warrants**

Mike motions, seconded by Ann to sign warrants. All in favor, so voted.

## **CORRESPONDENCE**

The Selectboard received a cc of a letter from Carol Rossi to the Attorney General regarding violations of the open meeting law and regarding workplace harassment. A copy of the letter was also sent to the Sheffield Selectboard.

## **VISITOR COMMENTS**

Russell Ruff made the Selectboard aware that silt from a truck has clogged a culvert at his home on Peak Road and the road is beginning to widen and encroach beyond the right of way. He also shared a photo taken under one of the twin bridges, the bridge closest to Rte 122, East side. It shows erosion at the embankment.

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

At 8:42pm Mike motions seconded by Chuck to enter Executive Session to discuss road crew applications. All in favor, so voted. At 9:05 The Selectboard meeting came out of executive session, and shared plans to interview a road candidate in Executive Session April 1st.

Meeting adjourned 9:05pm

Submitted by Meaghan Rinehart

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Ann Lawless, chair

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Mike Richardson

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Chuck Dill