

**TOWN OF WINCHENDON
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MINUTES
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 4TH, 2019
Town Hall, 2nd Floor Auditorium
109 Front Street, Winchendon, Mass.**

Present:

Audrey LaBrie, Chairwoman	Keith R. Hickey, Town Manager
Barbara Anderson, Vice-Chairman	Linda Daigle, Executive Assistant
Amy Salter	Lindsay Kuchta, Recording Secretary
Rick Ward	

Absent:

Mike Barbaro

List of Documents Presented at Meeting:

- Legal Notice of Public Hearing Town of Winchendon Tax Classification (filed)
- Winchendon Assessor's Tax Classification Hearing Report (filed)
- Garret Davieau Letter of Resignation from Conservation Commission, Dated 10/28/19 (filed)
- Board of Selectmen November Notice of Vacancies (filed)
- William Lafrennie Christmas Tree Sales Permit Application (filed)
- Proposed Marijuana Facilities Local Licensing & Fee Schedule (attached)
- Massachusetts Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Grant Program Draft Support Letter (filed)
- Town Manager Memo Re: Proposed Modifications to Nonunion Personnel Rules and Regulations (attached)
- Report of the Town Manager (attached)
- Minutes approved:
 - Monday, October 7, 2019 Regular Meeting

LaBrie called the meeting to order at 6:30 P.M. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

No one announced they were audio recording the meeting this evening.

- 1. SELECTMEN'S COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Ward wanted to make everyone aware that the Beals Memorial Library is hosting their first annual tree festival from November 30th to December 14th. So far they have 15 trees; each tree is donated to help raise money for the library. If you want to get a tree into the festival, you must get an application by November 15th. There will be voting for the best tree, and some trees will be silently auctioned off for individuals to take home. Additionally, Ward wanted to remind the public that a week from today is Veteran's Day, and if you would like to participate in the ceremony at the Legion, to please arrive by 10:45 a.m.

Anderson reminded all that go to the Transfer Station to please take the time to wash their recyclables out; there is still a problem. It will start costing the Town more money, which will cause the rates to go up again because someone is too lazy to separate their recyclables.

LaBrie noted she would like to follow up on Ward's comments and make everyone aware there will be a Veteran's Day ceremony held at 9:00 a.m. at the Massachusetts Veteran's Cemetery on Monday.

Kuchta noted for those who are interested in attending any of the events to be held on Veteran's Day, information of the scheduled events is posted on the Town's Facebook page as well as on Channel 8.

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS: There were no public comments this evening.

3. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

3.1. Fiscal Year 2020 Tax Classification Hearing- LaBrie read the public hearing notice for the Fiscal Year 2020 Tax Classification Hearing.

Anderson moved to open the public hearing, seconded by Ward with a vote of all aye.

Associate Regional Assessor George Bourgault came forward. Mr. Bourgault noted he was present this evening to propose the historically common single tax rate in Winchendon as there are not a lot of commercial and industrial properties to allow for a second rate. He asked if there were any questions.

LaBrie asked what the proposed tax rate is to which Mr. Bourgault replied \$16.28, but it still has to be approved by the State. The current tax rate is \$16.71.

Anderson then asked Hickey if he could explain the difference between the proposed rate and the current rate. Hickey noted that primarily property tax values increased across town. A certain amount of taxes needs to be collected, so if the value increases of a home, the tax rate decreases.

Salter asked if all properties are reassessed to which Mr. Bourgault replied yes. The average value of a single family home for FY 2020 is \$205,866; in FY2019, the average value of a single family home was \$193,076.

Hickey noted Mr. Bourgault was kind enough to download all values into an Excel spreadsheet for the Board; he will ensure it is formatted properly and get it on the website tomorrow so people can see what their old and new assessments are.

LaBrie asked if the recent properties sold at the auction in October will have an effect on the tax rate to which Hickey replied not at this time.

After further discussion LaBrie asked if there were any comments from the public, to which none were heard.

Anderson moved to close the public hearing, seconded by Ward with a vote of all aye.

Anderson moved the Board of Selectmen vote in accordance with M.G.L., Chapter 40, Section 56, as amended, the percentage of local tax levy which will be borne by each class of real and personal property, relative to setting the Fiscal Year 2020 tax rate and set the Residential Factor at 1.0 with a corresponding CIP shift of 1.0, pending approval of the Town's annual tax recap by the Massachusetts Department of Revenue, seconded by Ward.

LaBrie asked if there was any further discussion, to which none was heard.

With a vote of all aye, the motion carried.

Mr. Bourgault thanked the Board.

4. APPOINTMENTS/RESIGNATIONS:

4.1. Conservation Commission Resignation of Garrett Davieau- LaBrie noted that Mr. Davieau had to regretfully resign from the Conservation commission due to family reasons.

Anderson stated that Mr. Davieau did a great job at Chairing the Conservation Commission, as well as explaining topics being discussed. Mr. Davieau has been outstanding, his resignation is a huge loss. She thanked him for his years of service. LaBrie, so noted.

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Anderson moved the Board of Selectmen regretfully accept the resignation of Garrett Davieau from the Conservation Commission, and thank him for his numerous years on the Commission, seconded by Ward. With a vote of all aye, the motion carried.

4.2. Board of Selectmen Notice of Vacancies- LaBrie read the Notice of Vacancies.

Anderson noted that with the resignation of Mr. Davieau, the Conservation is now down two members and is barely keeping a quorum.

LaBrie noted that anyone interested in filling one of the vacancies can check out the Town website or call the Town Manager's office. On that note, LaBrie added a big thank you to all of those who do volunteer their time, small towns run on volunteers, we really appreciate all you do.

5. PERMIT/LICENSE APPLICATIONS:

5.1. Christmas Tree Sale Permit – William Lafrennie- William Lafrennie came forward on behalf of his application to sell Christmas trees.

LaBrie noted he is looking to sell trees November 29th through December 25th from 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Sunday through Saturday. It was also noted that Mr. Lafrennie will be located at the Lickity Splitz parking lot at 231 Main Street.

LaBrie asked that Mr. Lafrennie provide the office with a copy of his signed agreement with the owner of Lickity Splitz to which Mr. Lafrennie replied he would have it in tomorrow.

Anderson moved the Board of Selectmen approve the permit for Christmas tree sales for William Lafrennie, seconded by Salter. With a vote of all aye the motion carried.

6. BOARDS/COMMISSIONS/COMMITTEES/DEPARTMENT: There were no Boards, Commissions, Committees or Department matters this evening.

7. NEW BUSINESS:

7.1. Marijuana License and Application Fee Schedule- Hickey started off by noting the Town received what he believes to be good news; a letter was received from the Cannabis Control Commission inquiring about Jolly Green Inc., and whether they were in compliance or not with the Town's needs for the applicant. The Town is required to reply to the letter to help the applicant reach the next step of the process with the State.

Planning and Development Director Tracy Murphy came forward to discuss the licensing fees for marijuana establishments. The only local license that the Board is authorized to police is retail. We have been trying to figure out what the fees should be for this sort of thing; I have reached out to several other municipalities, and not many others have chosen to locally license these establishments. The Town wanted to keep some consistency with the licensing fees, and other permits of that nature, so that is where these numbers came from. The application fee for a retail license was set at \$500 as it covers a lot of the expenses the application incurs; annually the license will cost \$1,000. Initially the applicants will have a site plan review and other general inspections before opening; when an establishment is renewing their license, they will be inspected again. Adult use marijuana facilities are not required to be locally licensed, but will be required to submit a \$300.00 deposit with their Letter of Intent to the Board of Selectmen. The fee is intended to cover all costs associated with advertising the Community Outreach Meeting and sending abutter notifications. The fee may be modified in the event that the costs exceed \$300.00. The Town currently does not have any applications for established Medical Marijuana Facilities, but in the case that we did, there would be no fees associated with the letter of non-opposition process as there is no local licensing. Murphy then asked if there were any questions.

Anderson asked if the fees fall within legal limits, to which Murphy replied there are no limits.

Anderson then noted that some people may have concerns they would like to voice and it could be an issue if a community outreach meeting doesn't take place, to which Murphy replied applicants are required to attest to having a community outreach meeting and are required to sign something stating they followed the steps.

Ward stated that he had done some research on rates that other communities were charging, and the rates being proposed this evening are quite equitable. The State's main concern with fees is that they are not punitive to the business.

Salter asked as far as once the businesses are up and running, does the Town have to monitor them or is it up to the State to which Murphy replied the State will monitor them.

Hickey noted that any complaints or concerns would be reported to the Cannabis Control Commission rather than the Police.

Ward moved the Board of Selectmen approve the Marijuana Fee Schedule presented this evening, seconded by Anderson.

LaBrie asked if there was any further discussion to which none was heard.

With a vote of all aye the motion carried.

- 7.2. Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Planning Grant- Murphy remained in front of the Board to explain the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Planning Grant. She noted she is here to seek support for the MVP Planning Grant as it assesses infrastructure for climate change resiliency, and will update hazard mitigation. The town is part of a regional mitigation plan, and though we don't have the specifics, once we apply for this, if we are successful and get a plan together, we will become eligible for funds for the action plan. Hickey added this will identify shortcomings in infrastructure. Developing an action plan will allow us to apply for grant funds to take care of the shortcomings and deficiencies.

Murphy then informed the Board that we will have the ability to add some MS4 requirements and drainage that the DPW is currently working on with this MVP Planning Grant.

Anderson thanked Murphy for looking into this and noted the Town needs this.

Anderson moved the Board of Selectmen authorize the Chair to sign the grant application on behalf of Winchendon, seconded by Ward.

LaBrie asked if there was any further discussion to which none was heard.

With a vote of all aye the motion carried.

Tracy thanked the Board for their time.

- 7.3. Consideration of Amendments to the Nonunion Personnel Rules and Regulations- Hickey noted there are a few inconsistencies with the personnel policy for nonunion employees and a few oversights that he would like to make the Board aware of, and potentially update. The first modification Hickey proposed was adding the language that nonunion personnel should receive a small bonus for longevity annually as follows:

5-9 years of services- \$250.00
10-14 years of service- \$500.00
15-19 years of service- \$750.00
20-24 years of service- \$1,000.00
25 or more years of services \$1,200.00

Anderson asked if the stipend would be annual, to which Hickey replied it is a once a year stipend for the employee who was worked for the town for at least 5 years.

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Ward asked which positions were nonunion, to which Hickey replied department heads as well as some other department employees who shouldn't be in a bargaining agreement as they have access to sensitive information. Ward then asked based on current staff, what this would cost for the first year if everyone got their bonuses. Hickey said it would be less than \$10,000.

Anderson asked if most people get contracts to which Hickey replied the Fire and Police Chief's both have contracts as well as himself. Anderson then asked if employees get cost of living increases in their pay to which Hickey replied yes.

Hickey then noted the language regarding vacation needed adjustment. Upon discussion of this topic, the Board decided it would be best if the adjustments to the Nonunion Personnel Rules and Regulations be tabled until the next meeting.

Anderson moved the Board table this agenda item until the November 25th meeting, seconded by Ward.

LaBrie asked if there was any further discussion to which none was heard.

By a vote of all aye the motion carried.

- 7.4. Determine Board of Selectmen's December Meeting Dates- Hickey noted that this year there is one date that may be conflictive for the Board, December 23rd and he wanted to ask the Board how they felt about meeting that night.

LaBrie asked if the Board had any thoughts, to which all replied there were no conflicts for that evening.

8. **OLD BUSINESS:** There was no Old Business discussed this evening.

9. **TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT:**

1. Financial Updates-

- a. The Tax Collector held an auction on October 23rd on the following properties. The total amount realized from the property auction was \$198,000. Past due taxes totaled \$89,866.94

PROPERTY ADDRESS	MAP/LOT	LOT SIZE - ACRE	SELLING PRICE	ASSESSED VALUE	TAX POSSESSION AMOUNT	TAX POSSESSION DATE
33 Morse Avenue	5B2-51	0.25	\$33,000	\$114,000	31,699.43	5/21/2018
Morse Avenue	5B2-50	0.11		\$4,500	625.20	5/21/2018
25 Nash Road	4-48	0.87	\$26,000	\$95,000	11,762.72	8/7/2019
122 Hale St	8A1-24	.79	\$57,000	\$127,800	14,186.50	9/27/2018
20 Mechanic St	5B2-77	0.21	\$82,000	\$172,600	31,593.09	4/2/2019
TOTAL			\$198,000		89,866.94	

- b. If the Board approves the property values at this evening's Tax Classification Hearing the tax rate should be certified by the middle of November.

2. Personnel Updates-

- a. Matt Bardsley has resigned as the Senior Water Operator. An internal ad has been published.
b. Interviews have been held for the Assistant Tax Collector/Treasurer position.

Hickey added that two people will be brought back for second interviews this week, and we will hopefully know by the end of this week or early next week who we would like to hire.

3. Project Updates-

- a. Demolition of the Diehl property has been temporarily slowed by the discovery of two, 250 gallon oil tanks on the property. The EPA is working with MASSDEP to properly dispose of the contents of the tanks.

Hickey then noted they are doing a great job; a company was hired to take down the large chimneys and the project is moving along well. The work will continue for the next 6 weeks until the cold slows the project down, at which point it will continue in the spring.

- b. The Tighe and Bond contract to study the necessary repairs of the Senior Center has been signed. I am awaiting a date for the project to be scheduled.

Hickey added after communications with the repair company, it was noted they would prefer to get a better sense of the scope of work needed to be done from Tighe and Bond, and more permanent repairs were suggested.

Ward stated the area does need to be fenced off as kids have been playing around in that area.

4. Miscellaneous Updates –

- a. An IT grant to through the Community Compact has been applied for. The grant would fund a document archiving system. This system would allow a central digital records system to be established for all departments to save information into allowing one central file for all town documents. The grant requested \$60,000 in funding.

Hickey then noted this grant would allow the Town to have one file for each property or lot number to establish a database in the near future.

Anderson noted we are supposed to get substantial snow Thursday and voiced concerns as the parking ban doesn't begin until after Thursday. Hickey replied that he appreciates her concern; information will be dispersed to ensure people don't park on the street for the snow storm. The parking ban cannot be enforced early as it is not an emergency.

Ward reminded Hickey that the Streeter School still has a window on the lower level that is smashed out and asked that it be taken care of, especially if the building will be put to use in the future for veteran's housing. Hickey thanked Ward for the reminder.

LaBrie informed the Board she has been unable to attend the meetings for the Montachusett Transportation Committee, and after speaking with Hickey, is stepping down. Hickey will ensure the meetings are attended by a representative from the Town.

LaBrie then asked how the notice to quit on Front Street is coming along to which Hickey replied all abutters have been notified; a representative from one of the companies has failed to participate in the meetings and conversations had. After speaking with the individual who has been acting as the spokesperson for the businesses there, it has been made certain each business is moving their belongings out of the building.

LaBrie asked if there was anything further, to which no comments were heard.

10. **MINUTES:**

10.1 Monday, October 7, 2019 Regular Meeting-

Anderson moved to approve the minutes of October 7, 2019, seconded by Salter.

LaBrie asked if there were any further questions to which none were heard.

By a vote of all aye the motion carried.

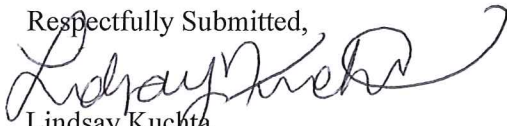
11. **COMMUNICATIONS:** The next Board meeting will be held on November 25th.

12. **AGENDA ITEMS:** There were no Agenda Items discussed this evening.

13. **EXECUTIVE SESSION:** There was no Executive Session held this evening,

14. **ADJOURNMENT:** *Anderson moved to adjourn, seconded by Salter. By a vote of all aye, the meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.*

Respectfully Submitted,



Lindsay Kuchta
Recording Secretary

