

Approved: June 12, 2023

**TOWN OF WINCHENDON
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES**

MONDAY, May 22, 2023

Town Hall, 2nd Floor Auditorium, 109 Front Street, Winchendon, Mass.

Present: Audrey LaBrie, Chair
Rick Ward, Vice-Chair
Danielle LaPointe
Barbara Anderson
Melissa Blanchard

Justin Sultzbach, Town Manager
Mary Calandrella, Executive Assistant
Debra Dennis, Administrative Assistant

List of Documents Presented at Meeting:

- Entertainment Permit Application-Recreation-Winchendon Music Festival August 8, 2023 (filed)
- Entertainment Permit Application-Recreation-Winchendon Wheels Parade September 16, 2023 (filed)
- Entertainment Permit Application-Recreation-Winchendon Family Olympics-September 17, 2023 (filed)
- Entertainment Permit Application-Veterans Office/Legion Memorial Day Parade-May 29, 2023 (filed)
- One Day Liquor License Application-Wachusett Brewery-10 Days-Community Park Event Wine/Malt Truck Vendor (filed)
- Entertainment Permit and One Day Liquor License Application-Immaculate Heart of Mary-Strawberry Festival June 16th-June 18th (filed)
- One Day Liquor License Application-Winchendon Food Truck Festival-Bull Spit June 23, 2023 (filed)
- One Day Liquor License Application-Amphitheater Events Grand Opening June 16th and Winchenstock August 12th-Bull Spit (filed)
- One Day Liquor License Application-Winchendon Fall Festival-Bull Spit October 7, 2023 (filed)
- One Day Liquor License Application-Bull Spit-May 25th-May 28th, June 1st-June 4th, June 8th, June 11th (filed)
- One Day Liquor License Application-Smith's Country Cheese-Say Cheese Food Truck Event-June 11, 2023 (filed)
- Formal Invitation-Amphitheater Grand Opening June 10, 2023 (filed)
- FY2023 Paving Plan (attached)
- Draft Support letter for Federal Broadband and Digital Equity Planning Grant (attached)
- Memo-Town Manager-Whitney Bridge Fund (attached)
- Memo-Town Manager-Water & Sewer Rates (attached)
- Town Manager's Report May 22, 2023 (attached)
- Draft Board of Selectmen Minutes: March 30, 2023 and May 8, 2023

6:30 PM Chair LaBrie called the meeting to order at 6:30P.M. All rose for the Pledge of Allegiance. LaBrie asked if anyone would be audio or video recording this meeting tonight to which there was no response heard.

Chair LaBrie welcomed new member Melissa Blanchard.

REORGANIZATION OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN-Nominations for Chair-LaPointe nominated LaBrie motion seconded by Ward. VOTE: Blanchard aye, Ward aye, Anderson aye, LaPointe aye, and LaBrie aye.

Nominations for Vice Chair-LaBrie nominated Ward seconded by Anderson. VOTE: Blanchard aye, Ward aye, Anderson aye, LaPointe aye, and LaBrie aye.

1. **SELECTMEN'S COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:** LaPointe commented good job by all of the volunteers/workers at Taste of Winchendon. Ward thanked the voters who showed up at the annual town meeting. He said he appreciated all who came out and voted. Blanchard thanked all voters who came out and voted.
2. **PUBLIC COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:** There were no public comments or announcements this evening.
3. **PUBLIC HEARINGS:** There were no public hearings this evening.
4. **APPOINTMENTS/RESIGNATIONS:** There were no appointments/resignations this evening.

5. **PERMIT/LICENSE APPLICATIONS:**

5.1 Entertainment - Recreation- Winchendon Music Festival-Community Park 8/18th @6pm& 8/ 27th @2pm- Tiffany Newton, Recreation Coordinator came forward. These are free musical events at the Amphitheater. **Ward made a motion to approve the Entertainment Permit for Winchendon Music Festival to be held at the Community Park on August 18, 2023 and LaPointe seconded the motion. Vote: Blanchard aye, Ward aye, Anderson aye, LaPointe aye, and LaBrie aye.**

5.2 Entertainment – Parks & Recreation-Winchendon Wheels Parade - Winchendon Community Park 9/16th @10am -Newton said going to have decorating contest, bikes, skateboards etc. **Ward moved to approve the Entertainment Permit submitted by the Recreation Department for Winchendon Wheels Parade to be held on September 16th starting @10am as presented this evening. The motion was seconded by LaPointe. Vote: Blanchard aye, Ward aye, Anderson aye, LaPointe aye, and LaBrie aye.**

5.3 Entertainment – Parks & Recreation-Winchendon Family Olympics - Winchendon Community Park 9/17th @1pm - Ward moved to approve the Entertainment Permit submitted by the Recreation Department for Winchendon Family Olympics to be held on September 17th starting at 1 pm as presented this evening. The motion was seconded by LaPointe. **Vote: Blanchard aye, Ward aye, Anderson aye, LaPointe aye, and LaBrie aye.**

5.4 Entertainment – Veterans Office/Legion Memorial Day Parade- May 29, 2023 –Stephen Bassett, Veteran Agent came forward. He said it will start off around 10am. **Ward moved to approve the entertainment permit for the Memorial Day Parade as presented this evening. LaPointe seconded the motion. Vote: Blanchard aye, Ward aye, Anderson aye, LaPointe aye, and LaBrie aye.**

5.5 One Day Liquor License- Wachusett Brewery – 11 days – Community Park Event Wine/Malt Truck Vendor-Ward moved to approve the eleven One Day Liquor Licenses for Wachusett Brewery for the following dates July 8th, July 16th, July 23rd, July 29th, August 19th, August

25th, August 26th, September 9th, September 15th, September 23rd, and September 30th as presented this evening and LaPointe seconded the motion. Vote: Blanchard aye, Ward aye, Anderson aye, LaPointe aye, and LaBrie aye.

5.6 Entertainment Permit & One Day Liquor License – Immaculate Heart of Mary – Strawberry Festival Event 6/16-18th (Liquor License for 6/17th only) -Sue Pocary from the Parish came forward. Ward moved to approve the Entertainment Permit and One Day Liquor License submitted by Immaculate Heart of Mary for the Strawberry Festival on June 16-18 for entertainment and liquor license for June 17th as presented this evening and LaPointe seconded the motion. Vote: Blanchard aye, Ward aye, Anderson aye, LaPointe aye, and LaBrie aye.

5.7 One Day Liquor License – Winchendon Food Truck Festival – Bull Spit 6/23/23 G.A.R. Park - James Hunt came forward. Ward moved to approve the one-day liquor license request for Bull Spit Brewery for the Winchendon Food Truck Festival on June 23, 2023 to be held at G.A.R. park. LaPointe seconded the motion. Vote: Blanchard aye, Ward aye, Anderson aye, LaPointe aye, and LaBrie aye.

Ward motion to take 5.10 out of order and LaPointe seconded. Vote: Blanchard aye, Ward aye, Anderson aye, LaPointe aye, and LaBrie aye.

5.8 One Day Liquor License - Amphitheater Events Grand Opening 6/10 & Winchenstock – 8/12/23- Bull Spit - Ward moved to approve the one-day liquor licenses for the Grand Opening and Winchenstock and Andersons seconded the motion. Vote: Blanchard aye, Ward aye, Anderson aye, LaPointe abstained, and LaBrie aye.

5.9 One Day Liquor License –Winchendon Fall Festival 10/7/23 - Bull Spit –Ward moved to approve the one-day liquor license for Bull Spit for the Winchendon Fall Festival and Anderson seconded. Vote: Blanchard aye, Ward aye, Anderson aye, LaPointe aye, and LaBrie aye.

5.10 One Day Liquor License- Additional Dates for 3 Summer Drive- Bull Spit 5/25/23 -5/28/23, 6/1/23-6/4/23 & 6/8/23-6/11/23 -James Hunt, Manager of Bull Spit discussed the parking issue. They have parking agreements with the Bowling Alley, Clark and Boivert Insurance which wasn't enough. For big events we have a long range plans. Anderson thought shuttle would help the situation. LaBrie also suggested the municipal parking lot on Pleasant Street. Ward moved to approve the one-day liquor licenses for Bull Spit as presented and LaPointe seconded. Vote: Blanchard aye, Ward aye, Anderson aye, LaPointe aye, and LaBrie aye.

5.11 One Day Liquor License – Smith Country Cheese- 20 Otter River Rd – June 11, 2023- “Say Cheese “Food Truck Event Ward moved to approve the one-day liquor license for Say Cheese” submitted by Smith’s Country Cheese to be held on June 11, 2023 as presented this evening. Anderson seconded the motion. Vote: Blanchard aye, Ward aye, Anderson aye, LaPointe aye, and LaBrie aye.

6. **BOARDS/COMMISSIONS/COMMITTEES/DEPARTMENTS**

6.1 Formal Invitation to the Amphitheater Grand Opening June 10, 2023- Tiffany Newton said on behalf of The Winchendon Parks & Recreation Commission we would like to invite you all to the Grand Opening of the Robinson-Broadhurst Foundation Performing Arts Amphitheater on June 10, 2023 at 3pm. In addition, we would like to invite the Chair or their designee to give a speech after the ribbon cutting. Please confirm that you would like to participate in this noteworthy event finalizing the creation of an extremely generous donation from The Robinson-

Broadhurst Foundation and, commitment from your board; the Town Manager, Justin Sultzbach; DPW Director, Brian Croteau; the advisors; and all the committees and volunteers involved.

LaPointe to take 7.5 out of order and Anderson seconded it. **Vote: Blanchard aye, Ward aye, Anderson aye, LaPointe aye, and LaBrie aye.**

6.2 DPW Director Croteau – FY2024 Paving Plan-Brian Croteau, DPW Director said the funding sources are free cash \$550,000, 5 year borrow \$450,000, Chapter 90 \$470,000, and Winchendon School \$50,000. The total is \$1,520,000. He went over the road paving plan for FY2024. This list is built off of current rates. Anderson asked about Front Street. Brian Croteau said there will be a skin coat. It will be addressed in June or July.

7. NEW BUSINESS:

7.1 Support Letter for Federal Broadband and Digital Equity Planning Grant –Linda Daigle came forward. She said a consultant will be hired. MRPC will be involved. As part of the grant application a letter of support from the Board of Selectmen is required. Sultzbach thanked Ms. Daigle for her hard work. **Ward moved to authorize the Board of Selectmen chair to sign the letter of support for the Town's Municipal Digital Equity Planning Grant as discussed this evening and Anderson seconded the motion. Vote: Blanchard aye, Ward aye, Anderson aye, LaPointe aye, and LaBrie aye.**

7.2 Colonial Power Group – Review of Energy Aggregation – Update numbers 1-year extension-Sultzbach informed the Board the current contract will expire in November. He said their recommendation is a 24-month agreement under Constellation for .148. This would be a more than 30% decrease from our current rate of .235. National Grid, while presently lower (.141) is projected to hit .190 heading into this winter. He would like the Board to authorize him to negotiate into an agreement. Anderson commented by locking into the contract last year we are now paying higher rates. Sultzbach said while National Grid is lower at this time overall we are paying a lower amount. Residents can switch at any point. This provides an additional option. Anderson said she feels they are not giving us their best deal. LaBrie stated the current agreement ends at the end of November. Sultzbach said the Board can take no action at this time but during the summer, it usually spikes. Ward said if you wait, it is a dangerous gamble you might get a higher rate. **LaBrie made a motion the Board authorize the Town Manager to enter into an agreement for a 24-month period not to exceed 15 with Colonial Power Group as presented this evening and Ward seconded the motion. Vote: Blanchard aye, Ward aye, LaPointe aye, Anderson no, and LaBrie aye.**

7.3 Form Town Manager's Search Committee-LaBrie said we need to get the word out there. This would be a seven-member committee. Ward said he would like to see a member of School Committee and Finance Committee. We need to look at the financial aspects of the candidates. The majority would come from the Town. LaBrie we will solicit letters of interest to be discussed at the next meeting.

7.4 Water & Sewer Rates Process Review- Sultzbach said included in your packet is a water and sewer rate survey. Small regular incremental increases are justified to maintain your retained earnings account. Recommendation they were showing is an increase of 18% in FY23 and a 3% annual increase starting in FY24. He said he will bring a recommendation with a realistic number for the water project. LaBrie said the Board has a lot of discussion over the next months. Anderson said she asked for the last five years for an audit of the water and wastewater enterprise

funds. Sultzbach said there are plans for a single audit. He said there isn't any waste of those funds. Croteau added the Town of Winchendon is reactive not proactive. We are fixing things as they break. We are not addressing all the issues. Sultzbach said this independent group reviewed the financial trends over the past five years.

- 7.5 Whitney Bridge Fund Discussion- Les Goodrich and Burt Gould came forward. Mr. Gould discussed the George M. Whitney Bridge fund. The key to this is "see page 12". This fund was set up for the benefit of the tax payers. Mr. Whitney sought to ensure the proper upkeep of bridges that bore his name throughout Winchendon. To support this, he set up a trust, overseen by three members of the community that would financially support this endeavor. To date it is believed that unfortunately all three trustees have passed away, making it impossible to access these funds at this time. At this time the thought is that the Board of Selectmen would have appointing power. Ward said the last information he had was from 1962 when the balance was \$145,000. The bridges were supposed to have signs on each bridge that says this is the George Whitney Bridge.

Sultzbach said our team is presently working with legal counsel to determine the proper procedures to appoint new trustees.

7.6 Review of BOS Policies and Procedures Introductory Discussion -LaBrie said a very thorough review of your policies occurred in 2018 and amended in 2019 to add a new policy. She said we can review it, in past practice was to create a sub-committee with two Selectmen to review and bring back any suggestions to the full Board. Linda Daigle went over the additions she made to the policies. LaBrie said we can place this on a future agenda.

8 OLD BUSINESS: There was no old business discussed this evening.

9 TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT: Sultzbach read the following

1. Financial Updates-

- a. *We have started the year-end transfer process and continue to keep an eye on the budget as FY23 comes to a close.*

2. Personnel Updates-

- a. *Welcome to Tara Rivers, our new part time Planning and Development Clerk.*

3. Project Updates-

- a. *The Amphitheater has hit the punch list phase and is on target for completion by the June 10th Grand Opening.*
- b. *A pre-construction meeting is taking place this Wednesday (virtually) for the Old Murdock Restoration project. Work will kick off on-site in June.*
- c. *A contractor has been secured for the Town Hall Cupola Project, with work to be completed before the end of the Fiscal Year.*
- d. *Site Remediation for the 4 Summer Drive property will be taking place over the coming weeks.*

4. Miscellaneous Updates -

- a. *Annual Town Meeting was a great success, with all Articles passing. Special Thanks to our Clerks office and Don O'Neil for all the work that goes into setting up and breaking down Annual Town Meeting.*

Sultzbach discussed as a dry run of the Amphitheater there will be a screening of a movie for the staff. We asked the Board of Selectmen to pay for the movie broadcasting fee out of the Board's

account. LaPointe made a motion 375.00 for the movie broadcasting fee and Anderson seconded. Vote: Blanchard aye, Ward aye, Anderson aye, LaPointe aye, and LaBrie aye.

10 **MINUTES:**

10.1 Joint with Finance Committee 3/30/23-Anderson moved to approve the meeting minutes of March 30, 2023 and Ward seconded. Vote: Blanchard aye, Ward aye, Anderson aye, LaPointe abstained, and LaBrie aye.

10.2 Regular Meeting Minutes 5/8/23- Anderson moved to approve the meeting minutes of May 8, 2023 and Ward seconded. Vote: Blanchard aye, Ward aye, Anderson aye, LaPointe aye, and LaBrie aye.

11 **COMMUNICATIONS:** LaBrie said she received an email asking if the Board of Selectmen wanted to march in the parade at the Summer Solstice.

12 **AGENDA ITEMS:** Next meeting is July 15, 2023.

13 **EXECUTIVE SESSION:** LaBrie moved to go into executive session- MGL, 30A, Sec 21 (a) # 2 – To discuss strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with non-union personnel and to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with non-union personnel. - Town Manager and to reconvene in open session for the sole convening and Ward seconded. Vote: Blanchard aye, Ward aye, Anderson aye, LaPointe aye, and LaBrie aye.

14 **ADJOURNMENT-**Executive Session at 8:32pm.

Respectfully submitted;



Debra Dennis, Administrative Assistant