

**Meeting of the Waterbury Select Board  
December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2017  
Steele Community Room ~ 28 North Main Street**

Present: C. Viens, D. Schneider, M. Metayer, J. Brown, and M. Frier, Select Board; W. Shepeluk, Municipal Manager; B. Farr, Long Term Community Recovery Director; W. Woodruff, Public Works Director; A. Tuscany, Town Engineer; A. Imhoff, ORCA Media; and C. Lawrence, Town Clerk.

Public: M. Hughes, Waterbury Record; A. Johnson, S. Desantis, D. DeSanto, E. Coffey.

The meeting was called to order at 7:03pm.

**APPROVE AGENDA**

D. Schneider made a motion to approve the agenda with the addition of a liquor license for AGS Vermont doing business as Village Market. The motion was seconded by J. Brown and passed unanimously.

**CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS**

M. Metayer made a motion to approve the consent agenda items, including the minutes of the November 20<sup>th</sup> meeting. The motion was seconded by D. Schneider and passed unanimously.

**LIQUOR LICENSE**

J. Brown made a motion to approve a liquor license for AGS Vermont doing business as Village Market. The motion was seconded by M. Metayer and passed unanimously.

**PUBLIC**

There was no public comment.

**INTERVIEW CANDIDATE FOR LIBRARY COMMISSIONER**

Shannon Desantis was present to express interest in serving on the Library Commission. She is a proponent of libraries and is a librarian herself, and wishes to be involved in the community. She is excited to learn and grow with the Commission.

D. Schneider made a motion to appoint S. Desantis to the Library Commission until March 6, 2018. The motion was seconded by M. Metayer. S. Desantis will plan to pick up a petition in January to be placed on the March Town meeting ballot. The motion passed unanimously.

**DISCUSS MAIN STREET RECONSTRUCTION SCHEDULE - WEEKEND HOURS**

The topic was discussed at the last meeting. Feedback has been received from staff, the business community and Revitalizing Waterbury. The contractors have asked if weekend construction will be acceptable, to speed up construction. A. Johnson surveyed businesses for their input and distributed a survey. There was no overall consensus but businesses were appreciative that the question was asked.

There is a Main Street Committee and a smaller subset that have been meeting to work on website communication during the construction. There are case studies that have been looked at, including the Barre construction project. Staff has spent a lot of time with VTrans to try to be proactive and a resource to businesses. The traffic management plan will be a high priority. The project is scheduled to start July 5, 2018.

M. Frier recused himself from the discussion. B. Woodruff recommended allowing some Saturday work as the construction season is so short. Construction would not occur during big events or holiday weekends. He did not recommend Sunday construction unless it started Sunday night.

M. Frier, speaking as a Village business owner, stated he is adamantly against Saturday work anywhere within the core business district. Business owners do not yet know how much this project will impact their businesses. C. Viens stated that the Board has to depend on staff to make appropriate decisions about weekend work. Discussion continued as to how to try to limit Saturday construction in the core from the Congregational Church to Foundry Street; and Stowe Street to the Dry Bridge.

B. Farr discussed banner arms on period lamp posts in the Village area and Stowe Street. J. Brown suggested putting on flower arms to hold flower baskets. The information has been submitted to VTrans in hopes of getting incorporated into the project. There is a concern about maintenance and that the project will not pay for the flower arms. B. Farr stated that there might be a grant that will pay for the hangers.

E. Coffey expressed concerns about the narrowing of the road on South Main Street. B. Farr explained how the road and sidewalks will look in that section of the project. Her understanding is that there was a request to widen the sidewalks in that section of the project.

### **POLICE SERVICES DISCUSSION – NEXT STEPS**

M. Metayer stated that several options for implementation were discussed at the last meeting. None of those options are set in concrete. It appears utilizing the resident trooper program is favored. The committee feedback that implementing a town wide department sooner rather than later is supported. The ultimate size of the department is negotiable and the community can decide at a later date if hiring additional officers makes sense. The committee feels that waiting to incorporate a town wide force is a delay that may not be a positive step.

C. Viens expressed concern about implementing a local options tax on the tail end of the phase-in and ask M. Frier for his thoughts. M. Frier stated that the local options tax is additional income for the town, not necessarily to be used for police budgets. Taxes are already high and some of the tax comes out of community members pockets. He stated that the police should be funded by municipal taxes.

W. Shepeluk stated that the State cannot enter into the agreement for resident trooper services until July and need to plan their staffing soon. The Town may need to hold a special town meeting prior to March. This timing will not allow any conversation or votes on a local options tax.

C. Viens expressed concern that the Town is asking too much of the public and businesses to pursue a full blown police department, and if just the resident trooper program could be used over the next two to three years. M. Metayer stated that the feedback to the committee was that people viewed the local options tax as a viable option for income, and that other communities that utilize the tax are not suffering. It is a matter of when to have the discussion about implementing a local options tax.

D. Schneider suggested looking at public safety first, and saving the discussion of a local options tax for a later date. Discussion continued around the implementation of a local options tax.

M. Frier asked if the resident trooper program was funded, and the voters decided not to fund in year two, would the contract still have to be paid. M. Metayer stated that the Town has multi-year contracts subject to approval at Town Meeting and there is always an 'out' clause. W. Shepeluk responded that the State will appreciate that all the Town can do is budget for the present year, but if the program is to move forward, the VSP will provide a level of service to see this happens. M. Metayer stated that the State Police are committed to the program.

W. Shepeluk stated that the first recommendation from the Committee is to enter into an agreement with the VSP and evaluate in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year whether to hire a Chief. The State would prefer to know sooner than March if the Town will enter into the program. Discussion continued about the resident trooper program and implementation of a Town wide department and how the transition would work.

A discussion was held as to how a special Town meeting should be warned and how the article should read. The motion could be to budget for the resident trooper program, and funding for a police chief could be considered at town meeting or a later date. The Manager will draft a warning to present at the next meeting, with a special Town meeting to be held in late January.

## **MANAGER'S ITEMS**

### **2018 Budget – Preliminary Discussion**

The Manager did not have much to report. He has met with representatives from WASI to discuss ambulance expenses. Volunteer help has declined over time, partially because the standards of training have increased, therefore more employees need to be hired. WASI currently has an operating deficit. W. Shepeluk has asked for additional information from WASI on their financial statements and asked if they could run under a deficit for another year and discuss after town meeting as to how to approach the issue for 2019.

A job offer has been made and accepted for the Bookkeeper position. The Manager has received information from VLCT that liability insurance will be reduced for 2018. The recreation director position will have to be filled in 2018. The highway department would like the part-time parks work made into a fulltime position.

D. Schneider asked if there is any liability to the Town with the charter amendments that were approved in June. W. Shepeluk responded in that there are no liability issues.

C. Viens asked about the Town's responsibility for the Main Street project. W. Shepeluk responded that the Town's share is approximately 2% on a \$25 million project. The \$400,000 share will be split between the Town, Water and Sewer and the expense will be spread over three years.

### **TD Bank Parking/Purchase**

M. Frier stated that there is merit to purchasing the TD Bank property. Prime commercial properties do not come up for sale very often, and parking is of great concern. Zoning could allow a ground up commercial building with no parking. He suggested that the Town purchase the property, sell the structure for what the town paid, and keep the parking. There will be some costs, including the listing agent, inspection, etc. In the future, the Town will be responsible for parking.

The Village has authorized an RFP to go out on 51 South Main Street which went out today. The Village is asking \$200,000 for the property. W. Shepeluk stated that if Town is concerned about parking, they could purchase the Village property. Three parties have already expressed interest in purchasing the property. The RFP states that some parking will be maintained throughout the Main Street project.

D. Schneider asked about the financing for the purchase of the TD Bank parcel. The voters will need to approve the purchase and price. A motion could be made to authorize a nominal sum of money to negotiate an option to buy. The Town does have some assets and could authorize liquidation of some stocks in reserve funds. Short term borrowing, with authorization from the voters, is also an option. The timing is challenging so politically the concept may be a problem.

M. Metayer commented that if the Town is looking at securing parking in the future, then 51 South Main Street should be a consideration. The Town could respond to the RFP, or talk with the Trustees directly about buying the property to make into a parking lot. M. Frier stated that there additional costs to purchasing 51 South Main Street, including knocking down the building and paving the parking lot.

W. Shepeluk stated that the Town has let the realtor of the TD Bank parcel know that the parking is important to the community. The Town can try to negotiate a deal with the buyer to preserve the parking.

M. Frier asked about the financial risks. W. Shepeluk responded that the Town currently has the cash, but will that will dissipate within a couple of months. Assets can be liquidated from stock market, which is currently at an all time high. One other option is to borrow from the Village UDAG fund.

W. Shepeluk stated that the voters may ask why restaurants do not have the responsibility to provide their own parking.

M. Frier made a motion to authorize the Municipal Manager to make an offer for the full asking price in cash for the TD Bank parcel; secured by up to a refundable \$10,000 deposit; with the offer contingent on a Town vote and inspection. The motion was seconded by D. Schneider. The vote failed, with 2 in favor and 3 opposed.

**Meeting Schedule**

January meetings will be held on January 8<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>. There will be no meeting the first week of January.

There being no further Select Board business, the meeting adjourned at 10:38pm.

Respectfully submitted,

C. Lawrence, Town Clerk

Approved on: December 18, 2017