

West Windsor Selectboard
Draft Minutes
January 25, 2016

Present: Dick Beatty, Ted Siegler, Tom Kenyon, Art Keating (School Board Chair), David Baker (Superintendent), Jen Aldrich (ABS Principal), Dan Potter (SWCRPC), Todd Menees (Stream Alteration Engineer), Win Johnson, Rice Yordy, Glenn & Shelley Seward, Bob French, Laura Page, Martha Harrison, Cathy Archibald, Mike Spackman, George Calver (*Vermont Standard*)

1. Call to Order – Dick Beatty called the meeting to order at 8:00 AM.
2. Changes or additions to the agenda – solar array, child care request, executive session
3. School Budget & Act 46 Options – Art Keating said they are looking at a 15% increase in the school budget due to high school tuition, special education and mandatory pre-school costs. Art said high school tuition is up by \$195,000 and middle school tuition is down by \$46,000 for a net increase of \$149,000. The increase includes two or three new students and increases in per pupil tuition charges. West Windsor pays tuition for 26 middle school students and 44 high school students, and there are 82 students at Albert Bridge. Art said special education is up by \$200,000. David Baker said the supervisory union is discussing ways to moderate costs but West Windsor has seen an increase in the number of students needing special education services, which accounts for the spike in costs. Art said the school budget includes \$20,609 for the pre-school program mandated by the state; technology is up by \$4,000; and teacher salary and health benefit increases, along with the addition of a half-time guidance position, account for an additional \$64,000. Art said the state has imposed mandatory spending caps, per equalized pupil, on every school district and, because the number of students in West Windsor decreased by 6 or 8 last year, the per pupil costs increased. Art said, at this point, state education taxes are projected to increase by 34 cents per \$100, with about 22 cents being a result of going over the spending cap. To get below the spending cap, Art said the School Board would have to take \$220,000 out of their budget. Art said the legislature is still debating changes to Act 46 but statute requires the warning to be posted. David said it's going to be hard to predict the tax rate this year until the legislature makes a decision, which may or may not occur before Town Meeting. Even if the spending cap is repealed, David said, West Windsor is probably looking at a tax increase of around 20 cents per \$100 after the state adjusts the formulas. Art said the state's interpretation and implementation of Act 46 has been frustrating. Art said the supervisory union has an Act 46 study committee that meets once a month, with four members from each of the four towns. West Windsor's members are Art Keating, Tim Mello, Pat Eastman and David Hill. Art said he would like the committee to move more quickly in evaluating the options. Current options include a regional high school serving all students in all four towns, with no school choice. Art said another option is a side-by-side merger, which would involve the three "choice" towns (Hartland, Weathersfield and West Windsor) sharing a budget and continuing to offer high school choice. For middle school, West Windsor students would go to Hartland or Weathersfield. Windsor would either stand alone or join forces with another K-12 school. Art said Representative John Bartholomew has asked for a waiver to allow this type of structure. David said spreading the cost of choice over three towns would help a little but the new 3-town district would still not have control over high school tuition. Art said consolidating some functions, including curriculum development, within the supervisory union has already resulted in efficiencies. Win asked about including Cornish, NH in our supervisory union. Art said that's an option but it will take longer to implement. Tuition to Windsor and Woodstock is about the same; Hanover is significantly higher, as is Thetford. David said he would like the four towns to agree on an option in time for a November ballot since the presidential election will result in high voter turnout. Dick asked about the tax impacts in the other three towns. David said the other towns had surpluses at the end of last year and Hartland had a slight increase in equalized pupils so they are not experiencing the tax impacts that West Windsor is experiencing. Martha asked if there are other options. Art said West Windsor could look into joining the Woodstock district, or several supervisory

unions could form a mega-district. David said there's no cushion built into the budget to allow for more families with school-age children moving to town.

4. Announcements/Public Comment – None
5. Discuss river implementation projects & Clean Water Act with Dan Potter (SWCRPC) – River Projects: Dan said the recent geomorphic study of Mill Brook identified a number of projects in Reading, Windsor and West Windsor that could mitigate existing hazards and improve the ecosystem. On behalf of the three towns, the SWCRPC applied for and received a High Meadows grant to help fund some of the projects. West Windsor's Conservation Commission reviewed the projects and came up with five high priority projects for our town: corridor protection and stream bank stabilization on Brook Road and at several other locations, dam removal behind the fire station to reduce siltation and flood potential, dam removal on Harrington Road, and stream bank stabilization along Sheddsville Road. Todd Menees said he is available to provide technical assistance, and would like to be involved early on to make sure projects can be permitted. Todd noted various potential funding sources for the projects including Ecosystem Restoration Project funding, CT River Watershed Council, Trout Unlimited, American Rivers, and VT River Conservancy. Win asked about the condition of the dam in Windsor. Ted said he thinks Windsor is using FEMA funding to make repairs to the dam. Clean Water Act: Todd said there are funds available to implement clean water projects through the Better Backroads program. Todd asked about the town's culvert inventory. Ted said it's up-to-date and the Highway Foreman has the results of the geomorphic study, including the information about undersized bridges and culverts. Tom said run-off can be reduced by using the right material on dirt roads. Dan said there will be a workshop on these issues on February 24th. Dan provided handouts explaining the responsibilities of towns with regard to the Clean Water Act and encouraged the town to be involved in the process as the Agency of Transportation develops a general permit. All communities will have to be covered by the general permit by 2021 and, as part of the process, will have to develop a stormwater management plan for town roads and developed lands (more than 3 acres of impervious surface) with a 20-year time horizon for implementation. Dan said the state is stressing the importance of tactical basin plans. West Windsor is included in Tactical Basin #10.
6. Consider signing contract with SWCRPC for Local Hazard Mitigation Plan – Martha said there's a small discrepancy in the match amount but she'll have that corrected. **Ted moved to authorize the Chair to sign the contract. Tom seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**
7. Consider signing revised Mascoma Savings Bank Promissory Note – Dick noted that the revision is in the town's favor. **Ted moved to sign the revised Mascoma Savings Bank promissory note. Tom seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**
8. Discuss insurance claim – Dick said it's his understanding that the total cost of the settlement with the Axtens would be about \$1,500 of which the town would pay \$1,000, with the insurance company paying the balance even though they denied the claim. **Ted made a motion that the Selectboard agree with the insurance company concerning their proposed settlement with the Axtens. Tom seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**
9. December Police Report – The report for December was fairly typical.
10. Other Business – Town Meeting child care request: Ted said if we're not using the downstairs for polling, he doesn't see why we shouldn't make it available for child care. Dick agreed. **Ted moved to let Elizabeth Burrows know that she should coordinate with the Town Clerk and if the Town Clerk is not using the downstairs for polling then the Selectboard has no objection to the space being used for child care during the 2016 Town Meeting at the expense of those using and organizing the service. Tom seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.** Credit card: Ted said, since we seem to be at an impasse over the credit card, he would like Martha to ask Competitive Computers to set up the cloud-based computing, upload the files, and give us an invoice. Tom suggested a debit card. Ted said that's fine but he'd still like to move forward with Competitive Computers since we've been talking about this for months and we haven't gotten anywhere. Dick said he is not a fan of debit cards. Tom and Dick agreed that Martha should proceed with Competitive Computers.

11. Approve Minutes: January 11th & 15th – **Tom moved to approve the minutes of January 11th and January 15th. Ted seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**
12. Executive Session – **Dick moved to go into executive session concerning the solar litigation and the option to purchase the Base Lodge. Tom seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.** After discussion, **Dick moved to come out of executive session. Tom seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. Ted moved to authorize the Chair to send the proposed option agreement for the burned-out Base Lodge to Snowdance, with a copy to Dan Purjes, and to continue moving forward with the Planning Commission on a settlement agreement on the solar array before the Public Service Board (PSB). Tom seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**
13. Sign Town Clerk's orders – The Selectboard signed the Town Clerk's orders.
14. Highway Foreman's report – Plow for one-ton truck: Mike said a new plow would cost \$6,000. Mike said he'd like to try to sell the old plow. The Selectboard agreed to buy a new plow with money from the Equipment Fund, and try to sell the old one. Mike said he will continue investigating mower options and will look into a flail mower rather than a bush hog.
15. 2016 town and highway budgets – **Ted moved to establish a town budget of \$512,063 for 2016, with \$361,914 to be raised by taxes. Dick seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. Ted moved to establish a highway budget of \$662,450 for 2016, with \$552,950 to be raised by taxes. Tom seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**
16. Bond vote warning - Cathy said Paul Giuliani is working on the warning, ballot and resolution for the bond vote but he needs to know when the Selectboard is going to meet to approve the materials. The Selectboard agreed to meet to approve the materials on Friday, January 29, at 8:00 AM. The Selectboard agreed to hold an informational meeting on the bond issue at 7:00 PM on Monday, February 22nd. Martha will check with Aldrich + Elliott to make sure they're available.
17. Town Meeting warning – **Tom moved to accept the warning as proposed for the annual meeting to be held on Tuesday, March 1, 2016, at 9:00 AM. Dick seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.** The Selectboard signed five copies of the warning.
18. Adjourn – **Ted moved to adjourn at 10:30 AM. Tom seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,

Martha Harrison