

## ***Town of Westminster – Select Board Meeting Minutes – Monday, April 22, 2024***

**Members Present:** Salvatore Albert Jr, Melissa A. Banks, Heather Billings

**Staff Present:** Stephanie Lahtinen, Tamie Chiarelli

**Others Present:** Mike Cooley, Karen Conte-Moore, Marcia Sharkey, Roni Beal

### **CALL TO ORDER**

H. Billings called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM in room 205 of the Town Hall. She announced that the meeting was being recorded by Ashburnham/Westminster Community Media and no other recording devices have been brought to her attention.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

H. Billings announced:

Thank you to everyone who assisted with this weekend's Earth Day Clean-up efforts in Westminster. We are extremely grateful for your dedication to keeping our town beautiful!

Candidates Night will be held this Wednesday, April 24<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM at the Forbush Memorial Library. All candidates for open elected positions have been invited to speak and answer questions. Library Trustees Chair Kim Samson will moderate and it will be broadcast on [www.awcm.org](http://www.awcm.org) or local channel 8.

Annual Town Election will be held on Tuesday, April 30<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 AM to 7:00 PM at the Westminster Community Senior Center, 69 W. Main St. Mail in ballots were also sent to those who requested them.

Annual Town Meetings will be held on Saturday, May 4<sup>th</sup>, starting at 10:00 AM, at the Westminster Elementary School. The warrants and Advisory Board booklet are posted on the front page of the website and hard copies are available at the Town Hall.

Light the Town Purple – Marcia Sharkey was present at tonight's meeting to discuss the event for Westminster held on Tuesday, May 14<sup>th</sup> at Academy Hill. She stated that purple is the color of hope for cancer survivors. The elementary choral group will be there to perform and invited the Select Board to be there to light the Gazebo up purple. The Relay for Life event will be on May 7<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> at the Wachusett Community College.

### **APPROVALS:**

#### WARRANTS:

M. Banks made a motion to approve the following warrants:

Accounts Payable	#24-43A	\$219,411.47	04/22/2024
Payroll	#24-43B	\$257,197.00	04/25/2024

The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

#### APRIL 8, 2024 MEETING MINUTES:

M. Banks made a motion to approve the minutes of April 8, 2024. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

#### PAYROLL AUTHORIZATIONS:

M. Banks made a motion to approve the payroll authorization for Caroline Albert as part time Land Use Administrative Assistant, filling a vacancy. The motion was seconded by H. Billings, S. Albert abstained and motion passed.

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### **APPOINTMENTS – BOARD OF REGISTRARS:**

M. Banks made a motion to approve to re-appoint Ken Marien to the Board of Registrars for a term to end June 30, 2027, as requested by the Town Clerk. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

### **LAURIE LANE LAND DISPOSAL BID INVITATION – ACTION ON BIDS AND CONTRACT DETERMINATION:**

Last fall the Town sent out an Invitation for Bids for the sale of town-owned land on Laurie Lane, just under 12,000 square feet. The bid invitation stated that an agreement by the Town to sell the land could only result from a vote by the Select Board and execution of a sales agreement. It also stated that the Town reserved the right to reject any and all bids. The bid documents additionally specified that any award was contingent on the bidder preparing a land survey for approval of the DPW and Planning Board prior to a contractual award.

Two bids were received, in October. On October 16, a letter from the Town was sent to the highest bidder regarding the survey requirement. Although the Select Board had not taken any vote to award a contract the letter referred to the bidder as having the winning bid. That was an inadvertent description.

The Select Board did not vote to award a contract, and on November 22 the Town Administrator sent letters to both bidders informing them that the Town had determined to reject all the bids and reassess the property. At the time of those letters, the deposit for the lowest bid had already been returned, and the letter to the high bidder included his deposit. In order to finalize the process and fully comply with the terms of the bid invitation, the Select Board should take a formal vote to reject all the bids.

M. Banks moved that the Select Board confirm the Town Administrator's November 22, 2023 letters to the bidders and reject all bids received in response to the bid invitation for sale of the town owned land on Laurie Lane; and confirm the Board's intention to further evaluate how that land should be used. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

### **SURPLUS PROPERTY DISPOSAL:**

Kubota Pump Skid (Fire Dept): the Fire Chief is requesting that the Board declare the Kubota Pump Skid, a portion of the town's brush truck, as surplus property and suitable for disposal. This truck is slated for replacement in FY2025 and due to the high cost of repair, this piece of equipment is no longer useful to the Town.

M. Banks made a motion to approve Kubota Pump Skid as surplus property and suitable for disposal. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

### **ONGOING BUSINESS/MISCELLANEOUS**

#### **PARKS AND REC – PLAYGROUND STATUS UPDATE:**

Due to Parks & Rec not receiving the layout from the Playground Contractor and not having the opportunity for their committee to meet & go over it. This will be passed over to the next Select Board meeting on April 29<sup>th</sup>.

### **ADJOURNMENT:**

M. Banks made a motion to adjourn, the motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 5:14 PM

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Salvatore Albert, Clerk  
(Prepared by T. Chiarelli)

**EXHIBITS:**

- Town Administrator's Report
- Warrants (2)
- April 8, 2024 Meeting Minutes
- Payroll Authorizations (2)
- Fire Chief's email – pictures of pump skid