



Select Board

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Select Board Meeting Minutes October 2, 2023

Quorum present: Select Board Members; Kathleen Keresey, Chair, Andrew Krouss, Andrew Potter, and Town Administrator Marie Ryan.

Kathleen opened the meeting at 6 PM.

Approval of Minutes:

Kathleen stated minutes will be approved at the next meeting.

Citizen Speak:

Neal Pilson, Richmond Select Board member spoke to the Board in regard to an odor issue coming from Wiseacre Farm on Baker Street. Kathleen explained that there have been several complaints from residents that live in Richmond and one in West Stockbridge about the strong odor coming from Wiseacre Farm. Neal requested that the West Stockbridge Select Board take the next steps to investigate the issue and provide a remedy while working with the property owners. Richmond will assist in any way needed to mitigate the odor for the residents.

Sheila Thunfors informed the Board that she is part of a working group that is researching different ways to assist the senior residents, which have limited income resources, with their property tax burdens. She said there are many programs that most people are not aware of that may help them with their taxes. The group would like to provide information to the residents and assist in the process of completing forms. Sheila said that the group will also be meeting with Mary Stodden, Assessing Clerk, to gather more information.

Andy Potter thanked Sheila and her group for their research. He said that the Affordable Housing Trust may also be able to assist them. Once this group has gathered all their research, he would like to have a single location on the website to make it easier for residents to find the information.

Appointment of New Town Treasurer - Benjamin Gelp

Marie explained that the current Town Treasurer, Karen Williams, is retiring and her last day will be Thursday, October 5th. She and the Human Resource Director, Sophia, advertised

for this position and asked the Board to Appoint Benjamin Gelp. Marie introduced him and explained that he has experience with the same software programs we use in West Stockbridge. He will begin working on Tuesdays all day and will fill in with additional hours as needed starting Tuesday, October 10th.

Ben thanked the Board for the opportunity to serve West Stockbridge as the Treasurer. He stated that he also works part-time in Rowe as the Treasurer/Collector and in Washington as the Treasurer. He looks forward to working here.

Andy Potter made a motion, seconded by Andy Krouss, to appoint Benjamin Gelp as the new Town Treasurer for a three-year term.

All were in favor, appointment approved.

Appoint Clerk and Secretary of the Select Board:

Andy Potter made a motion, seconded by Kathleen, to appoint Andy Krouss as the Clerk of the Board. All were in favor, motion approved.

Kathleen made a motion, seconded by Andy Krouss, to appoint Andy Potter as the Secretary of the Board. All were in favor, motion approved.

Discussion of Real Estate Transfer Fee: Kathleen

On September 28, 2023, the Board had a discussion with Leigh Davis, Great Barrington Select Board member, in regard to the Real Estate Transfer Fee would add money to the affordable Housing Trust from fees collected on real estate transfers. Leigh had a meeting with a legislative member in Boston on Friday, who explained to that the House may be moving legislation on a Housing Bill in the next two weeks. Kathleen suggested that the Select Board-hold off on moving forward on this issue until after the Bill has passed and then review how to proceed with next steps.

Select Board Speak:

Andy Potter mentioned, in memorium, several residents that have passed away in the last few weeks; Tony Balestro, Ruth Bronz and Bob Burke.

Kathleen made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Andy Potter at 6:28 PM.

All were in favor, meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Marie y. Ryan

Marie Y. Ryan

Town Administrator