

Selectboard Minutes

March 25, 2024

Selectboard Present: Jessica Pollack (chair), Andy Coyne (vice-chair), Len Beman and Greg Meulemans

Public Present: Paul Fraser, Dana West, Drew Hazelton, Karen Ameden, Chrissy Haskins, Erica Bowman, Clara Robinson, Chris Mays, Katie Hazelton, Mike Tuller

Jessica called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

1. Call for any late additions to the agenda
a. overweight permit

2. Approve the minutes from the March 11 Regular Meeting, and March 11 Organizational Meeting, of the Selectboard

Jessica made a motion to approve the minutes from March 11th, seconded by Len. Andy asked about moving the rec committee funds to the bike park, he voted against moving funds. The board made a suggestion that the rec committee look at the bike skills park as a way to use funds. The rec committee will decide what to do with the funds.

Jessica made a motion to approve the minutes as amended, seconded by Len. 3 in favor, 1 abstained.

Jessica made a motion to approve the minutes from the regular meeting on March 11th, seconded by Andy. All in favor.

3. Consider candidates for recommendation to the Board of the West River Modified Union Education District for the open seat from Jamaica

The Selectboard will be making a recommendation to fill an empty seat that was previously filled by Drew Hazelton. The previous school board meeting talked about closing Jamaica school.

Drew Hazelton said for the past 15 years and he has been asking people to get involved. A few people like Karen Ameden and Patti Dickson have. The amount of students has declined but the education funding system has stayed the same. Jamaica also sends a lot of money to the state education fund. Because Jamaica was part of Leland & Gray Union High School so our high school students would still have to go there. There were not a lot of options for merging. We joined the district and the articles of agreements were written. We were given school choice for schools in our district which include Newbrook, Townshend, Jamaica and Leland & Gray. Currently, Townshend is the only preschool. There is an education funding change that is supposed to help some of the inequities. Pupil weights mean that each child is counted depending on circumstances. Some count as more than 1, others count less than 1.

The budget is almost the same as last year according to Drew. It does not address deferred maintenance and it does not add any new programming.

They have started a long-term planning committee. They came up with a plan that was

scrapped by the School Board. They did this two more times.

The estimated enrollment for Jamaica for Fall of 2024 is 9.

Schools cannot close without the vote of the town itself. The School board cannot close the school without a vote. The board can change what is offered at each school. Drew and Dana both want the citizens to be part of this conversation.

Education taxes would not change if Jamaica school closed. The cost per pupil would not change but the Town of Jamaica would have the school building. Drew spoke about the maintenance that needs to be done on the buildings.

Chrissy Haskins said that they did try to get involved and the school board did not really listen to their suggestions. She said that school choice and the loss of our Pre-K is what killed our school. They are trying to get Pre-K back, but the school board does not seem interested.

Karen Ameden said that the whole state student enrollment is declining, not just Jamaica. She said Newfane chose not to have Pre-K, Jamaica's Pre-K was closed without any town involvement.

Pre-K is not a requirement. Newfane chose not to have Pre-K. Jamaica did have Pre-K but it was taken away. Chrissy believes we would have better enrollment if we had Pre-K.

Discussion on promoting the school.

Jessica made a motion to consider recommending Drew Hazelton to the school board for a one year term. Seconded by Greg, all in favor.

4. Discussion of Jamaica Village School enrollment and development

See item number 6.

Erica Bowman said we need to promote our school and Karen agreed.

5. FEMA general update; VBB funding update

The bond bank paperwork was completed. It was approved and we should have funds tomorrow. There are 2 properties.

Mike Tuller said we are heading into the next phase with the buyout programs.

The FEMA event from 2021 is close to being completed. We should receive over \$500 from the July 2021 Rain Storm.

Our FEMA Representative is back in town and we will continue to work on the July 2023 storm damage.

6. Review and approval of letter to Parking Ordinance Violators; next steps in enforcement

Jessica has not finished this, she will finish and circulate it. She would like to prepare a generic letter for the owners that may be in violation of the Parking Ordinance.

7. Update from JPC Meeting

The Jamaica Planning Commission had a kickoff with the Windham Regional Commission. They have received a grant for the Town Plan.

The JPC is still fine-tuning recommendations for ARPA funds. Thank you to the Jamaica Planning Commission.

8. Update on IT work and spend approval

The IT work has been approved under the contract. We will formalize the next group of tasks that we need him to do.

8A. Overweight permit

Greg made a motion to approve an overweight permit for Lynde Well Drilling, seconded by Jessica. 3 in favor, 1 abstained.

9. Review and approve time sheets for town office, listers, highway and transfer station

Jessica made a motion to approve the timesheets, seconded by Andy. All in favor.

10. Review and approve pay orders

Jessica made a motion to approve the pay orders, seconded by Greg.

Jessica made a motion to adjourn at 8:45 p.m. seconded by Andy. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted,
Sara Wiswall