

Town of Woodstock
Selectboard Meeting
December 17th, 2024
6:00PM
Town Hall & Zoom
Agenda

- A.** Call to order
- B.** Additions to & deletions from posted agenda
- C.** Citizen Comments
- D.** Manager's Report
- E.** Votes
 - a. Permit Software
 - b. ARPA Resolution
- F.** Discussion
 - a. Two Rivers- Shared Energy Coordinator program for FY26.
 - b. Town Report Dedication
 - c. EDC's ADU
 - d. Finance Committee Update on "Rate Card"
 - e. Hoyle Tanner- Main wastewater plan update
 - f. Water System ordinances
 - g. FY26 budget discussion
 - h. State House Delegation
- G.** Executive Session 1 V.S.A 313
- H.** Approval of Minutes
 - 11.14.24
 - 11.19.24
 - 11.21.24
 - 12.05.24
- I.** Adjournment

This Meeting will be held in person at Town Hall and on Zoom

The link to join us is

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84782406503?pwd=UXAzWnJxaEE0MzJaMlBKeHJPUjB6QT09>

or from zoom.us you can enter these details to join the meeting

Meeting ID: 847-8240-6503

Password: 247624

You can also download the Zoom app on your smartphone

December 3, 2024

Town of Woodstock
31 The Green
PO Box 488
Woodstock, VT 05091

Dear Mr. Duffy,

Thank you for your continued participation in the Shared Energy Coordinator (SEC) program with the Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee Regional Commission. We are pleased by Woodstock's progress towards its energy goals – receiving a state-funded energy audit of the Town Hall to develop recommendations for energy-efficiency upgrades; winning a six-figure EV fast-charging grant for the Bridgewater Woolen Mills complex; applying for \$1 million in Congressional funds for the main wastewater treatment facility; and collaborating with the other SEC towns to develop and implement outreach, education, and policy efforts.

TRORC is excited to continue the SEC program in 2025 - 2026, and we hope that Woodstock will renew its participation. Woodstock's contribution to the SEC program for July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026 would be \$40,016, representing a 3% increase from FY25. A significant portion of the program's costs will be covered by TRORC reserves.

Thank you for your consideration. Please let me know if you have any questions or would like us to participate in budget discussions.

Sincerely,



Peter G. Gregory, AICP
Executive Director

(cc: Ray Bourgeois, Select Board Chair; Jenevra Wetmore, SEC Steering Committee; Harry Falconer, SEC)

Woodstock EDC ADU Workforce Rental Application

Applicant/Property/Project Information
(Google Sign Is Not Required, Proceed to Owner Name)

Owner Name(s): *

Lee Garsh

Mailing Address: *

2409 SOUTH ROAD WOODSTOCK VT

Phone Number: *

802 763-7311

Email: *

lee.garsh@gmail.com

Property Address:

2409 SOUTH ROAD WOODSTOCK VT

What is the project? *

- ☒ Existing Structure Needing Conversion or Permit Work
- ☐ New Build Construction

Has the project been started? *

YES, APARTMENT HAS BEEN FUKKY RE WIRED. PAINTED AND NEW BATH.

At what stage are you in the Project?

- ☐ Exploring
- ☐ Feasibility
- ☐ Designing
- ☐ Financing
- ☐ Permitting
- ☒ Constructing

Is your property on the municipal sewer? *

- ☐ Yes
- ☒ No
- ☐ Unknown

If known, what is your septic capacity?

For the apartment, 2 bedrooms.

If known, is there sufficient water capacity for the ADU? *

☒ Yes

☐ No

What are the projected start and finish dates for your project?

The exterior Secondary Stair case has been scheduled for ASAP.

Will you be able to complete the project within 2 years? *

☒ Yes

☐ No

Do you understand the financial implications for the project? *

☒ Yes

☐ No

If known, will you be able to obtain financing for the entire project?

- ☐ Yes
- ☒ No
- ☐ Maybe

If known, how will you finance the project?

Cash on hand. No financing necessary and I have already spent over \$ 15,000 to make the apartment perfect.

Which best describes the grant are you applying for? *

- ☒ \$10,000 - Existing ADUs needing partial construction or permit work to meet code/reqs for rental are eligible for reimbursement of costs up to the maximum of \$10,000
- ☐ \$5,000 - New ADU build participants are eligible for reimbursement of pre-construction costs (e.g., design, permits) up to a maximum of \$5,000 AND \$5,000 - Additional \$5k is available for new ADU build as construction begins. Any unused pre-construction funds can be used for construction costs.

Program Description:

The EDC will provide an incentive grant to a limited number of eligible applicants. Applicants must meet all eligibility criteria and be willing to commit to rent the unit at a reasonable rental rate to a qualified tenant for a three year term. The funding for this program is limited and priority will be given on a first come first served basis dependent on eligibility dependent on eligibility and expected time to project completion.

Grants are available for the design, permitting or construction of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU) that will be rented to Qualified Tenants for a three year period and that meet the Rental Conditions described below. The maximum incentive any one ADU can receive for a three-year period, assuming the program continues and expands, is \$10,000.

A Qualifying ADU must have a dedicated kitchen, bedroom area, and bathroom that meet the requirements of federal, state and local law pertaining to rental housing, including, without limitation, relevant provisions

of the Vermont Rental Housing Health Code and the Woodstock Zoning Regulations. A building in which people rent accommodations constitutes a "public building" under 20 V.S.A. §2730(a)(1)(D) and is subject to the authority of the State of Vermont Division of Fire Safety or its designee.

Eligibility Criteria:

Owner must comply with these criteria to be considered for the program.

Can you commit to these Rental Conditions? *

- **Long term basis** is defined as a lease term of at least one year
- **Reasonable rental rates** are defined as monthly rents not exceeding \$1,000 for a studio unit, \$1,500 for a one-bedroom unit and \$2,500 for a multi-bedroom unit. Utilities are not included
- **Qualified Tenant** is defined as follows:
 - A Person who claims the address as their primary residency and continuously occupies the Property as their Principal Place of Residence
 - A Person who works, or will work, an average of 25 hours or more per week at a business, organization or public or private entity located within the **Qualified Area**
 - The employer/business must serve the Woodstock Community, hold a valid and current business license, or pay sales taxes, or is otherwise generally recognized as a legitimate business
 - To ensure **Qualified Tenants**, the owner must provide proof of employment and hours via pay stub, W2 or equivalent. The document should include their employer's name, address, and telephone number
- **Qualified Area** is defined as Woodstock, Barnard, Bridgewater, Pomfret, Reading and Hartland

☒ Yes

☐ No

Other:

Will you allow the Housing Advisor to conduct on site development compliance checks until the unit is complete? *

☒ Yes

☐ No

Do you agree to repay the incentive grant within 2 months if you are non-compliant at any stage ^{*} of the program?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Do you understand Owner must provide a copy of the signed lease agreement prior to EDC ^{*} releasing the final payment?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Do you understand a Qualified Tenant rental lease must be in place within 3 months of the ^{*} project completion or the grant is void and must be returned in full?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Do you understand that you are responsible for tenant selection and background checks?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Do you understand leases must comply with all local, state, and federal fair housing guidelines?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Will you allow the Housing Advisor to conduct Qualified Tenant Lease Compliance checks until the agreement ends?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Do you give consent for the EDC Housing Group's use of your participation in this program on our website, listserv, VT Standard, other platforms to promote the program?

☒ Yes

☐ No

Acknowledgement & Certifying E-Submission/Signature

*** THIS FORM IS FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES AND DOES NOT GUARANTEE ANY INCENTIVE GRANTS OR SERVICES**

BY SUBMITTING THIS FORM, I CERTIFY THE ACCURACY OF INFORMATION PROVIDED *
AND CONFIRM UNDERSTANDING OF PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS HEREIN.

MM DD YYYY

10 / 25 / 2024

This content is neither created nor endorsed by Google.

Google Forms

Lee Garsh Change from the Rental Incentive Program to ADU Workforce Rental Program

Program Term & Incentive: 3 Year lease, \$10,000 - Lee has a one bedroom apartment on his property that he recently purchased. He lives in the primary dwelling. He heard about the programs and wants to help with the housing issue. He meets all eligibility reqs on paper and has a Qualified Tenant who works in Woodstock in mind for the rental. Site visit/owner meeting completed by Trena Tolliver.

Location: 2409 South Road, Woodstock VT 05091

Description: One bedroom unit over the garage with a private entrance, kitchen, bathroom, parking. It was not a prior short term rental.

Reason for Program Change: The back deck stairs still need to be replaced as recommended by the State Fire Safety Inspection. The State inspection is included. Lee has a quote and they're going to start the stairs maybe this spring or sooner. Nobody has moved in yet.

11/21/24 - EDC Housing Working Group approved the application. Submitted to Jon for EDC funding approval.

[Full Application](#)







**Town of Woodstock
Selectboard Meeting
November 14th, 2024
5:30 PM
Town Hall & Zoom
Minutes**

Draft minutes are subject to approval.

Present: Chair Ray Bourgeois, Laura Powell, Greg Fullerton, Susan Ford, Keri Cole

Staff: Eric Duffy

Public: Tom Weschler, Byron Kelly, Susie Stulz, Barbara Kennedy, Molly Hutchins, Jon Spector, Deborah Neuwhof, Peter Shoemaker, Charlie Kimball, Alex Mulley, Chris Miller, Ben Pauly, Jill Mitchell, Roger Logan, Steven Bauer

Call to order

1. Chair Ray Bourgeois called the Selectboard meeting of November 14th to order at 5:30PM

B. Addition to & deletions from posted agenda- none

C. Citizen Comments – none

D. Executive Session 1 V.S.A 313

Motion: by Susan Ford to enter Executive Session 1 V.S.A 313 at (5:32PM)

Seconded: by Laura Powell

Vote: 5-0-0, passed Returned (5:37PM)

E. Discussion

Water System Capital Project and purchase of Vondell Reservoir (5:38pm)

Susan Ford explained the meeting format, one person from the audience or one on Zoom to speak at a time.

Tom Weschler questioned the necessity of the Vondell Reservoir for the current and future water system.

Susan Ford explained the historical context and future potential of the Vondell Reservoir.

Eric Duffy clarified that the purchase of the water company is still pending. The purchase has not closed yet.

Tom Weschler questioned the necessity of purchasing Vondell and if easements to the water rights already exist.

Eric Duffy and Laura Powell explained the broader benefits of Vondell, including future water use, recreation, and conservation.

Susan Ford emphasized the risk of losing Vondell to private ownership if not purchased by the town.

Barbara Kennedy inquired about taxability and revenue from Vondell.

Eric Duffy provided the annual revenue from Vondell and mentioned the cost of water readings.

Byron Kelly supported the 1B vote, then questioned the allocation of costs between users and taxpayers

Byron Kelly expressed concerns about the \$1.6 million cost for 350 acres and its future potential.

Susie Stulz highlighted the historical and ecological significance of Vondell, including its potential for fighting wildfires.

Susan Ford confirmed that Vondell could be used for emergency water in case of drought or wildfires.

Susan Ford acknowledged the potential for development but emphasized the current focus on preservation.

Eric Duffy revealed the appraised value of Vondell at \$2,058,000 million, indicating a significant discount at \$1.6 million purchase price

Laura Powell discussed the potential for future revenue from Vondell and the need for a rate increase.

Molly Hutchins emphasized the importance of connecting Vondell to the water system for emergency use.

Alex Mulley questioned the allocation of local options and hospitality taxes for the bond.

Laura Powell explained the tentative allocation and the need for user contributions to cover the debt.

Jon Spector suggested preserving flexibility in funding allocations to accommodate future priorities.

Deborah Neuwhof questioned the 40% contribution from non-users and suggested a flat per property fee.

Laura Powell explained the rationale behind the current allocation, emphasizing the benefits to all taxpayers.

Peter Shoemaker argued that users should pay more through rate increases rather than property taxes.

Eric Duffy and Susan Ford acknowledged the need to explore different rate structures and revenue projections.

Charlie Kimball highlighted the potential for increased capacity and grand list growth with Vondell.

Laura Powell confirmed that the bond for Vondell and 1B will be paid by all users and taxpayers, while the Elm Street suspension and new well will be user funded.

Chris Miller questioned the feasibility of connecting Vondell to the water system and the cost

Ben Pauly stressed the importance of a timeline for new hookups to support future development.

Laura Powell and Susan Ford acknowledged the need for better communication and messaging to non-users.

Eric Duffy provided estimates for the cost of Vondell and emphasized the need for further discussions and budget projections.

Participants are encouraged to attend upcoming meetings for further discussion.

F. Adjournment

Motion: by Susan Ford to adjourn the meeting at (6:58PM)

Seconded: by Greg Fullerton

Vote: 5-0-0, passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Kitty Mears Koar

**Town of Woodstock
Selectboard Meeting
November 19th, 2024
6:00 PM
Town Hall & Zoom
Minutes**

Draft minutes are subject to approval.

Present: Chair Ray Bourgeois, Laura Powell, Greg Fullerton, Susan Ford, Keri Cole

Staff: Eric Duffy

Public: Meghan Landis, Fire Chief David Green, Jill Davies, Antonia Richie, Jon Spector, Greta Calabrese, Roger Logan, Todd Eckert, Joe DiNatale, Reese Brown, Mark Knott, Ben Jervy, Caroline Olsen, Barbara Otranto, Suzanne Wooten, Jeffrey Kahn, Peter Shoemaker, Seton McIlroy

Call to order

1. Chair Ray Bourgeois called the Selectboard meeting of November 19th to order at 6:00PM

B. Addition to & deletions from posted agenda

- a. Water Rate Discussion with the Finance Committee
- b. Review water system discussion below Maximum Meadow Way
- c. Discussion about a conservation easement on the Vondell Reservoir
- d. Discussion about December meeting and having our state representatives present to talk about taxes

C. Citizen Comments – none

D. Manager's Report (6:01PM)

Eric Duffy announced a reminder regarding the bond vote on December 10 to acquire the Vondell Reservoir and related projects, with absentee ballots available at the clerk's office.

Eric Duffy mentioned an informational session on Thursday December 5th at 6PM at Town Hall and on Zoom, before the December 10th vote on the bond for the Vondell Reservoir

Wassail weekend December 13-14

Town Hall Closed for Thanksgiving and the day after

E. Votes

Planning Commission – Meghan Landis

Ray Bourgeois introduced Meghan Landis, who provided a brief background on her architecture and interior design experience.

Meghan Landis expressed her interest in getting more involved with the community and shaping Woodstock's village and town positively.

Ray Bourgeois asked if Meghan Landis has attended any meetings, to which she responds she has attended one planning commission meeting.

Motion: by Susan Ford to appoint Meghan Landis to the Planning Commission
(6:05PM)

Seconded: by Laura Powell

Vote: 4-0-0, passed.

E911 Road Name Change (6:06PM)

A road name change from Reading Road to Mount Moses Trail is discussed

Motion: by Susan Ford to change the name of Reading Road to Mount Moses Trail.
(6:07PM)

Seconded: by Greg Fullerton

Vote: 4-0-0, passed.

Route 4- High School sign/speed limit (6:07PM)

Eric Duffy presented a request from the high school superintendent for signage and reduced speed limits in front of the high school to improve safety.

The board discussed the possibility of adding a crosswalk and flashing lights, with some members expressing support for these measures.

Motion: by Laura Powell to approve the speed limit and signage and considered the addition of a crosswalk and flashing sign (6:12PM)

Seconded: by Susan Ford

Vote: 4-0-0, passed.

Ambulance Billing per Capita Funds (6:13PM)

The board discussed and approved the annual subscription rate for EMS services, with a focus on maintaining consistent rates for member towns.

Olmstead Contract- For Town Forest

Eric Duffy presented the Olmsted contract renewal, which includes a request to include road repair costs for heavy trucks using Long Hill.

The board agreed to include language in the contract acknowledging the additional wear and tear on roads caused by heavy trucks.

ARPA reallocation (6:18pm)

Eric Duffy discussed ARPA reallocation, mentioning he wants all the contract in by December. He mentioned a bill for South Woodstock beautification which is a painting project that will not be finished before December.

Motion: by Susan Ford use the unallocated money from the South Woodstock Wastewater Treatment Plant improvements to pay toward the tower, with the understanding that the painting of the tank will be done from general funds.

(6:20PM)

Seconded: by Laura Powell

Vote: 4-0-0, passed.

EDC – Website subscription funds (6:20PM)

Jon Spector and Greta Calabrese discussed the need for a technical website maintenance contract of \$2,500 to ensure the website remains functional.

Motion: Laura Powell to approve a \$2,500 allocation for a six-month hourly contract to maintain the website (6:22PM)

Seconded: by Susan Ford

Vote: 4-0-0, passed.

Greta Calabrese presented the case for a new website build, highlighting the current website's high maintenance costs and outdated technology.

The board supported the RFP for a new website build but emphasized the need for the Chamber to meet its responsibilities in maintaining the current website.

F. Discussion

Water Rate Discussion with the Finance Committee (6:33PM)

Laura Powell outlined goals for a new water rate card, including incentivizing meter installation, stratifying rates based on usage, and providing subsidies for affordable housing.

The board discussed the challenges of self-reporting usage for non-metered accounts and the potential for charging based on the number of bedrooms.

Eric Duffy suggested reaching out to the water working group for insights on water rate structure.

The board agreed to have the Finance Committee develop options for water and sewer rates, with a focus on gradual change and long-term planning.

Maxham Meadow Way (6:52PM)

Reese Brown and Mark Knott discussed the need for the town to take over the maintenance of Maxham Meadow Way, citing the road's public use and the current association's inability to manage it.

Laura Powell and Susan Ford expressed concerns about the lack of authorization from the road association and the need to involve all private property owners.

The board tabled the discussion until proper authorization is obtained from the road association.

Motion: by Susan Ford to table the discussion until proper authorization is obtained from the road association. (7:05PM)

Seconded: by Laura Powell

Vote: 4-0-0, passed.

Sewer Update

Eric Duffy provided an update on the wastewater plant renovation project, mentioning potential cost savings with new technology.

The board agreed to have Hoyle Tanner present at the next meeting to discuss the potential cost savings and seek feedback before moving forward with a bond vote.

FY26 Budget discussion

Eric Duffy discussed the next FY26 budget, mentioning a kickoff meeting with the board and the finance team's revamped budget.

Water System Update (7:10PM)

Susan Ford talked about a separate bond to purchase of the Vondell for \$1.6 million, mentioning conversations with the Vermont Land Trust and potential town forest grants.

Susan Ford explained the Town forest grants and the possibility of privately fundraising to help with the purchase.

Eric Duffy sought clarity on the implications of the town voting to have the land trust involved, and Susan Ford explained the development restrictions and recreation use allowed under a conservation easement.

Barbara Otranto questioned the decision to hold back developmental rights on 80 acres, suggesting that planning for the future should stop any development.

Susan Ford explained the potential future flexibility for the town, including the possibility of selling acreage for development if needed.

Laura Powell supported the idea of pursuing discussions with the land trust, emphasizing the importance of future flexibility.

Eric Duffy clarified that the December 10 vote will be for the bond up to 1.6 million for the Vondell, and the board can decide later if they want to pursue an easement.

Roger Logan suggested holding back developable areas for potential multi-family housing, which Susan Ford agrees with, emphasizing no plans for immediate development.

Antonia Richie inquired about approaching the Nature Conservancy for potential grants, and Susan Ford mentioned informal discussions.

Antonia Richie also raised concerns about the lack of public discussion on the listserv regarding Vondell, and Susan Ford explains ongoing efforts to inform the community.

Jeffrey Kahn asked about the water section of the Vondell and restrictions in the future, Susan Ford clarifies that the grant previously discussed is a Forest grant, and the language of the grant would allow use of the Vondell in the future for water if needed.

Eric Duffy clarified that the bond for \$1.6 million is for both water and conservation purposes, and the Selectboard is putting money aside for a new well at \$700,000.

Laura Powell emphasized that the bond is for multiple uses, including conservation and recreation, and not solely for water.

Barbara Otranto and Laura Powell discussed the need for clarification on the bond's purpose and the potential development of the land.

Laura Powell presented a new proposal for bond allocation, suggesting that the Vondell be paid for by all taxpayers and the water projects by users only.

The slideshow started with the two articles that will be voted on December 10th,

1. The bond purchase of property known as the Vondell for up to \$1.6 Million
2. To finance the debt required to do the following projects for up to \$6.7M
 - a. Replace the water main from the storage tank to the Rec Center bridge (1B) \$5M
 - b. New well and pump to replace well #005 (\$800,000)
 - c. Elm Street water main suspension (\$900,000)

Eric Duffy calculated the annual cost for taxpayers and users, estimating a \$114 increase per year for all taxpayers.

Ray Bourgeois and Peter Shoemaker discussed the impact of hydrant fees on the budget and the need to include public service buildings in the allocation.

Eric Duffy clarifies that hydrant fees are currently paid by all taxpayers and would continue to be under the proposed allocation.

The board agreed to reconvene on Thursday morning to further discuss and finalize the bond allocation.

G. Approval Minutes

Motion: by Susan Ford to approve the minutes from 10.08.24, 10.15.24, 10.23.24, 11.04.24, 11.08.24 (8:21PM)

Seconded: by Laura Powell

Vote: 4-0-0, passed

Motion: by Laura Powell to approve the minutes from 10.03.24 (8:21PM)

Seconded: by Ray Bourgeois

Vote: 4-0-0, passed

H. Adjournment

Motion: by Susan Ford to adjourn the meeting at (8:21PM)

Seconded: by Greg Fullerton

Vote: 4-0-0, passed

Respectfully submitted,

Kitty Mears Koar

**Town of Woodstock
Selectboard Meeting
November 21st, 2024
9:30AM
Town Hall & Zoom
Minutes**

Draft minutes are subject to approval.

Present: Chair Ray Bourgeois, Laura Powell, Greg Fullerton, Susan Ford, Keri Cole

Staff: Eric Duffy

Public: Roger Logan

Call to order

1. Chair Ray Bourgeois called the Selectboard meeting of November 21st to order at 9:30AM

B. Addition to & deletions from posted agenda -none

C. Citizen Comments – none

D. Discussion

Discussion and vote on the allocation of Vondell and capital project funds

Eric Duffy provided an update on the status of the allocation plans & mentioned a bond vote scheduled for December 10th

The original idea was to have the Elm Street pipe and the new well being paid for by only users, and splitting costs for 1B and Vondell between all taxpayers based on house appraisal.

At the last meeting a Selectboard member made a presentation which summarized having all four of the capital projects being a paid for by users, Vondell would be paid by all taxpayers, hydrant fees would be increased to \$270 a quarter to help offset some of that cost.

The board was given time to consider and possibly propose their own alternatives.

Susan Ford discussed the challenges of using hydrant fees and the potential need for adjustments based on interest rates and grants.

Susan Ford's proposed payment from the bond be a percentage: 23% all taxpayers, 27% local option tax payment, and a 49.6% water user.

Eric Duffy clarified Susan Ford's proposal, noting that the local option tax payment would remain constant while user and taxpayer payments would adjust annually.

Greg Fullerton asked for a breakdown of the percentage split between non-users and users.

Susan Ford explained that 23% would be paid by all taxpayers, including users, and 49.6% users via the water rate, which has not been decided.

Susan Ford clarified that all the capital projects would be paid through these percentages and the Vondell would be paid by all taxpayers.

The board discussed the implications of this proposal, including potential dissatisfaction among users and non-users.

A board member suggested decreasing the economic development fund contribution to the Vondell project.

Susan Ford argued that Vondell is not immediate economic development and should not use EDC funds.

Ray Bourgeois preferred keeping the entire 1% tax for all infrastructure projects.

Eric Duffy summarizes the board is leaning toward Susan Fords proposal: Vondell will be paid by all taxpayers based on house appraisal. Elm Street Bridge, 1B, New well- 23% for all taxpayers, 27% for local option tax, and 49.6% for water users in the first year. With the allocation decreasing every year as the interest rate decreased.

Susan Ford emphasized the importance of keeping options open for future adjustments based on interest rates and grants.

Eric Duffy opens the floor for public comment, with Roger Logan expressing satisfaction with the compromise.

Motion: by Keri Cole to approve the allocation of Vondell will be paid by all taxpayers based on house appraisal. Elm Street Bridge, 1B, New well- 23% for all taxpayers, 27% for local option tax, and 49.6% for water users (9:47AM)

Seconded: by Susan Ford

Vote: 5-0-0, passed

Adjournment

Motion: by Susan Ford to adjourn the meeting at (8:49AM)

Seconded: by Greg Fullerton

Vote: 5-0-0, passed

Respectfully submitted,

Kitty Mears Koar

**Town of Woodstock
Selectboard Meeting
Special Informational Session
December 5th, 2024
6:00 PM
Town Hall & Zoom
Minutes**

Draft minutes are subject to approval.

Present: Chair Ray Bourgeois, Laura Powell, Greg Fullerton, Susan Ford, Keri Cole

Staff: Eric Duffy, Kitty Mears Koar

Public: Mike Moriarty, Sarah West

Call to order

1. Chair Ray Bourgeois called the Selectboard meeting of December 5th to order at 6:00PM

B. Addition to & deletions from posted agenda -none

C. Citizen Comments – none

D. Discussion

Presentation of water capital improvements and Vondell Property

Laura Powell introduced herself and explained the purpose of the meeting, which is to provide information on the upcoming bond vote.

Laura Powell outlined the two articles on the ballot: one for bonding the purchase of the Vondell Reservoir property for up to \$1.6 million and another for financing infrastructure projects for up to \$6.7 million.

The first article involves bonding the purchase of the Vondell property, a 358-acre parcel used for hiking, mountain biking, birding, and fishing.

The property is currently enrolled in the state's current use program, which allows for grants towards conservation and recreation if the town owns it.

Laura Powell noted that with our acquisition of the water company, we retain easements to the tank and the use of the water in the reservoirs as it exists currently, regardless of ownership.

The board has agreed to bring the option to purchase the Vondell to the voters per the terms acquisition with the Woodstock Aqueduct Company.

The property has ecological importance and is designated as high-priority lands by Fish and Wildlife.

The Vondell was a source of drinking water until 1988 and could be reincorporated into the system in the future if needed due to climate change.

The property is used for recreational activities, including mountain biking trails developed by the Woodstock Area Mountain Bike Association and fishing by Vermont Fish and Game.

The town is working with the Vermont Land Trust and private donors to secure funding for the bond.

Susan Ford mentioned the Vermont Land Trust potential grant of \$150,000 or more, which would help the town own the property.

The cost to buy the Vondell is estimated at \$12.71 per \$100,000 of assessed value per year, with the highest payment in the first year.

Eric Duffy clarified that the interest rate used for the estimate could fluctuate based on the rate in March.

The cost does not include the possibility of grants or donations, making it the maximum possible amount.

The payment will decrease each year as the interest is paid off.

The second article involves financing infrastructure projects, with the biggest project being the replacement of the water main from the storage tank to the Rec Center bridge. The project will also address fire flow deficiencies by bringing most fire hydrants into compliance with state standards.

The current 8-inch service pipe will be replaced with a 12-inch pipe, which will help mitigate water loss within the system.

The payments will be based on assessed property value, with an estimated cost of \$11.75 per \$100,000 of assessed value.

The Selectboard has tasked the Finance Committee with developing a new rate card for both water and sewer rates.

The budget includes employee salaries, maintenance and repairs, a capital reserve fund, and other necessary expenses.

The vote will be done by Australian ballot on Tuesday December 10th, with voting hours from 7 AM to 7 PM at Town Hall.

Absentee ballots can be requested from the clerk's office starting tomorrow.

Mike Moriarty, Sarah West, and Kitty Mears Koar asked questions, and Eric Duffy, Susan Ford and Laura Powell provided detailed answers to these questions, clarifying the budget, the allocation of costs, and the potential benefits of the projects.

Eric Duffy thanked the Select Board and the community for their participation and support throughout the process.

Laura Powell reiterates the importance of supporting both bonds for the future of the town and its water system.

Adjournment

Motion: by Greg Fullerton to adjourn the meeting at (6:38PM)

Seconded: by Laura Powell

Vote: 5-0-0, passed

Respectfully submitted,

Kitty Mears Koar