

# The Town of Washington

"THE FIRST WASHINGTON OF ALL"

March 10, 2014

7:00 p.m.

Town Council Meeting

Approved Minutes

- CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Sullivan called the Town Council to order at 7:00 p.m. Council members Jerry Goebel, Gary Schwartz, Dan Spethmann, Patrick O'Connell, and Mary Ann Kuhn were present. Council member Alice Butler was absent. Town Attorney John Bennett and Town Clerk Laura Dodd were present. \_

Mayor Sullivan discussed that Alice Butler was absent due to a broken collar bone and that she had decided not to run again for Council. He announced that Katharine Leggett had filed to run for Council along with all the other Council members except Ms. Butler.

- MINUTES: November 11, and November 18, 2013 minutes: Ms. Kuhn made a motion to approve the minutes of November 11, and November 18, 2013 and Mayor Sullivan seconded and the motion passed 6-0.

- REPORTS: Treasury Report: Mr. Goebel reviewed the attached Bank Summary Report, the Bills-To-Be Paid List, and the Additional Bills to Be Paid List. He discussed that there was no water report for the month but it would be available next month. He also discussed that the Meals and Lodging Taxes had come in after the end of the month so were not reflected in the report but would show up next month.

Mr. Spethmann made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report and Mr. O'Connell seconded and the motion passed 6-0.

Planning Commission: Chairman Schwartz discussed that the Planning Commission would not be meeting this month and that there still was a Planning Commission vacancy.

Architectural Review Board: Mayor Sullivan reported that at the next ARB meeting the committee would be reviewing an application from the Inn at Little Washington for some fencing of electrical equipment.

Website: Ms. Kuhn reported that the Town would be updating the Town website for the White Moose Inn and taking out the Heritage House.

- TOWN ATTORNEY: Mr. Bennett had no report.

Mayor Sullivan invited Scott Leake from Congressman Hurt's office to say a few words to the Council.

Mr. Leake discussed that Congressman Hurt's 5<sup>th</sup> district was larger than the state of Vermont and he invited the Council to attend a breakfast at Graves Mountain on March 18<sup>th</sup>.

- PUBLIC HEARING: Consideration and adoption of an Ordinance to repeal and re-enact a tax on Meals and Lodging with no change in the tax rate of 2.5% from the existing Ordinance: Mayor Sullivan discussed that the Meals and Lodging Tax Ordinance needed to be revised to be consistent with state statues and it needed a slight change in the definition of a restaurant. He discussed that there were no substantial changes.

Mayor Sullivan opened the Public Hearing.

As there were no comments, Mayor Sullivan closed the Public Hearing.

Mr. Schwartz asked if the revised Ordinance needed to go before the Planning Commission.

Mr. Bennett said no.

Mr. Schwartz made a motion to accept and adopt the revised Meals and Lodging Ordinance as presented and Mr. Goebel seconded the motion and a roll call vote was taken:

Mr. Spethmann vote “yes”

Ms. Kuhn voted “yes”

Mr. Goebel voted “yes”

Mr. O’Connell voted “yes”

Mayor Sullivan voted “yes”

Mr. Schwartz voted “yes”

And the motion passed 6-0.

- OLD BUSINESS: b). Music Festival Update: Mayor Sullivan asked Mr. Ben Jones and his wife, Alma Viator, to answer any questions that the Council might have regarding the May 17<sup>th</sup> Music Festival at Avon Hall.

Mr. Jones discussed that the festival would be hosting a kind of music referred to as Americana, which was influenced by the blues, rock-a-billy, rhythm and blues, and folk music which was popular but not main stream and was considered an alternative to country and folk music. He gave examples of Joan Baez and Emmy Lou Harris as being Americana musicians. He discussed that there would be two separate venues, one outside on the Avon Hall grounds from 1 p.m. to 6 p.m. where the Gold Top Ramblers, Big Buster and the Dirty Dogs, Piedmont Blues Players, and Irene Kelly would play. He discussed that the second venue would be at the Theatre with David Olney and Sergio Webb and closing with Robin and Linda Williams.

He discussed that the cost of the tickets was \$25 for each event or \$40 for both. He discussed that they hoped to see 300 to 500 people and that it wasn’t going to be a money maker but they did hope to break even.

Ms. Viator discussed that they hoped non-profits would sell water, soft drinks, and hot dogs and asked for suggests for vendors. She also asked for guidance on marking the grounds for the event.

Mr. Spethmann asked about parking.

Ms. Viator discussed that they hoped to use the Black kettle property and the Fire Department parking lot.

Mr. O’Connell discussed that the festival was a charming idea and asked if it was being financed by her company.

Ms. Viator said yes.

Mr. O’Connell suggested that they might want to consider using food trucks for selling food.

Mr. Spethmann volunteered to coordinate the layout of the event with RappFlow and the Old Rag Naturalists.

After a short discussion Mayor Sullivan invited the audience to come back with any ideas on how to make the event more fun and discussed that Cooter (Mr. Jones) had a great sound with very good music.

b). Wastewater System Update: Mayor Sullivan discussed that there were several issues that needed to be addressed at the Wastewater Treatment Plant some of which were exacerbated by the severe cold weather of the last few months. He discussed that when the plant was built a second sand filter had been eliminated from the design in order to save about \$300,000. He discussed that the one existing filter worked well but sometimes got overloaded and now the Town needed to spend a small but real investment on it. He discussed that the Town had had several violation notices from DEQ regarding high suspended solid levels. He referred to an Action Plan presented by ESS, attached, which outlined a plan to help resolve some of the problems at the plant.

Don Hearl, from ESS, led the Council through a discussion of the Action Plan. He discussed Group I, items 1 through 5, of the plan, which was critical and a high priority including removing scum from both SBR tanks surfaces, installing new chemical feed lines, replacing a ductile iron filter feed force main pipe with PVC, installing a filter control valve on the filter feed line, and inspecting and cleaning the sand filter.

He discussed that Group II, items 1 through 3, was a high priority but not critical and included replacing the SBR #2 valve actuator and rebuilding the plug valve, fabricating and installing a platform to provide worker access to service the SBR #2 plug valve, and installing a flow diversion pipe extension.

He discussed that Group III was non-critical.

He discussed that if the Town continued to violate the suspended solid levels it could result in penalties. He discussed that the Town was being proactive and was meeting with DEQ to work out how to solve the problem.

Mr. Spethmann made a motion to approve up to \$14,000 for the Group I repairs and up to \$11,000 for the Group II repairs and Ms. Kuhn seconded the motion and a roll call vote was taken:

Mr. Schwartz abstained.	Mayor Sullivan voted “yes”
Mr. O’Connell voted “yes”	Mr. Goebel voted “yes”
Ms. Kuhn voted “yes”	Mr. Spethmann voted “yes”

And the motion passed 5-0 with Mr. Schwartz abstaining.

Mr. Schwartz discussed that the freezing issues at the plant needed to be addressed and that pipes needed to be insulated. He recommended that a list of on-going issues needed to be made and tracked including testing the Inn’ effluent, getting the generators serviced on a regular basis, renting an incoming flow meter and monitoring the incoming flow, getting pressure gages for the force mains, and getting a spare actuator valve.

The Council directed Ms. Dodd to get quotes on generator services for both the Water Treatment Plant and the Wastewater Treatment Plant generators.

Mr. Spethmann discussed that for planning and budget purposes the Town should be looking at a 6 year replacement plan for items wearing out at the plant.

a). Avon Hall Update: Ms. Kuhn reported that the Avon Hall Committee had met and had included Alan Comp, Ray Gooch, Katharine Leggett, Dan Spethmann, and herself. She discussed that a lot of ideas had been tossed around but it was hard to do anything without having an appraisal. She asked the Council to approve up to \$5000 to have an appraisal done.

Mr. Bennett discussed that it would be hard to find a comp for Avon Hall and an appraisal might not be reflective of the market especially for such an unusual piece of property.

Mr. Spethmann discussed that the Town could let the appraiser have an idea of what the Town was looking for. He discussed that there needed to be a starting point.

Mr. Bennett discussed that the Town could gather market values at a much lower cost.

Mayor Sullivan discussed that the property could be rezoned to create value.

Mr. Spethmann discussed that an inspection might provide value.

Mr. O'Connell discussed there was flexibility for someone to buy or lease the property and in having the zoning altered. He discussed that the selling point was the setting and the site had potential and could be a showplace for a person with vision and even a greater amount of money.

Ms. Kuhn discussed that Mr. Spethmann was not only looking at the house but was also looking at the whole property as a campus.

Mr. Spethmann discussed looking at taking advantage of the property by using it in connection with education.

After some further discussion, Ms. Kuhn and Mr. Spethmann agreed to come back to the Council with some type of game plan for Avon Hall.

- NEW BUSINESS: a).
- PUBLIC FORUM: Mayor Sullivan opened the Public Forum:

The Council agreed by consensus to hold a work session on Monday, April 7, 2014 at 9 a.m. on the FY 2014-2015 Budget.

Mr. Phil Irwin expressed his concerns about properties for sell at the entrance of Town.

Mayor Sullivan closed the Public Forum.

- CLOSED SESSION:

ADJOURNMENT: At 10:20 p.m. Mr. Spethmann made a motion to adjourn and Mr. Schwartz seconded and the motion passed 6-0 and the meeting was adjourned.

NEXT REGULARLY SCHEDULED COUNCIL MEETING TO BE HELD ON April,  
2014

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Dodd

## Town Clerk

### Attachments:

Treasurer's report  
Additional Bills to be Paid  
Bills to be Paid  
ESS Water Contract  
TW SU # 12-01-01 Meuse Tourist Home