

**TOWN OF SPRINGFIELD
SELECTBOARD HALL – 96 MAIN STREET – THIRD FLOOR
REGULAR SELECTBOARD MEETING
MONDAY, October 23, 2023**

APPROVED MINUTES

A. CALL MEETING TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND ROLL CALL

Chair, Kristi Morris, called the meeting to order at 6:32 pm. Pledge of Allegiance was recited, and Roll Call was taken.

Selectboard Members: Chair Kristi Morris, Vice Chair Michael Martin, Everett Hammond, and Walter Martone were present in-person. Crissy Webster was not in attendance.

Administration: Town Manager Jeff Mobus was present in-person. Planning and Zoning Administrator Chuck Wise and Library Director Sue Dowdell joined via Zoom.

School Board Liaison: Steve Karaffa was not in attendance

B. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Under I V.S.A. 313 (a) (3), the purpose of this executive session is to discuss the appointment, employment, or evaluation of a public officer or employee. Chair Kristi Morris discussed that they will be interviewing two candidates for the Development Review Board.

MOTION: Walter Martone moved that the Board enter into Executive Session under I V.S.A. 313 (a) (3) and the purpose is to discuss the appointment, employment or evaluation of a public officer or employee.

Seconded by: Everett Hammond

Vote: 4-0, unanimous, recognizing Crissy Webster as being absent.

The Board moved into Executive Session at 6:33 pm and no action expected to be taken immediately following Executive Session.

The Board exited Executive Session at 7:18 pm, no action was taken.

Open Local Control Commission

The Board moved into Local Control at 7:18 PM.

Act on Second Class Liquor License, Tobacco License, and Tobacco Substitute Endorsement for Agora Spirits, LLC.

Agora Spirits, LLC of Claremont NH is the purchaser of Joe's Discount Beverage and they have applied through the Department of Liquor and Lottery's (DLL) portal for the following licenses, which require local control:

- Second Class Liquor License
- Tobacco License
- Tobacco Substitute Endorsement

MOTION: Michael Martin moved to approve the DLL application 32688 for a second-class liquor license in the business name Agora Spirits, LLC.

Seconded by: Everett Hammond

Walter Martone inquired if the applicants would be changing or keeping the name of the business. Nauroz Wein in-person confirmed they would be keeping the name of the business. Nighat Wein discussed that they have been the owners of Birney's in Claremont for 20 years and kept the name of that business when they acquired it, as well.

Vote: 4-0, unanimous, recognizing Crissy Webster as being absent.

MOTION: Michael Martin moved to approval of tobacco license to DLL applicant 32689 in the business name of Agora Spirits, LLC.

Seconded by: Everett Hammond

Vote: 4-0, unanimous, recognizing Crissy Webster as being absent.

MOTION: Michael Martin moved to approve the tobacco substitute endorsement for DLL application 32690 in the business name of Agora Spirits, LLC.

Seconded by: Everett Hammond

Vote: 4-0, unanimous, recognizing Crissy Webster as being absent.

Nauroz Wein discussed that Joe Cerniglia is a very important member of the community and they would like to continue the relationship that he has with the community and serve the community to the best of their ability. Nighat Wein added that they have been in the business of retail stores for the past 22 years with businesses in New Hampshire and this will be their first business in Vermont.

***The following Local Control item was added to the agenda at the time of the meeting and not included in the meeting packet.**

Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed the application added was for 2023 liquor license renewal for a third-class liquor license for Rusted Roof, LLC d/b/a Copper Fox. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that Town Clerk Barbara Courchesne noted that this renewal had been on the DLL dashboard since April and believed they were waiting for us to act on it. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that Town Clerk Barbara Courchesne requested this be added to the meeting as it will expire at the end of the month.

MOTION: Michael Martin moved to approve DLL application 24337 for a third-class restaurant bar license for the Rusted Roof. LLC doing business as the Copper Fox.

Seconded by: Everett Hammond

Vote: 4-0, unanimous, recognizing Crissy Webster as being absent.

Close Local Control Commission

The Board returned to regular session at 7:28 PM.

C. MINUTES

1. Regular Selectboard Meeting – October 9, 2023
2. Public Hearing – October 9, 2023

MOTION: Walter Martone moved to approve the Regular Board meeting minutes of October 9, 2023, and the public hearing of October 9, 2023, as printed and distributed with revisions.

Seconded by: Michael Martin

Michael Martin inquired what 42.20 meant on page six in the 2nd paragraph from the bottom, “Michael Martin 42.20 commented on page 1 item...”. Recording Secretary Carrie Kellow noted that was meant as a guide for her when doing the minutes that the section was at minute 42 and 20 seconds of the audio recording and was intended to be deleted.

Vote: 3-0, 1 abstained, affirmative, recognizing Everett Hammond abstained due to absence and Crissy Webster as being absent.

D. ANY REQUESTED ADDITIONS TO THIS AGENDA

Town Manager Jeff Mobus requested to add an update on the Community Center heating (chimney) situation as item 10. This item was added to the agenda without objection from the Board.

E. NEW BUSINESS

ITEM #1 Appoint Budget Advisory Committee member.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus presented the “Appoint Budget Advisory Committee member” item included in the meeting packet. Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed that he has received the questionnaire from Jim Fog requesting appointment to the Budget Advisory Committee (BAC). Town Manager Jeff Mobus noted that he recommends his appointment, and this brings the number of committee members up to 7, which completes the committee. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that he reached out to the committee, and they have scheduled their first meeting for October 24th, 2023, at 7 pm.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus thanked each of the committee members for agreeing to perform this service for the Town.

MOTION: Everett Hammond moved to appoint Jim Fog to the Budget Advisory Committee.

Seconded by: Michael Martin

Chair Kristi Morris noted that Jim Fog held that capacity in years past so this is not a new member. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that Jim Fog was the BAC Chair last year.

Vote: 4-0, unanimous, recognizing Crissy Webster as being absent.

ITEM #2 Appoint Development Review Board members.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus presented the “Appoint Development Review Board members” item included in the meeting packet. Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed at the last meeting, the Board received a resignation from the Development Review Board (DRB), creating a vacancy. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that previously, the Board had appointed Michael Kollman as the alternate to the DRB and he is asking that the Board appoint Mr. Kollman to the DRB as a regular member.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed that this creates a vacancy for the alternate position and the Town has received applications from Judith Stern (withdrawn for personal reasons) and Joe Wilson for the DRB alternate position. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that he also received an application for the DRB alternate position from Bill Cronin which was given to the Board at the time of the meeting and not included in the meeting packet. Town Manager Jeff Mobus noted that earlier this evening the Board had the opportunity to interview both candidates (Bill Cronin and Joe Wilson).

MOTION: Michael Martin moved to appoint Michael Kollman as a regular member of the Development Review Board.

Seconded by: Walter Martone

Further discussion ensued that the DRB member positions have terms and the position that if approved Michael Kollman’s term would be consistent with Peter Fuller’s term that was to end March 31, 2025.

Vote: 4-0, unanimous, recognizing Crissy Webster as being absent.

Everett Hammond commented that they interviewed two exceptional candidates for the DRB alternate position, noting that both Bill Cronin and Joe Wilson both bring exceptional input on what they are looking for. Tough discussions back there.

MOTION: Everett Hammond moved to accept Joe Wilson as the alternate candidate for the DRB.

Seconded by: Michael Martin

Further discussion ensued that there is no term limit for the alternate positions.

Vote: 4-0, unanimous, recognizing Crissy Webster as being absent.

Walter Martone pointed out that in March we may have openings on the DRB because terms will be expiring, and they hope Mr. Cronin will reapply then.

Michael Martin commented that they had two exceptional candidates and Mr. Cronin's background was interesting to them. Michael Martin continued that he believes Mr. Cronin would be a valuable member of the community. Michael Martin added that they are considering rule changes to the Development Review Board's process and Mr. Wilson is familiar with the details and specifics of those rule changes. Michael Martin further added that was important for the Town to have some continuity in that regard and he (Joe Wilson) served previously on the Development Review Board as the Chair, noting that was their reasoning for choosing Joe Wilson. Michael Martin further discussed that Mr. Cronin is an exceptional candidate and confirmed that they hope that he will continue to be interested in some other position in Springfield and maybe even the Development Review Board in March.

ITEM #3 Discuss and act on Municipal Planning Grant application.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus presented the "Discuss and act on Municipal Planning Grant application" item included in the meeting packet. Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed that the Planning and Zoning Administer Chuck Wise submitted the information which includes the application and resolution

for a Municipal Planning Grant to continue the work of the Planning Commission. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that the application is due November 1, 2023.

MOTION: Everett Hammond moved to approve the Municipal Planning Grant application.

Michael Martin commented that before Chuck Wise was Planning and Zoning Administrator, the Vermont Flood Hazard and River Corridor model bylaw was presented to them, and they rejected it. Michael Martin added that one of the reasons they rejected this was because the River Corridor rules that were written would make River Street in Springfield completely undeveloped, noting it was too restrictive on that main corridor in Springfield because of the way the River Corridor bylaw section was written. Michael Martin further added that Springfield has not flooded like these neighboring communities that were affected by hurricane Irene and the most recent storm and he believes it is primarily because we have a better culvert system, better stream bed controls, and we have a flood control dam.

Further discussion ensued that the current Town match for emergency assistance is 17.5% and would go down to 12.5% if we adopted these model bylaws. Additional discussion ensued that homeowners could save 10% to 15% on their flood insurance if we pass these bylaws.

Chuck Wise, Planning and Zoning Administrator via Zoom commented that regarding the bylaws we do not have to adopt river corridors to become part of this program (Community Rating System/CRS). Chuck Wise, Planning and Zoning Administrator added that the program starts at about 5% to 15% discount and that number can increase up to 45% as we are chipping away at this program. Chuck Wise, Planning and Zoning Administrator noted that the river corridor issue is inexplicably linked to the neighborhood development area, so as we deal with that, we want to see the tradeoffs.

Seconded by: Michael Martin

Michael Martin noted that he would second the motion but would like to see us separate from the river corridor by-law as much as possible, noting that we would have the ability to amend the model by-law. Walter Martone confirmed

the concerns regarding river corridors and the development of River Street. Walter Martone added that he would be more comfortable with this if we protected that development area more by not having river corridors. Walter Martone asked to clarify if the Neighborhood Development Areas (NDAs) were contingent on adopting river corridors. Chuck Wise responded that you could have NDAs without river corridors, but the areas in the river corridors would be removed from the NDAs which would create an unusual Neighborhood Development area.

Walter Martone commented that in the Strategic Plan on item B2 workforce housing, they said they would be applying for a Municipal Planning Grant focused on workforce housing in 2024. Walter Martone inquired if this was the 2024 Municipal Planning Grant. Further discussion ensued that in 2023 we would be applying for fiscal year 2024 and in 2024 we would be applying for fiscal year 2025 and we are able to do one Municipal Planning grant per year.

Everett Hammond inquired if after this grant the Planning and Zoning Department would have an increased budget for employees, noting it is currently 1.5 full-time employees. Town Manager Jeff Mobus and Planning and Zoning Administrator both confirmed that they do not anticipate any changes to staffing in the Planning and Zoning department.

Vote: 4-0, unanimous, recognizing Crissy Webster as being absent.

ITEM #4 Discussion and possible appointment -Conservation Committee

Town Manager Jeff Mobus presented the “Discussion and possible appointment – Conservation Committee” item included in the meeting packet. Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed that under the Town Charter, the Board has the authority to create a commission or committee in response to a perceived need. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that he has been approached by a group of residents who are requesting the establishment of a Conservation Commission.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed that if the Board opts to create a commission, the Board must clearly state the reason for the creation of the body. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that the effective life of the body can be

for no more than three years and at the end of three years, the body terminates, but the Board may act to reconstitute the body if the need persists. Town Manager Jeff Mobus noted that he provided at the time of the meeting a sixth application that was received today for the committee, as well as the Vermont statutes related to Conservation Commissions.

Further discussion ensued that the State Statute allows for 3-9 members and staggered terms would not be necessary as it is only a three-year body.

Hallie Whitcomb in-person discussed that it has been wonderful for her to meet this group over the last few months and how they have morphed from their Hospital Hill project into the desire to finally manifest a conservation group for this Town. Hallie Whitcomb added that it has been very rewarding to have meetings with all these folks who all have their unique, wonderful gifts, and passions for this work. Hallie Whitcomb continued that it has been a great honor and gift to her to work with this group and as they have joined forces to get together the goals and mission statement and so on.

Hallie Whitcomb discussed that this group is all very dedicated to this kind of work, and helping as it says in our statements to educate, connect all of us better with the natural world that supports us, and how we can do that better within our Town. Hallie Whitcomb added that the question of whether to be a commission or committee did come up and she doesn't know the answer as to which this group should be. Hallie Whitcomb continued that she understands a commission would be considered something to abide by a state statute, where a Town committee would not be so obligated to the state statute, noting that would be good to have a conversation to clarify.

Michael Martin discussed that he reviewed title 24 Chapter 118 Conservation Commissions and if we agree to establish a Conservation Commission, we're obligated to follow the statute. Michael Martin continued that the statute is very specific about what the commission can do, and it appears that the State Conservation Commission is mostly concerned about preservation of tracts of land. Michael Martin reviewed aloud 24 V.S.A. § 4505 regarding the duties of Conservation Commissions. Michael Martin added that he was inclined to say they should establish a committee and the committee would be like they did for the Trails and Rural Economy.

Further discussion ensued regarding the Energy Committee (later referred to as the Sustainability Committee) was established at a time when the focus was on energy conservation such as weatherization and energy efficient light bulbs.

Michael Martin discussed that we need help to make sure that Springfield is resilient and if we can have systems in place such as this group that are willing to do the kinds of things that will help us be more resilient in a Town of Springfield, then he is in favor of this group. Michael Martin added that he does not believe they can accept the proposed mission statement as it is written, but they could constitute the committee and appoint the members tonight that would be responsible to come back to the Board with recommendations for the Board to approve as a policy.

Walter Martone discussed that he agrees with what Michael Martin said and added that he believes that we could either constitute this body through our charter or the statute, but they can't do both, because they're inconsistent. Walter Martone described the differences between the statute and the charter and noted the inconsistencies between them, noting that if constituted by statute it would need to go to the voters of the Town. Walter Martone commented that he liked Michael Martin's proposal that they constitute this committee under the Town Charter, noting that it could evolve into being under the statute in the future.

Carrie Kellow in-person commented that she believed that's ultimately what this group wants is to be a group recognized by the Town whether it's a committee or commission with a focus on conservation of natural resources we have in Springfield. Carrie Kellow continued that she believed this was acceptable, noting that the group went with the commission because that's seemed more like the board might have been more in favor of initially as things were developing. Carrie Kellow noted that initially she was working towards getting the Sustainability Committee going again and it morphed into this conservation committee.

MOTION: Michael Martin moved that the Selectboard establish a Town Conservation Committee under our charter provisions, consisting of seven members as an ad hoc committee with a life of three years with a mission

statement to be determined along the lines of the mission statement proposed to the Board for approval at a later meeting.

Seconded by: Walter Martone

Further discussion ensued to determine if they should designate the committee to have a total of seven members or if they should designate a maximum of seven members, noting that they only had six applications. Char Osterlund in-person commented that she believed they should designate how many members the committee should have because quorums if you're a public body can't meet without a quorum. Char Osterlund noted that if they say up to seven, it would be difficult to establish what the quorum would be.

Further discussion ensued that the group could come back before the Selectboard to adjust the membership needs if they fell short of having a quorum and that Vermont has an Open Meeting Law that all boards, committees, and commissions must follow. Additional discussion ensued that the group had several interested citizens that wanted to remain unofficial members.

Chair Kristi Morris commented that when the group comes back to the Board with a revised mission statement, they need to remove the provisions of the state statute 24 V.S.A. § 4501.

Char Osterlund discussed the recent legislation that was passed, 30% of Vermont for conservation by 2030 (30 by 30 principles) and 50% by 2050 and part of that legislation sets up different ecosystems and it also applies to municipal towns, as well as the state. Char Osterlund added that she believes this committee puts Springfield in a very good position to start identifying and to be right there when somebody must act on it.

Further discussion ensued that the group was additionally interested in exploring options for conserving small parcels of land. Chair Kristi Morris discussed that the 30 by 30 principles that the legislature just passed allows for smaller parcels or the working lands group to become old forest and they would qualify. Chair Kristi Morris added that there are a lot of changes on the horizon that would enable those smaller tracts of land to become useful and good in some way.

Vote: 4-0, unanimous, recognizing Crissy Webster as being absent.

MOTION: Michael Martin moved to appoint Hallie Whitcomb of Cherry Hill, Heidi Trimbach of Park Street, Carrie Kellow of Woodbury Road, Nathaniel Ells of Cherry Hill, Geetu Melwani of Breezy Hill, and Chuck Gregory of Mineral Street to the Conservation Committee.

Seconded by: Walter Martone

June Goodband in-person commented that she has gone to some of these meetings as they're organizing, and this is an amazing group of people, and she believes they should be approved.

Vote: 4-0, unanimous, recognizing Crissy Webster as being absent.

Chair Kristi Morris reminded the appointed members that they need to take the Oath of Office at the Town Clerk's office. Further discussion ensued that the committee would have an organizational meeting.

Further discussion ensued that the committee would like to work with the other Boards, committees, and commissions in the Town, including the school district. Additional discussion ensued that this committee would be an advisor to the other Boards, committees, and commission and provide recommendations. Geetu Melwani added that the group is also hoping to serve as a resource so that they can help provide input on whatever matters that might impact the conservation issues.

ITEM #5 Act on Inclusion Committee resignation.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus presented the "Act on Inclusion Committee resignation" item included in the meeting packet. Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed that he received a letter of resignation from Brandon Gulnick from the Inclusion Committee due to work pressures.

MOTION: Michael Martin moved to accept the resignation of Brandon Gulnick from the Inclusion Committee with regrets.

Seconded by: Walter Martone

Walter Martone discussed that we need to better publicize recruitment for these committees by having a more descriptive thing about what the committee is all about to really get people's attention to what they are applying for. Walter Martone added that each committee should submit to the Town Manager's office a brief description of what they want to have on the Town website, including a description of what each committee does. Town Manager Jeff Mobus agreed that made sense to do.

Further discussion ensued that the Selectboard meeting minutes would have motions and discussion about the committees when they were constituted.

Char Osterlund in-person discussed that she is on the Inclusion Committee, and this applies to everything they are doing. Char Osterlund added that they are trying to make everything more accessible to more people and agreed with Walter Martone that including the descriptions on the website is part of that. Char Osterlund noted that the Town website is sometimes hard to navigate and information about the committees is difficult to find. Char Osterlund continued it would be more proactive to make the Town committees more visible to the public.

Vote: 4-0, unanimous, recognizing Crissy Webster as being absent.

ITEM #6 Cemetery update and proposed action.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus presented the “Cemetery update and proposed action” item included in the meeting packet. Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed that the large pine trees at Oakland Cemetery have been a concern for decades. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that there are nearly 100 large pines, many of which are diseased and all of which are vulnerable to falling and causing significant damage to the memorial stones. Town Manager Jeff Mobus further added that he has spoken with the Cemetery Commission a couple of times and has received a couple of proposals to remove these trees, and this could cost as much as \$120,000.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed that the Cemetery Commission has warned a special meeting for Tuesday, October 24th, 2023, at 5pm to discuss with him the best way to remediate these trees and how that effort can be

funded. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that if we decide to at least start removing the trees this year, that will need to start very quickly and, in this case, it will be likely that he will need to act before the next Board meeting. Town Manager Jeff Mobus requested that the Board authorize him to commit up to \$25,000 this year from funds encumbered and current year budget. Town Manager Jeff Mobus further added that it is possible that remediation efforts could take more than one year and if so, he will request funds in the FY25 budget for any future expenses.

Chair Kristi Morris inquired if the trees could all be taken down in one year or not. Town Manager Jeff Mobus responded that one proposal that we've heard is they could all come down but then you're paying for it all at once. Town Manager Jeff Mobus continued that we can't take down 5-10 trees a year because they're all intertwined with each other and once you start taking down some trees, the remaining ones will be much more vulnerable to falling and causing damage. Town Manager Jeff Mobus further added that there is a natural break just about exactly in the middle so the trees could come down in two halves without overly endangering the remaining trees by taking down the first patch.

Further discussion ensued regarding the location and slope of the trees and how they may be affected by removing fewer trees at a time or strong winds.

Michael Martin inquired how much money was in the trust fund. Further discussion ensued that the Cemetery Commission was responsible for the maintenance of the cemeteries regarding perpetual care. Additional discussion ensued that the Town has a cemetery budget, but unfortunately, the cost has gotten to a point where it exceeds what we can do in the cemetery budget annually. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that the Trustee of Public Funds for the cemetery fund had as of June 30th, 2023, almost \$800,000 noting that \$500,000 of that is true endowment which means that it cannot be spent.

Further discussion ensued that the true endowment was invested by the Trustee of Public Funds with the earnings going to the Town. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that last year we got \$5,000 from earnings and he expects this year will be closer to \$10,000 because the returns have gotten better.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed that there's \$300,000, noting these numbers were all rough numbers, of what would be unrealized gains because we've been receiving the dividends and interest. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that the unrealized capital gains are also still invested. Town Manager Jeff Mobus further added that those funds the Cemetery Commission can authorize the disbursements from.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed at the second to last Cemetery Commission meeting, the Cemetery Commission said that they'd like to keep a margin of 30% of the funds, so roughly \$90,000 to \$100,000 because the market does go up and down and they thought that was important to protect against the market going down 30%. Town Manager Jeff Mobus continued they always have the half million dollars that's the corpus.

Further discussion ensued that those funds would also be needed to get more land for the cemeteries and to repair several stones in bad condition that have been damaged.

Michael Martin inquired if the actual maintenance cost for the cemeteries is born in the Town budget and all these funds are reserved for potential expenses such as acquisition of land or monument maintenance, noting that the endowment is to create a trust fund that we earn earnings that ensure perpetual care at \$5,000 a year. Michael Martin commented that our budgets is way more than \$5,000. Town Manager Jeff Mobus confirmed and added that our budget is \$60,000 or \$70,000. Michael Martin commented that the endowment of the half a million dollars is not even covering a tenth of what actual operating costs are for this perpetual care that people have contracted for. Michael Martin added that they are being asked to give \$120,000 when there's \$500,000, earning \$5,000.

Michael Martin inquired why they don't spend \$120,000 from the fund and cut down all the trees and he would guarantee that the town would pony up the extra \$5,000 a year to reimburse the fund for the money that was used for the purposes of this and in 24 years the fund would be whole again. Town Manager Jeff Mobus commented that the Selectboard doesn't have the authority to spend their (Cemetery Commission) money. Michael Martin

responded that he would propose that the Cemetery Commission spend their money.

Chair Kristi Morris inquired what the intent of Cemetery Commission's meeting tomorrow (10/24/23) night was. Town Manager Jeff Mobus responded that the intent of the meeting is to work out an agreement between the Town and the Cemetery Commission.

Walter Martone discussed that at the October 9th, 2023, Cemetery Commission meeting, the Town Manager made the request that the trust fund contribute \$22,500 this year and he inquired if they (Cemetery Commission) had acted on that. Town Manager Jeff Mobus responded that they did not act on that, noting that's the reason for the special meeting tomorrow (10/24/23). Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that was just a suggestion for if they did half the trees this year at the low bid of \$90,000 it would be \$45,000 the first year. Walter Martone inquired if they would do that portion plus the Town would do \$25,000. Town Manager Jeff Mobus confirmed and added that was if they did the low option, noting there are concerns with taking the low bid.

Chair Kristi Morris noted that the buy-in from the fund would be more desirable to take care of the trees.

MOTION: Walter Martone moved to authorize the Town Manager to commit up to \$25,000 this year from funds encumbered in the current year budget contingent upon the Cemetery Commission obligated \$22,500 from their trust fund.

Seconded by: Everett Hammond

Further discussion ensued that the Selectboard could not dictate what the Cemetery Commission uses their funds for, though if they chose not to obligate funds the motion would be withdrawn.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus noted that he would speak to the Cemetery Commission regarding Michael Martin's proposal that they do not take any earnings and get paid back over a period for the trees. Michael Martin added that the fund is more valuable to pay for immediate cost of \$120,000 than to sit there and earn a paltry \$5,000 a year, we would be much better off if

they're concerned about their earnings to guarantee their earnings on that money and to replenish that fund over a period. Town Manager Jeff Mobus responded that the \$5,000 we are getting is not the full earnings that's the interest in dividends, the unearned income, which is what's built up to \$300,000 over time is also earnings. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that whatever money is taken out they will lose earnings on that as well, so it would compound.

Everett Hammond commented that he would not want them to take too much of the funds because in the future he doesn't think any cemeteries in the State of Vermont have enough funds to maintain them as they should be maintained. Everett Hammond continued that regarding going with the low bid it was best to be cautious, noting that they must have the proper equipment to work in a cemetery. Everett Hammond added that he felt they might get a better value in the cost of removing the trees if they hired good quality tree cutters by the hour vs by the tree. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that 98 large trees even at the high bid of \$120,000 is still very reasonable.

Further discussion ensued that the Board would be comfortable with the Town Manager offering the alternative to the Cemetery Commission, that they pay everything, and the Town makes the fund whole over a period of years.

Michael Martin commented that the Cemetery Commission fund should be intended for repairs and maintenance for the facilities. Town Manager Jeff Mobus responded that the Cemetery Commission believes the funds are for capital projects and this should have been ordinary repairs done 40 years ago.

Vote: 4-0, unanimous, recognizing Crissy Webster as being absent.

ITEM #7 Act on Foreman job description.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus presented the "Act on Foreman job description" item included in the meeting packet. Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed that many years ago, prior to the acquisition of the Vactor truck, the Town combined stormwater management and property management into 2 positions that were shared between the operating fund and the water sewer fund. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that the attached job description

combines duties from the Maintenance Foreman position and the Vactor Driver position and clearly delineates how the position will be used (8 months under wastewater and 4 months for snow removal). Town Manager Jeff Mobus further added that Josh Blish has been performing these duties and agrees with the changes proposed in the job description, noting this doesn't involve a change in pay.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed that this action did open the Maintenance Foreman position and the Town went through the hiring process and extended an offer to fill the position that has been accepted. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that the new foreman will start later this week. Town Manager Jeff Mobus noted there would be a slight increase in the total payroll will be from a Maintenance Worker III to a Foreman, but this is the way we have been functioning for quite a while and have just had vacant positions.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed that he has been meeting with Jeff Strong, Cathy Sohngen, and the water and wastewater superintendent and Donny Turner and they have created a flow chart of who does what and when and who reports to who.

Further discussion ensued that the Vactor is a specialized and dangerous piece of equipment, and they were paying a stipend for the Vactor driver.

MOTION: Walter Martone moved to approve the new job description for the Wastewater Collection Foreman within the Public Works Department.

Seconded by: Everett Hammond

Town Manager Jeff Mobus noted that the Vactor was used more for the wastewater and is kept down at the treatment plant and the operator reports to Nate Fraser.

Vote: 4-0, unanimous, recognizing Crissy Webster as being absent.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus announced that the new Maintenance Foreman was Michael Kollman. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that he has been working with the State more recently. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that we have also been very fortunate that we have a licensed wastewater operator (Level II Operator) to fill the vacant position that was created by the

restructuring. Town Manager Jeff Mobus continued that means that for the first time in 15 years we have a lead operator down there.

Further discussion ensued regarding the Public Works Union Contract retirement incentive and the current staffing providing continuity for us to be able to maintain our wastewater permit from the State.

ITEM #8 Discuss regional priority list.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus presented the “Discuss regional priority list” item included in the meeting packet. Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed that at the last meeting, Walter Martone asked that this item be on the agenda for discussion. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that the Town received an email from the Mount Ascutney Regional Commission (MARC) stating that the process is now open. Town Manager Jeff Mobus further added that he included a copy of the email and the 10 projects from our region that were submitted last year so that the Board can see the types of projects under consideration. Town Manager Jeff Mobus noted that he has been told that being on the list does open doors to funding, so it does help to have a project on the list.

Walter Martone read a quote from Jason Rasmussen Regional Planning Commission's, “It's become very important to get projects on this list to be eligible for certain funding programs that flow through the Agency of Commerce and Community Development. For example, Windsor's wastewater plant project was not funded because it was not on this list. I would like to build a robust list this year.” Walter Martone continued that he saw Jason Rasmussen this morning at the Regional Planning Commission, and mentioned to him that his thought looking at the criteria and the fact that they want things that are shovel ready or close to shovel ready, he suggested our two gateway projects that are currently in the scoping process. Walter Martone added that Jason Rasmussen thought they would be excellent candidates. Town Manager Jeff Mobus agreed that those are two great projects.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that he asked about Parks and Woolson and was told that it was not close enough yet, it needs to get through the phase two and see where that is.

Further discussion ensued that some of the projects on the list have been projects that have been hanging in the wind for a long time and the list was compared to being a wish list. Additional discussion ensued that if we apply for specific funding after we get the scoping studies done, they will look at this list to see that it is identified as a regional priority.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed that he has spoken with the Regional Commission about the Northern Gateway project, and they've got alternative proposals. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that they will come back to us with three proposals for the Northern Gateway, which will probably be either November 27, 2023, or December 11, 2023. Town Manager Jeff Mobus noted that the Clinton Street Road diet alternatives should be coming in February. Further discussion ensued that these projects should be added to the list as two separate projects. Additional discussion ensued regarding the previous discussions regarding the Northern Gateway, and it was noted that the bigger challenge with the Northern Gateway project (from the bottom of Elm Hill to the VFW) is that it should not be done until the water project has gone through River Street.

Everett Hammond inquired if the road in North Springfield to the Industrial Park was included. Town Manager Jeff Mobus confirmed and added that it was called the Precision Park access road. Further discussion ensued that this project was not shovel ready. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that he would be getting a traffic engineer for that project, noting the first thing we have to decide is if we want to build a new road or if we can just replace the culvert coming in from Route 10.

Chair Kristi Morris inquired if we should include our wastewater treatment plant on the project list as there are new State requirements regarding PFAS regulations that will require us to update our facility, with the consideration that the Windsor Treatment facility was not granted funding because it was not on this list. Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed that he had been working with Nate Fraser to look into becoming a regional compost facility. Town

Manager Jeff Mobus noted that he would add it to the list, but there are opportunities for funding for regional compost facilities and we have the capacity to take that on and it may help generate revenue.

Chair Kristi Morris commented that we could add the retaining wall near the Plaza. Town Manager Jeff Mobus responded that he was told the project was not big enough to be included.

Further discussion ensued regarding the waterline on Main Street being economic development and there are better funding packages for those types of projects. Additional discussion ensued that more projects could be added to the list in six months.

Everett Hammond inquired that as the Board and management changes over time whether they should include Parks and Woolson and the regional compost facility on the list so that they don't get forgotten. Further discussion ensued that as many projects as we wanted could be added to the list, but the list is the top ten priorities of the region so other Town's in the region get opportunities for funding also.

Doug Johnston via Zoom inquired if the Highway Department facility would qualify for this list. Town Manager Jeff Mobus responded that the list is for projects that are considered development projects and not for projects that are considered repairs or maintenance of facilities. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that a new highway facility would not create an economic benefit to the area.

ITEM #9 Manager's budget message

Town Manager Jeff Mobus presented the "Manager's budget message" item included in the meeting packet. Further discussion ensued that the Board did not have any questions on the Town Manager's budget message which would also be presented to the Budget Advisory Committee.

Walter Martone drew attention to the first full paragraph on the third page of the budget message regarding the Strategic Plan and noted the importance of

making sure the Budget Advisory Committee was aware of the updated plan to use as a guide.

Further discussion ensued that the updated Strategic Plan would be added to the website the next day.

Town Manager Budget Message FY2024-2025 Budget attached and available on the Town website or upon request from the Town Manager's office.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus pointed out that it looks like we're getting awfully close to actually getting the FEMA grant for the demolition of the Weathersfield dam. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that it is at public notice state where they're going to discuss it, which he believes is the last thing before they would come back to us with a grant agreement. Town Manager Jeff Mobus continued this would be a 90% grant to deconstruct or demolish the Weathersfield Dam. Town Manager Jeff Mobus further added that we have enough funds from the voted funds years ago and earnings on them to pay our 10% and our demolition permit is good through October of 2024.

ITEM #10 Community Center Chimney

Town Manager Jeff Mobus presented the "Community Center Chimney" item not included in the meeting packet. Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed that the Parks and Rec Department (Chris Merrill and Adam Middleton) have been speaking with many different chimney sweeps. Town Manager Jeff Mobus continued that we were advised by BART energy that until the chimney was resolved, it doesn't matter what goes on down below (furnace) if it doesn't vent out. Town Manager Jeff Mobus continued that there is a large enough crack on the chimney to stick a flashlight in and has likely never been cleaned. Town Manager Jeff Mobus further added that we are being told that the chimney must be lined to function properly, because there are so many cracks.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed that he had spoken to a number of contractors in the area who said they're too small to do the work and then we had a couple that said that they couldn't get to it until next year. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that they finally got one contractor Tom Cady Chimney Sweep in Lebanon, New Hampshire and he's given us an estimate of roughly \$25,000 to

clean up the chimney and do the lining. Town Manager Jeff Mobus continued that this is the only option that we have found thus far.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed that in terms of funding, we still have \$36,000 from last year that we did not do on the windows because we did not find a contractor for the windows last year. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that we are in a situation now where it's getting awful cold, and this is the first step, and this probably would take at least a few weeks to complete and then the pump for the boiler has to be put in also.

Further discussion ensued that Michael Martin had seen the chimney situation and has experience in the heating field, and he agrees the work needs to be done. Additional discussion ensued that the problems described by Chris Merrill were likely caused by the improper draft of the chimney and the cleaning door for the chimney was blocked by the ball return rack which was believed to be put in around 1920.

Further discussion ensued that there are no reports of fumes leaking into the building but the two times they had tried to turn the furnace on the Fire Department had to respond.

Everett Hammond inquired if the brick work on the chimney would stand up with the work. Further discussion ensued that the liner would remediate the issues caused by the cracks and the chimney was structurally sound aside from the very top 2-3 feet.

Further discussion ensued to determine if there was any familiarity with Tom Cady Chimney Sweep and that his quote appeared to be well thought out and put together. Everett Hammond requested that they do a couple of reference checks on Tom Cady Chimney Sweep.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed that BART Energy will be coming to do the pump work, but they would likely not be able to do the pump work until the first week of December. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that the Congregational Church is willing to let us rent the church Monday through Wednesday at \$100 a day, because they have to heat it and everything which he believes is reasonable. Town Manager Jeff Mobus further added that he will talk to the seniors about this option and see if they are willing to do that.

Further discussion ensued that this is considered an emergency repair, and the Town Manager was making sure to communicate to make sure they are all on the same page. Additional discussion ensued that the Board would still make a motion for this since the Town Manager was bringing this to them before the repair.

MOTION: Everett Hammond moved to accept Tom Cady Chimney Sweep LLC proposal for \$25,300 for relining the chimney and other chimney work at the Community Center providing favorable reference checks and insurance.

Seconded by: Walter Martone

Chair Kristi Morris noted that he liked that Tom Cady added compensation to the quote if we were to help out.

Wes Marshall SAPA TV in-person commented that community members use the Community Center every week for pickleball, shuffleboard, and cribbage. Wes Marshall continued that Lori Johnson has gotten a couple of heaters in there to take the chill off a little.

Vote: 4-0, unanimous, recognizing Crissy Webster as being absent.

F. FINANCIAL REPORTS

FY2024 Warrants to October 20, 2023 -copies on website.

Town Manager, Jeff Mobus stated that any questions regarding these warrants should be directed to the Finance Director, Cathy Sohngen.

G. MANAGER'S REPORT

Town Manager Jeff Mobus presented the "Manager's report" item included in the meeting packet. Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed that after meeting with the Public Works department, they decided that, if feasible, they would like to perform an emergency repair to the bridge on Greeley Road. Town Manager Jeff Mobus continued that they will be meeting soon with engineers to develop cost estimates and plans to bring to the Board. Town Manager Jeff Mobus noted that it would be very difficult to establish turnarounds on both

sides in order to maintain school bus turnarounds. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that we have been working diligently to get a chimney sweep to work on the Community Center. Town Manager Jeff Mobus noted that no one has been either available or able to do the work. Town Manager Jeff Mobus further added that this needs to be done before the heat can be turned on, the need is urgent.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed that this year's water project is very near the end. Town Manager Jeff Mobus continued that the new water lines are in and are being used. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that there will be a flow test this coming week to determine the additional capacity, we have been reached out to by the State to see if we would have enough capacity to take on Best Western, State garage, and the gas station down there noting that the water is currently supplied by Charlestown and it is believed that there is going to be work done on the old toll bridge. Further discussion ensued that the State would be responsible for extending the water line to that area.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed that next week, he will be attending the Annual Town Meeting Conference in Warren, Vermont. Town Manager Jeff Mobus noted that he will be out of the office both Thursday and Friday to attend the meeting. Town Manager Jeff Mobus thanked the department heads for their efforts to develop the most efficient budget possible to serve the Town's needs for FY25.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus announced that he does not have an event permit but has the insurance certificate for Trunk or Treat event. Town Manager Jeff Mobus additionally announced that the SEVCA store would be closing in December, noting that a lot of people rely on that store for basic needs. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that we may be trying to see if there's anything else we can do to help them with those needs. Town Manager Jeff Mobus continued that he may try to coordinate with SEVCA and the Housing Authority to see if there's something that we can do to make that transition less harmful. Further discussion ensued that with SEVCA's store closing they would still be offering their other services to the community.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus announced that he received a letter of retirement from Dan Farrar, so Dan Farrar will be retiring from the transfer station

effective December 31, 2023. Town Manager Jeff Mobus noted that we will get that position posted.

H. FUTURE AGENDA ITEM PROPOSALS

No future agenda item proposals at the time of the meeting.

I. COMMITTEE REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair Kristi Morris noted that Halloween was coming up and cautioned the citizens of Town to be careful when they are out and about with traffic concerns, noting it does get dark in the evening.

J. OTHER MINUTES & CORRESPONDENCE

Chair Morris read aloud the list of Other Minutes and Correspondence and noted these are all available online.

1. Southeastern Vermont Community Action (SEVCA) -Letter of October 13, 2023
2. Springfield Housing Authority -Minutes of September 12, 2023
3. Springfield Housing Unlimited -Minutes of September 12, 2023
4. Springfield Senior Center -November 2023 newsletter
5. Springfield Town Library-Minutes of October 10, 2023
6. Springfield Trails & Rural Economy Committee-Annual report 2022-2023

K. CITIZENS' COMMENTS

Jules O'Guin via Zoom commented that there is standing deadwood in the Commons Park and inquired if we were getting closer to removing them. Town Manager Jeff Mobus responded that Donny Turner is trying to get a tree contractor to deal with those trees.

L. ADJOURN

MOTION: Michael Martin moved to adjourn the meeting.

Seconded by: Everett Hammond

Vote: 4-0, unanimous, recognizing Crissy Webster as being absent.

The meeting adjourned at 9:33 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Carrie M. Kellow, Recording Secretary