

Windsor selectmen set tax rate; agree to hire road supervisor

by Beth Choate

The Windsor selectmen set the tax rate and recommended officially hiring a road supervisor at the August 3 selectmen's meeting.

At the beginning of the meeting interim road supervisor, Keith Hall, gave the selectmen an update on Windsor Public Works. Hall was replacing culverts on the Legion Park Road and would soon do one on the Melany Road. The following week he planned to assist in the removal of a tree in the Sheepscot River off the Maxys Mill Road. He had also done some brush cutting and planned on renting a chipper.

Paving bids will be opened at the August 17 selectmen's meeting and Hall had been meeting with perspective pavers to go over the paving projects.

At the annual town meeting the town's residents voted to raise the road construction budget line by \$100,000. The selectmen had already increased this line by \$50,000, so the total road construction budget for this year is \$250,000. Hall said he expects

the town will be able to afford to get all their planned road construction projects done.

The selectmen decided it was time to officially appoint a new road supervisor. Selectmen Ronnie Brann said, "Keith Hall has done a bang-up job and I think we should make him full time road supervisor."

Selectman Ray Bates agreed, "Keith has done a good job. I'm happy with his interest in the job and his go get 'em attitude." The selectman asked town manager Theresa Haskell her opinion and she said he is very open with her; if there is an issue, they both go look at it. The selectmen voted unanimously to recommend officially hiring Keith Hall as the road supervisor.

The town tax assessor, Vern Zeigler, gave the selectmen a presentation on the town's assessed value. The total real estate value in the town is \$173,269,100 and the personal property value in the town is \$3,125,500. This is a 5.6 million dollar increase over last year. Two million dollars of the assessed personal property value

came from Pike's portable asphalt plant which they had at their Windsor facilities on April 1 this year. Real estate value is up from CMP purchasing parcels of property and from the new buildings in town.

The total taxes the town must pay (including county, school and municipal) is \$2,863,614, but with revenue set at \$691,540, the amount to be raised through local taxes is \$2,172,074. The selectmen set the tax rate at 12.4 mils, which would give them a \$54,000 overlay. This is a two tenths of an increase from last year's mil rate.

The selectmen opened the roadside mowing bids and awarded the bid to Arthur Kennedy, of Union, who had the lowest bid of \$2300.

The selectmen discussed filling vacancies on the planning board. The planning board meets Tuesday with CMP to begin the approval process for their project of upgrading some power lines and building a new substation. This project is scheduled to be complete by 2014. There will be

a public informational meeting on Tuesday, August 24, at 6 p.m., when CMP will go over the phas-

es of construction and their schedule for construction. All townspeople are invited.

The Red Barn in Augusta celebrates opening of new addition

A ribbon cutting ceremony was held July 20 with Mayor Roger Katz to celebrate the opening of the new addition to the Red Barn Restaurant located at 455 Riverside Drive, Augusta.

The Red Barn opened in 1977, when Bob Benedict started serving chicken and seafood. Over the past 33 years, all 10 of Bill and Florence Benedict's children have worked there at one time or another.

In 1986, Laura Benedict took ownership of the Red Barn. With an excellent staff led by manager

Peter Benedict and brother, Ron, and the patronage of loyal customers, the Red Barn can proudly claim its status as one of the busiest family owned and operated restaurants in the area.

The new addition speaks to the concept of building on what works, and looking forward. Keeping in step with the revitalization of Augusta and the independent spirit of small business owners, it's powerful to consider what can result from unflagging support of locally owned enterprises.



Left to right Mayor Roger Katz, Peter Benedict (Laura's brother), Florence Benedict (Laura's mom), and Laura Benedict, celebrate the opening of a new addition to the Red Barn Restaurant in Augusta.

Contributed photo

Subdivision preliminary plan discussed in Vassalboro

by Mary Grow

Discussion of new Vassalboro planning board member Leon Cummings's preliminary plan for a subdivision off Crowell Hill Road took more than an hour at the board's August 3 meeting.

Cummings moved from board to audience seat to present his plan for 14 three-quarter acre lots along a private road on his property between Jack and Agnes Stearns' and Mark and Rosanna Flowers' land. The rest of the board told him what additional information he needs for a complete plan. Cummings intends to submit a complete plan at the board's September meeting. He talked about building the interior road in stages as he sells lots. He intends to build it to town specifications and eventually ask voters to accept it as a town road.

The only other applicant who attended the August 3 meeting, Tracey McKenney, received swift approval for her plan to relocate a driveway in a resource protection zone off Hannaford Hill Road.

Five other applicants on the agenda were postponed or removed from consideration:

- Robert Greig's modifications to Echo Hill subdivision and Cyrilla Collins's application for com-

mercial use of an existing building at 2283 Riverside Drive are likely to be on the September agenda.

- Bernard King, Jr.'s application to convert a shed on Kelly Road to a seasonal camp has been at least temporarily withdrawn, Codes Enforcement Officer Daniel Feeney said.

- Todd Overlock's after-the-fact application for his auto repair business in part of the former North Vassalboro woolen mill is apparently moot. Feeney said Overlock bought a building in China and intends to move by the end of August.

- Tom Bouchard, who talked with board members earlier this year about moving his machine shop into an existing building at the south end of Burleigh Road, did not reply to Feeney's phone call.

- Virginia Brackett, returning to the board after selectmen first declined to reappoint her and then reappointed her when new member Penny Plourde resigned, was again elected board chairman. The vote was 4-0, with

Sally Butler absent and Brackett not voting.

Planning board members are not sure what selectmen want when they urged a new direction on the board.

Brackett said she thinks selectmen are unhappy because under just-retired codes officer Paul Mitnik, Vassalboro had effective enforcement of local ordinances that brought more appeals and lawsuits. She pointed out at an earlier selectmen's meeting that of three lawsuits, one was between private individuals, one the board won, and the third planning board members recommended not pursuing.

Mitnik, now a planning board member, suggested procedural improvements to strengthen the board's position in future court cases. Veteran member Douglas Phillips recommended scheduling a workshop meeting on procedures.

Phillips pointed out that it is not the planning board's fault when the town has to take people to court for not abiding by permits.

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