

Bristol Town Administrator's Report

January 24, 2020

The Town Administrator's Report is intended to assist the Selectboard, and in its other capacities as Water Commission, Sewer Commission, Liquor Control Commission, etc., with the conduct of their regular or special meetings. References made to enclosures relate to printed or electronic documents provided in advance of or at the meeting and may be found online at bristolvt.org/meeting-minutes. This report is also intended to provide information to Town officials and the public about Selectboard activities and other Town affairs. Except as provided under Vermont's public records laws, all documents are available upon request.

Monday, January 27, 2020 Meeting Agenda and Materials

I. CALL TO ORDER

Item I.1. Review agenda for addition, removal, or adjustment of any items per 1 VSA 312(d)(3)(A). Among the amendments to the open meeting law that took effect July 1, 2014 is a requirement that "an item may only be added or removed from a meeting agenda as the first order of business at the meeting. Other adjustments to an agenda may be made at any time during the meeting."

RECOMMENDATION: Review and consider adjustments to the agenda.

II. PUBLIC FORUM

This is an opportunity for citizens to briefly share comments and concerns with the Board about matters *not already on the agenda*. Public Forum should not be used for lengthy discussion of a new topic, both for time management of the meeting and to allow for the public to receive notice of the matter on a future agenda.

III. REGULAR BUSINESS

Item III.1. Budget workshop: finalize general fund budget. The enclosed budget reflects the following new information since the last meeting:

- The Capital Equipment Reserve Fund reflected \$125,000 rather than \$135,000, underrepresenting the intended allocation;
- \$50,000 of the undesignated reserve fund needed to be allocated to the Capital Building Fund per voter approval of Article 7 at last year's Town Meeting; and
- Adjustments in personnel compensation.

The combination of these adjustments increased the net supported by taxes to 3.8%. Some of what happens with this agenda item will affect the Town Meeting warning agenda item below.

RECOMMENDATION: Discussion. Discuss personnel matters, if necessary, in Executive Session. If the discussion includes budgeted compensation adjustments, a final FY2021 budget figure might not be determined until the conclusion of the Executive Session.

Item III.2. Review Water and Sewer Dept. budgets and water system long range capital plan.

Enclosed are draft water and sewer budgets for inclusion in the Town Report. These are not presented as proposed budgets, but rather projections. The draft water budget projection needs to be adjusted so that the revenues and expenses match. I propose doing that by reducing Water Service Connection Fees back to \$500, increasing the Capital Reserve Fund by \$5,000, and adding \$240 to Contracted Services.

The sewer district projected budget debt retirement figure needs to be clarified before being finalized.

The water and sewer district annual meetings are held in late May or early June, when the final budgets will be voted on. That provides more time to refine the budgets to meet the systems' needs.

An updated water system capital plan and more information will be provided at the meeting.

RECOMMENDATION: Discussion. Adjustments where necessary. Determine if additional information is needed.

Item III.3. Review and finalize Town Meeting and Police District warnings. Enclosed are updated drafts of the Town Meeting and Police District warnings. The Town Meeting warning reflects the topics and allocations discussed at last week's meeting. Since then, however, additional information has been received regarding the undesignated fund balance available for redistribution that warrant revisiting some of them. The total amount available decreased from \$335,188 to \$285,188. Setting aside 5% of the total expenses would amount to approximately \$144,770 leaving \$141,410 of the undesignated fund balance available. However, the Selectboard increased the amount to set aside to \$210,000, leaving \$75,188 of the undesignated fund balance available for redistribution. Paying off the South Street Bridge loan was identified as a high priority, which is addressed in **Article 8**. Unless the Selectboard wishes to revisit the \$210,000 set-aside, subtracting the \$52,620 loan payment leaves **\$22,568 available for redistribution**.

Article 9 asks voters to approve transferring \$20,000 of the undesignated general fund balance to the Capital Building Reserve Fund. Since then, we learned that last year's voter-approved allocation of \$50,000 had not been applied that would bring that balance to approximately \$186,000. The proposed \$20K from the undesignated general fund balance would have been in addition to the \$30K already included in the budget.

Article 10 asks voters to approve transferring \$25K of the undesignated general fund balance to the Capital Paving Fund. This would be in addition to the \$125K already included in the budget.

Article 11 asks voters to approve transferring \$15K of the undesignated general fund balance to the Capital Sidewalks Fund. This would be in addition to the \$35K already included in the budget.

Article 12 asks voters to approve establishing a new Cemetery [Care] Reserve Fund and authorize the use of \$10,000 of the undesignated general fund balance to it.

Article 13 asks voters whether to authorize renaming the Conservation Reserve Fund to the *Conservation and Community Development* Reserve fund and broaden its purpose to leverage investments in community development as well as conservation. This idea behind this to provide a resource for matching funds to leverage future community development projects that would not otherwise be found in the budget. What prompted this is that some grant programs are no longer accepting in-kind time, materials, or services as matching dollars. Any use of the funds in this way would require Selectboard approval.

Articles 14 through **Article 21** address budgetary matters relating to capital appropriations, social service appropriations, DPW/Highway Dept. budget, Recreation Dept. budget, and the general fund budget.

Two years ago, voters approved from the floor reducing the penalty for delinquent taxes from 8% to 4%. We learned recently that voters would need to vote to adjust the rate each year; otherwise it reverts back to the statutory 8%. **Article 4** is a new article that proposes the penalty be adjusted to 6%.

In 2017, the Vermont Legislature amended the state statutes authorizing voters to determine whether the Town Clerk and Town Treasurer positions may be appointed by the Selectboard. Prior to that, each position was elected for either one or three year terms and authority to appoint the Town Clerk and/or Town Treasurer needed to be done by adoption of a charter change and approval by the Legislature. The Legislature's action in 2017 recognized the increasing trend of many Vermont municipalities seeking the authority to appoint their Town Clerks and/or Treasurers. **Article 6** and **Article 7** asks Bristol voters whether to authorize the Selectboard to appoint the Town Clerk and the Town Treasurer. This has come about in response to current Town Clerk/Treasurer Jen Myers' desire to separate the roles and focus on serving as Treasurer. One big difference between the elected and appointed position is residency: elected officials need to reside in the town; appointed officials do not. In the event of a vacancy, this could be an important aspect to finding the most qualified person for either position who might just happen to not live in town. If approved by the voters, the elected positions would expire after 45 calendar days after the vote or on the date the Selectboard votes to make the appointments. In Bristol's

case, Jen would be appointed Treasurer and current Assistant Clerk Sharon Lucia, who does not live in Bristol, would be appointed as Clerk.

The draft Police District warning reflects the budget numbers that were accepted at the January 10 meeting and updated meeting dates.

RECOMMENDATION: Adjustments as needed. Approve the warnings.

Item III.4. Designate alternate authorized representative for the DWSRF planning loan for the Village water line replacement engineering report. The Town's loan application for engineering services to develop the preliminary engineering report for the replacement of the lead-packed joints in the village water system is currently under review by the state. They recommended that the enclosed alternate authorized representative be included with the application. I am currently the authorized representative and this would designate Town Clerk/Treasurer Jen Myers as the alternate.

RECOMMENDATION: Approval.

Item III.5. Approval of the January 13, 2020, January 20, 2020, and January 15, 2018 (backlog, tentative) meeting minutes. Draft January 13, 2020 minutes are enclosed. Review of the January 20, 2020 and backlogged January 15, 2018 minutes are still in process. The original draft minutes are available. If not e-mailed and posted prior to Monday's meeting, they should be available by the next meeting.

V. OTHER BUSINESS.

Item VI.1. Correspondence, documents, reports received.

- Letter from Bristol Rescue re annual budget request.
- Bristol Revolving Loan Fund status through 12/31/2019.

VI. EXECUTIVE SESSION.

The Selectboard is expected to deliberate in Executive Session regarding personnel matters per 1 V.S.A. §313(a)(3) and pending litigation per 1 V.S.A. 313(a)(1)(E).

Schedule

Unless otherwise noted, I expect to be in the office from 8:00am to 4:30pm, though anything can change from day to day and often does ...

Week of January 27

Monday: 10:00am – FEMA Applicant Briefing, Middlebury
6:00pm – Selectboard.

Tuesday: In by 12:00noon

Wednesday: 5:00pm – LEPC 8 meeting at State Police Barracks, New Haven.

Week of February 3

Monday: 6:00pm – Selectboard.

Tuesday: In by 11:00am
11:00am – Bristol CORE

Wednesday: 10:00am – Meet with new Vergennes City Manager

Upcoming Meetings

Below are meetings that citizens, staff, board members, or others might be interested in. Underlined entries include on-line links for more information about the organization.

- [Selectboard](#): Mon., Jan. 27, 6:00pm at Holley Hall.
- [Selectboard](#): Mon., Feb. 3, 6:00pm at Holley Hall.
- Bristol CORE: Tues., Feb. 4, 11:00am, location TBD.
- [Conservation Commission](#): Thurs., Feb. 13, 6:00pm, at Holley Hall.
- [Selectboard](#): Mon., Feb. 17, 6:00pm at Holley Hall.
- [Planning Commission](#): Tues., Feb. 18, 7:00pm, at Holley Hall.
- [Energy Committee](#): Wed., Feb. 19, 7:00pm, at Holley Hall.

Upcoming Agenda Items

- Police Union contract review.
- VTrans annual highway mileage certification.
- Volunteer candidate interviews.
- Basin Street Preliminary Engineering Report.
- Selectboard Rules of Procedure and handbook.
- Winter maintenance policies and practices town-wide and for Main Street sidewalks.
- Class 4 highways maintenance policy.
- Process to become a Certified Local Government (CLG).
- Adirondack View right-of-way status.
- Other stuff.

Respectfully submitted,

Valerie Capels, Town Administrator