

# **Bristol Town Administrator's Report**

## **August 23, 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 documents online relate to printed or electronic documents available electronically at [bristolvt.org/meeting-minutes](http://bristolvt.org/meeting-minutes) in the Selectboard section. 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, August 24, 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."

Online is a request that has been received to add authorization to submit an application to the Addison County Regional Planning Commission (ACRPC) Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) for funding to study traffic management improvements at Bartlett's Falls. The application deadline is Sept. 11, 2020. The Lincoln Selectboard proposes to prepare the application.

RECOMMENDATION: Add to II. Public Forum for brief discussion and possibly IV. Consent Agenda or VI. Other Business for action.

REMOTE MEETING: This meeting will be conducted through the **Zoom** remote meeting on-line platform. See the connection information below. If you intend to join the Zoom meeting and have never used Zoom before, we recommend you begin the log-in process well in advance of the meeting to allow time for downloads and connections to occur.

PHYSICAL LOCATION: Holley Hall will NOT be open to the public.

CALL-IN: People without a computer or other device can call in from the number below and enter the meeting ID from the phone keypad.

TO JOIN THE ZOOM MEETING:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86214935863?pwd=TIBWcVBoWlIKdjdSM1hzQUNPdTdOUT09>

Meeting ID: 862 1493 5863

Passcode: 609749

Phone in: 1 (646) 558-8656

## 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. PUBLIC HEARING: Proposed Bristol Unified Development Regulations.

[Online](#) is the public hearing notice, and the proposed Unified Development Regulations (UDR), as presented by the Planning Commission through their August 7, 2020 transmittal and report.

Bristol's Zoning Regulations are proposed to be amended to include Subdivision Regulations for the town. The resulting proposed document would be named 'Bristol Unified Development Regulations.' The amended document is intended to implement the Bristol Town Plan and streamline the development review process, which affects all types of development throughout the town. The following list highlights the Articles and other topics substantially amended in the proposed document. Other minor changes are also proposed.

1. Article IX: the inclusion of Subdivision Regulations, Planned Unit Developments (PUDs)
2. Change from a Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA) to a Development Review Board (DRB)
3. Article X: definitions
4. Article III: the review process
5. Article VI: A new section allowing On Farm Accessory Businesses

Adam Lougee from the Addison County Regional Planning Commission, Zoning Administrator Kris Perlee, and Planning Commission Chair Katie Raycroft-Meyer are planning to Zoom in to walk us through the proposed changes and help answer questions.

The schedule for adoption is rather ambitious in an effort to get it on the November election ballot. If *substantive* changes are made to the proposed UDR following the August 24 hearing, a second public hearing would be necessary.

Because this a local vote, separate from the statewide general election, it will need to be warned as a special Town Meeting. The deadline for items to be added to the warning would be the September 28 Selectboard meeting and the warning would need to be posted by October 4. The Australian ballot would need to be mailed separately to voters who wish to vote by mail because the State will be handling the mailing of the general election absentee ballots to all voters for this election.

## IV. CONSENT AGENDA

Item IV.1. Authorization to apply for FEMA funds to reimburse eligible COVID-19 related expenses. This may have already been authorized by the Selectboard, but in case not, the application deadline is Sept. 1 to submit documentation for more than \$3,300 in

eligible COVID-19 related expenses for grant reimbursement of up to 75%. A 25% match is required.

RECOMMENDATION: Approval.

Item IV.2. Authorization to apply for Vermont Local Government Expense Reimbursement Grant for non-FEMA-reimbursed COVID-19 expenses. This grant program is intended to reimburse municipalities for the 25% match required with the above FEMA grant. The application deadline is Sept. 4.

RECOMMENDATION: Approval.

Item IV.3. Authorization to apply for a Coronavirus Municipal Records Digitization Grant. This program is intended to fund the digitization of municipal land records to accelerate capacity for on-line records research. Application deadline: September 1, 2020. Supporting documentation must be submitted on or before December 15, 2020. Eligible expenses must be incurred by December 30, 2020. Notice of award decision will be made by September 15, 2020. Awards would be up to \$20,000. No match is required.

RECOMMENDATION: Approval.

Item IV.4. Authorization to apply to the Dept. of Children and Families for grant to recover lost revenue due to COVID-19. The \$18,000 grant is intended to help support camps, afterschool programs, and childcare programs that lost revenue due to COVID-19. The funds would be used to supplement the revenue from the Adventure Camp, River Camp, Mountain Bike Camps, Make-it Break-it Camp, and the Clay studios camps. Funds would also be used to cover the cost of the COVID-19 "health officer." Application deadline is August 26, 2020. No match is required.

RECOMMENDATION: Approval.

Item IV.5. Authorization to apply to the Ben & Jerry's Foundation for grant to fund tutoring. The \$2,000 grant will fund a tutoring program for youth in the community by offering community members compensation who are willing to help and provide tutoring services. No match is required. Application deadline is August 25, 2020.

RECOMMENDATION: Approval.

Item IV.6. Authorization to apply to the Vermont Urban and Community Forestry Program Ash Tree Management Grant. The deadline for this application is October 30, 2020 and would be for activities in 2021. Though the Emerald Ash Borer Strategic Plan Committee will still be early in their work and we are not likely to have the benefit of their recommendations for this application, we can anticipate that there will be recommendations for removal and replacement of known ash trees in the Village that

this application could possibly help fund. Maximum grant award would be \$15,000 and a 50% match is required. A new Tree Planting & Maintenance line item was added in the FY2021 general fund budget under Town Parks with \$5,000 allocated to it.

RECOMMENDATION: Approval.

Item IV.7. Add Christopher Urban to the Emerald Ash Borer Strategic Plan Committee. I spoke with Chris Urban on the phone this week about his interest in participating on the Emerald Ash Borer Strategic Plan Committee. He is a resident on Maple Street and owns the Boro Hill Tree Nursery in Monkton.

RECOMMENDATION: Approval.

#### **IV. REGULAR BUSINESS**

Item IV.1. Consider a resolution to participate in an Addison County Communications Union District and appoint three representatives to it. [Online](#) is a proposal that Bristol consider joining in the formation of a new Communications Union District. Adam Lougee with the ACRPC plans to Zoom in to describe the initiative and answer any questions. An overview of the program from 5-Town Broadband Task Force member Nancy Cornell, FAQs, and a draft resolution are online.

According to Nancy Cornell in her overview, there is no financial risk to the Town and “[t]he ACCUD will be focused on expanding reliable, high speed internet access across all the towns of the county. A number of towns in our school district and elsewhere in the county have already joined, or are in the process of joining. Through Adam’s leadership, the ACCUD has already secured grants of \$110,000 and hired some terrific consultants to move forward with a feasibility study and a business plan.”

If approved, the resolution calls for appointing a one representative and two alternates.

RECOMMENDATION: Consider adoption of the resolution and appointment of three representatives.

Item IV.2. Research request for Saunders River Access, including use of Rodeo herbicide for management of Reed Canary Grass. [Online](#) are a series of communications from the Bristol Conservation Commission, Vermont Rivers Conservancy, and the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board regarding a proposal from Stever Bartlett’s request to establish a two-year research plot on Saunders River Access to study the effectiveness of mechanical methods, such as tilling and mowing, to suppress the invasive Reed Canary Grass so that newly planted tree and shrub stems in floodplain and riparian buffers have greater survivorship.

According to Stever Bartlett's proposal, the use of the Rodeo herbicide would be limited to one half of the 1/8 acre research plot, or an approx. 50' x 50' square area, that would be sprayed in two applications only in September 2020. Its purpose is to serve as a control for the current conventional methods versus the mechanical methods. The Saunders River Access would be one of several research sites in the Champlain Valley. The study design requires mechanical tilling of the entire 1/8 acre plot this fall to prepare the soils for research treatments. More detailed information is available [online](#).

Both VRC and VHCB approved the proposal and requested temporary signage be installed to educate the public. BCC member Kristen Underwood is planning to Zoom in answer questions and convey the BCC's recommendation.

RECOMMENDATION: Discussion. Clarify if there is any Rodeo application expected in the second year.

Item IV.3. Two-month review of Park Use Permit for recurring Black Lives Matter demonstration at Town Green, 1st and 3rd Thursdays, 5:30pm. At its meeting on June 22, 2020, the Selectboard approved the application for weekly Black Lives Matter demonstrations at the corner of the Town Green on Thursday evenings, subject to the condition of a review after two months to determine if any factors needed to be reassessed. This was largely related to COVID-19 concerns at that time and potential public safety concerns. [Online](#) is some feedback from one of the organizers who feels "the demonstrations have gone very well."

I have not heard any heard of any other feedback, whether positive, negative, or otherwise.

RECOMMENDATION: Consider additional feedback. Approval through 2020.

Item IV.4. Consider whether to proceed with Ireland Road stabilization with NRCS Emergency Watershed Program grant funds. Stabilization of the Ireland Road washout along Lewis Creek was one of three projects deemed to be eligible for 75% funding through the NRCS Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) program. EWP engineers estimated Project #5038-020 to cost approximately \$34,350.00, \$25,762.50 of which would be paid through the EPW program and \$8,587.50 would be the required match. The area is very close to the Starksboro town line; however, it appears to have been determined to be on the Bristol side. [Online](#) is a draft plan of the repair, coordinated with 455 Ireland Road, prepared by EWP engineers. A permit would be required from the State Stream Alteration Engineer and the Army Corps of Engineers. There is some question whether repair is necessary or a high priority. I expect additional information will be available at the meeting.

RECOMMENDATION: Discussion. Determine whether to proceed.

Item IV.5. Authorization request to apply to the Vermont Bicycle and Pedestrian Grant Program for a new sidewalk scoping study. This request is for authorization to apply for VTrans Bike Ped funds to conduct a scoping study for one of several potential projects:

- Scoping study for new sidewalk on Airport Road from West Street to Mount Abe. We are told the Town road ends at the gate, so a cooperative agreement would be needed with the MAUSD.
- Scoping study for new sidewalk along Munsill Avenue from West Street to Pine Street.
- Preliminary design of a new sidewalk alignment and restored green space on West Street from Champlain Farms to Howden Hall.
- Something else?

Scoping studies typically cost between \$20,000 and \$40,000 depending on the complexity. A 20% match would be required. Application deadline is September 30, 2020.

RECOMMENDATION: Decide which project to pursue; authorization to proceed.

Item IV.6. Consider how to address the two vacant Lister positions and provision of Lister services. Craig Scribner's Lister consultant contract is set to close at the end of this month and he does not wish to renew it. He has offered, however, to remain available, at no cost to the Town, for occasional support and services to the Lister Department. There are currently two vacancies among the three elected Lister positions, which means there is no longer a quorum and 17 VSA 2651(c) would come into play ([online](#)), which authorizes the Selectboard to appoint a professional Assessor until the next annual Town Meeting. It also authorizes the Selectboard to recommend abolishing the elected Lister position by ballot at an annual Town Meeting.

This agenda item is to determine how best to proceed with having this essential role of the municipality performed going forward.

There is ample guidance from colleagues to suggest that moving away from the elected Lister form of grand list management to a professional Assessor is highly recommended. This is, in large part, because the complexities and responsibilities of the Lister/Assessor position have increased over time.

RECOMMENDATION: Discuss whether to actively recruit individuals to be appointed to the vacant Lister positions; whether to solicit the services of a professional Assessor to perform Lister duties; or a combination of seeking Lister candidates while seeking a professional Assessor. Determine if more information is needed.

Item IV.7. Coronavirus COVID-19 update: preparations, response, and impacts to municipal operations. Little has changed since the previous report, except that the Governor extended the Emergency Order to September 15, 2020. The Town Office remains closed with restricted access.

Thanks to efforts coordinated by the Bristol Fire Department, the Town received 1,000 masks to distribute to citizens in need of one. A distribution event is not currently planned. Publicity about their availability will be pushed out this coming week. Currently, the sole point of distribution is through the Town Clerk's Office. It is difficult to predict the volume of residents that would respond to such an outreach, which may or may not become burdensome to the Town Office under its present closure protocols.

RECOMMENDATION: Discussion. Determine what, if any, additional measures or considerations should be made.

Item IV.8. Paving and sidewalk projects update. The current updates for the Main Street sidewalk and Village paving projects from Natalie Boyle/VTrans are available [online](#). The stamped concrete work is expected to be completed. Little activity is planned this coming week. Final paving has not been scheduled yet, as crews continue to manage drainage structures, replace water valve boxes, and complete other pre-paving tasks.

Mountain Street sidewalk replacement project: Sargent Concrete and Construction was administratively authorized to work on Saturdays following efforts to get concurrence from affected property owners. A number of concerns were raised about the lack of appropriate MUTDC signage at the project site. The Bristol Police Department placed traffic cones at the site over the weekend. Sargent reported that they will have complete their last pour this Saturday (Aug. 22) and expect to have all wrapped up and be moved out by Monday, Aug. 24.

VTrans is requiring the pavement patch on Route 116/17 on Rockydale Road to be re-done to level the dip that materialized. This will be coordinated with VTUMS and Pike along with the Elm, Taylor, and Maple Street paving projects.

RECOMMENDATION: Discussion. Determine if additional information is needed.

## **V. OTHER BUSINESS.**

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

- E-mail from Anna Bowler, Green Lantern Solar, 08/21/2020, announcing the commissioning of the South GLC Solar project.
- E-mail from Treasurer Jen Myers, 08/18/2020, with suggestions for adjusting the FY2022 budget process. This will be an agenda and discussion item at the Sept. 14 Selectboard meeting.

- Email from Brighton Luke, 08/18/2020, re interest in street tree replacement. This is expected to be coordinated with the EAB strategic plan work ahead.
- E-mails from Bristol Fire Dept., 08/13/2020, announcing the resignation of Will Elwell.
- E-mail from Bristol Fire Dept., 08/13/2020, requesting alcohol authorization for 09/15/2020 event at the Fire Station.
- E-mail from Bristol Fire Dept., 08/12/2020, announcing receipt of the State's distribution of face masks to town distribution points.
- E-mail from Porter Knight, 08/11/2020, cautioning against vigilante trail workers.
- Letter of "ability to serve" water allocation, 08/11/2020, to 143 North Street.
- Bristol Revolving Loan Fund status report through 07/31/2020.
- Bristol water monthly water meter readings vs. amount of water pumped through 06/30/2020.
- Letter from Vermont State Police Lieutenant Matthew Daley inviting community feedback on VSP policing.

## **VI. EXECUTIVE SESSION.**

The Selectboard may choose to deliberate in Executive Session personnel matters per 1 V.S.A. §313(a)(3).

### **Schedule**

In response to the COVID-19 guidance, I will continue to be working from home most days but plan to be in the office occasionally to tend to things that were not easily accomplished remotely. My schedule for the weeks ahead, however, will be variable in response to some medical matters that require attention.

#### **Week of August 24**

Monday: 10:00am +/- – in Office.  
7:00pm – Selectboard via Zoom.

Tuesday: 9:00am – ACEDC COVI-19 Recovery Team via Zoom.  
10:00am – Staff meeting? (off-schedule)  
12:00pm – Out (camping at Green River).

Wednesday: Out (camping at Green River).

Thursday: Out (camping at Green River).

Friday: 10:00am – Stoney Hill Business Park Infrastructure Project team Zoom meeting.  
12:00pm +/- – in Office.

#### **Week of Aug. 31**

Monday: 10:00am +/- – in Office.

Wednesday: 1:00pm – medical appt. in Burlington.  
6:00pm – Special Selectboard meeting (*tentative*).

Friday: Out (medical).

### **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., Aug. 24, 7:00pm via Zoom.
- [Planning Commission](#): Tues., Sept. 1, 7:00pm, via Zoom.
- Bristol CORE: Thurs., Sept. 3, 8:30am, via Zoom.
- [Conservation Commission](#): Thurs., Sept. 10, 6:00pm, via Zoom.
- [Selectboard](#): Mon., Sept. 14, 7:00pm via Zoom.
- [Planning Commission](#): Tues., Sept. 15, 7:00pm, via Zoom.
- [Bristol Energy Committee](#): Weds., Sept. 16, 7:00pm, via Zoom.
- [Selectboard](#): Mon., Sept. 28, 7:00pm via Zoom.

#### **Upcoming Agenda Items**

- FY2020 4<sup>th</sup> quarter (Apr. - June) budget review.
- FY2021 budgeting process and preparations.
- Presentation of the Stoney Hill sidewalk alternatives scoping study.
- Maple Street traffic control request.
- N.H. Munsill Coin Drop Request.
- Water bill abatement request.
- Approve warning for special Town Meeting to coincide with the Nov. 3 general election.
- Continued appointment and reappointment of Town Officials.
- Finalize Town Treasurer and Town Clerk job descriptions.
- Class 4 highways maintenance policy.
- Winter maintenance policies and practices town-wide and for Main Street sidewalks.
- Town Plan review.
- Personnel Policies review.
- Process to become a Certified Local Government (CLG).
- Other stuff.

Respectfully submitted,

Valerie Capels, Town Administrator