

**Town of Bristol, Vermont**  
**Selectboard Meeting Minutes of**  
**Tuesday May 26, 2020**

Selectboard Members present: Chair Michelle Perlee, Joel Bouvier, Ian Albinson, Peeker Heffernan, and Darla Senecal.

Staff present: Board Clerk Tasha Bouvier, Town Administrator Valerie Capels, Director of Public Works Erica Cota, Director of Bristol Recreation Department Meridith McFarland, Town Treasurer Jen Myers, Police Chief Bruce Nason, and Hub Director Taylor Welch.

Others present: Alan Huizenga (GME), Sue Jipner, Ted Lylis, Shawn Kimball (NEAT TV), Jill Marsano, Cy Marsano, Jim Quaglino, Christopher Ross, Don Stratton, and Lynn Wohlfert.

**I. Call to Order.** Chair Michelle Perlee called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. Review agenda for addition, removal, or adjustment of any items per 1 V.S.A. §312(d)(3)(A). There are no additions, removals, or adjustments.

**II. Public Forum.** None.

**III. Public Hearing – Water and Sewer District Annual Meeting.** Review of operating budgets, capital budgets, and upcoming projects, Consider adjustments to rates, General issues.

Town Treasurer Jen Myers explained that the proposed water budget is based on spending trends over the past couple years. Contracted services and supplies have continued to increase. Emergency leaks and the East and West Street projects contributed to the increased expenses. The budget reflects planned work, including replacement of two hydrants, and an allowance for emergencies. The proposed water budget includes a rate increase of 6.9%, which would amount to an increase of \$4.07 per quarter, which is below \$20 per year. An 8% increase would amount to about \$5.42 per quarter or about \$21.68 per year. The addition of Woodland Apartments adds approximately \$7,000 per year in revenue, but their rate is fixed for 10 years because of the Stoney Hill agreement.

Regarding the water system capital budget, there was agreement that replacement of the control panel is the highest priority, followed by replacement of the generator, both of which are original to the construction of the pump house. The schedule of current and anticipated debt was discussed and the capacity for future bond projects. There was agreement that it will be important to have at least two shovel-ready projects designed and permitted if and when grant funding becomes available. There was agreement that the Pine Street water line replacement, stormwater improvements, and paving should be next on the list. Bristol's application for planning loan funds for the distribution line replacement preliminary engineering report is still being reviewed by the state.

There was discussion about the plan to replace all the meter touchpads on the system. The commercial customers were done first. Jill and Cyrus of VTUMS said they have completed between five and ten residential replacements per year.

Peeker Heffernan moved to accept the proposed water budget with an 8% increase. Joel Bouvier seconded. So voted. The difference in revenue from the proposed 6.9% increase and the 8% increase will be allocated to the capital budget.

Jen explained that the proposed sewer budget, which is supported by only 30 customers, does not reflect an increase. Jill from VTUMS noted the collection system would need to be expanded, including tertiary treatment, in order for new connections to be accommodated to increase revenues. Alan Huizenga of Green Mountain Engineering noted that the 30-year old system is beginning to show its age. There was discussion about some repair items that will need to be expected, including repair or replacement of the splitter box, which is rusting apart due to gases.

Concerns of grease traps maintenance were discussed. Jill and Cyrus said that Wokky's has been exemplary. Not all other customers appear to be maintaining the proper documentation. The grease can clog gravity mains, areas within the splitter box, other areas, and drive up wastewater fats, oils, and grease lab results. Following discussion, there was agreement that VTUMS and the Town Administrator be authorized to take more assertive measures consistent with the Sewer Ordinance to compel compliance. It was noted that the ordinance currently does not include a schedule of fines and would need to be amended. Valerie recommended that she and Jill do another visit to all the grease trap managers to monitor progress and notify them of likely fines if documentation of proper management is not being produced.

Joel Bouvier moved to accept the proposed sewer budget. Ian Albinson seconded. So voted. Jen brought up the question of charging to sell water at a bulk rate for companies that may want to charge consumers to then truck the water to their home. Following discussion, Joel Bouvier moved to increase the swimming pool filling fee to \$75 for in district and \$100 for outside the district and changing the fee name to Bulk Water fee. Ian Albinson seconded. So voted. Jen will also do some more research regarding the bulk water for companies to purchase, so they can in turn fill people's pools, etc.

#### **IV. Regular Business.**

1. Fourth of July celebration status update. Ted Lylis is on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Committee and advised they are meeting tomorrow. Since the Governor said no more fairs, etc., there will be no parade, but they are going to talk in their meeting about the fireworks. They plan to hold the Chicken BBQ and will do take out at the Legion on June 27, 2020. Only half chickens will be offered; the quarter chickens will not be an option.

2. Village paving and Main Street sidewalk projects update. Valerie Capels referred to the update that VTrans published and that milling in the downtown is expected to begin Thursday requiring on-street parking to be blocked off all day. National Bank of Middlebury is paying to have some sections of their sidewalk replaced. Ian Albinson reported on some of the progress he has observed. He brought up the need to let the public know about the project and the idea of having a small flyer that would be mailed out to the town residents. He suggested that a line item be included in future projects for public outreach expenses, such as mailings. Joel Bouvier recommended using the electronic message boards at each end of the project to alert motorists of the milling.

3. Coronavirus COVID-19 update: preparations, response, safety plan, and impacts to municipal operations. Valerie Capels reported that the office is still closed, though access is available by appointment. People are following the safety protocols and the situation continues to be monitored. Taylor Welch provided an update on the Addison County Mutual Aid activities. They will be distributing a postcard and flyer about the services available.

There was discussion with Eric Cota about how the summer hours differ from the regular hours. He explained that road work is done over the four 9-hour days and small, non-road tasks are taken care of on Friday mornings. The same amount of work gets done as five 8-hour days, but the crew looks forward to working a half day on Friday. There was consensus of the board to keep the winter hours in place for the next three weeks. Staff schedules were reviewed. Eric will begin his vacation through July 5.

Meridith McFarland reported that department staff have begun transitioning to working out of the office and the Hub. They are working on presenting the safety protocols for the summer camps.

Darla Senecal raised the question whether the Town should require people to wear masks as other towns have done. Following discussion, there appeared to be agreement to continue to allow businesses to decide for themselves “no mask no service.”

4. Request from resident at 9 Elm Street for streetlight removal. Joel Bouvier said that is the only streetlight in that area and for safety reasons does not feel it should be removed. Peeker Heffernan asked if a different light could be put in that does not give off so much brightness. Sue Jipner, who lives on the street, said she looked at the streetlight and it does not seem like it gives off too much light. She walks a lot and likes having the lights for safety. There was consensus of the board to not approve the request.

5. Request from George Vince to pay half the repair cost for boundary fence. There was agreement that the roof line has changed several years ago that redirects snow in that area. The picket fence cost is \$500, and he is asking for half that cost. Ian Albinson moved to pay up to \$250 to repair the fence. Peeker Heffernan seconded. Following discussion, the motion failed 0-5, with all voting against.

6. Addison County Regional Planning Commission contract amendment proposal for continued work on a Unified Development Ordinance. Last year, the Town contracted with Adam Lougee of the Addison County Regional Planning Commission to develop subdivision regulations. The contract amount then was for \$5,000 and included a provision that additional funds were expected to be needed to complete the process through adoption. Online is a request/proposal for a contract amendment to cover the approximately \$5,886 expenses already incurred since January and to continue to assist through the review and adoption process. The total amendment request is for up to \$8,000 (including the \$5,886). The total amendment request is for up to \$8,000 (including the \$5,886). The current \$6,000 budgeted for Planning Services is already overspent by almost \$800 and \$5,000 is budgeted for FY2021. While that line item would be overspent, the overall Planning and Zoning budget will be in good shape and under

budget. Consensus is the Selectboard will need more information from the business to decide at a future meeting. The board would like to see current invoices first to see exactly how much work has been done and the cost so far.

7. Vacation carryover requests. *May include deliberation in Executive Session under personnel matters.* The Selectboard has been provided with the leave balances of each employee as we approach the end of the fiscal year. The personnel policy says employees can keep 120 hours of sick time, 80 hours of vacation time, all hours of personal time, and 60 hours of comp time. Anything above the 120 hours of sick time will be exchanged at the rate of 16 hours of sick leave for 8 hours of vacation leave (or 2 hours of extra sick time becomes 1 hours of vacation) for the following year. Up to 40 hours of vacation can be paid out at 80% of the employee's rate of pay. Anything over the 80 hours gets forfeited unless otherwise approved by the Selectboard. Up to 60 hours of comp time can be accrued, anything over 60 hours gets paid out at full value. Selectboard will follow the personnel policy and go through July 1, 2020. Peeker Heffernan moved to follow the personnel policy excluding the Police contract. Darla Senecal seconded. The motion passed 4-1, with Joel Bouvier against.

8. Approval of the February 17, May 11, and May 18, 2020 meeting minutes. Peeker Heffernan moved to approve February 17, 2020, May 11, and May 18, 2020 meeting minutes with minor adjustments. Ian Albinson seconded. So voted.

9. Authorize accounts payable warrant and any liquor licenses. Accounts Payable warrant \$65,295.47.

10. Selectboard roundtable.

Darla Senecal reported that she received one email from someone concerned about 4<sup>th</sup> of July, but that question was already answered above.

11. Town Administrator's report.

Valerie Capels reported that the Stoney Hill Business Park Infrastructure Project had its first meeting this week. They will probably have weekly meetings going forward.

The Stoney Hill sidewalk scoping study is moving along. An online survey was done that had 81 responses. There will be some reaching out to the Route 17 properties since some of it will go through or on their properties. An alignment connecting the Stoney Hill Business Park to Lovers Lane by Woodland Apartments could happen independently.

The Town received good news that Bristol's ISO rating has improved following an extensive survey of the water system. She encouraged folks to read Brett LaRose's e-mail and ISO letter in the Other Business section.

She reached out to the Vermont Forest and Parks Department to try to get the Emerald Ash Borer Strategic Plan Committee back on track.

A lot of her time has been spent these past few weeks dealing with grant administration, reporting, and preparations for the end of the fiscal year. The three new grant applications were submitted by Friday for the AARP benches, VTrans paving, and Emergency Watershed Program.

**V. Other Business.**

1. Correspondence, reports, correspondence received. There was no discussion.

**VI. Adjourn.**

At 11:03 p.m. Peeker Heffernan moved to adjourn the meeting. Ian Albinson seconded. So voted.

Respectfully submitted,

Tasha Bouvier  
Board Clerk

Valerie Capels  
Town Administrator