

Bristol Town Administrator's Report

May 9, 2021

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 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, May 10, 2021 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."

This is an opportunity to point out that time limits have been included on the agenda in an effort to manage and focus the Selectboard's and citizens' time. Some items might require more or less time than estimated. If substantially more time is expected to be needed, this may help Selectboard members to determine if the item needs to be continued to a future agenda.

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.

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/87912810018?pwd=WFdGNUtJYWx1eHMrenpqTkZmUUNGZz09>

Meeting ID: 879 1281 0018

Passcode: 619003

Join meeting by phone: 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. REGULAR BUSINESS.

Item III.1. Review of tree removal plan and quotes from area tree removal companies. Public Works Foreman Eric Cota has identified at least 19 dead or dying trees that need to be removed and possibly others for some maintenance pruning. These have been marked around town with ribbon.

- 2 Lower Meadow Lane
- 2 Pleasant Street
- 3 North Street (incl. 1 ash)
- 1 West Street
- 1 Hardscrabble Road
- 2 Meehan Road
- 2 Upper Meehan Road
- Trim tree at 920 Upper Meehan Road
- 2 Purinton Road
- 2 Lincoln Road hangers
- 2 Briggs Hill

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This list does not include three trees on Devino Lane that were also been marked for removal. Eric's intent was to preemptively remove them before they fall into the road and become a hazard. However, it appears they are just outside the Town right-of-way. The property owner supports their removal. Bristol [Tree Warden John Swepston](#) does not.

The following [quotes](#) were received from three area tree service providers:

Bidder	Location	Quote	Special Considerations
McCullough Bros.	Rutland	\$11,000 (for as many trees as can be cut and ground in 4 days)	Day rate for 4-person crew & equipment: \$3,000. Single day has a \$500 set up fee. Quote includes separate crew to grind village stumps. Presumably includes traffic control.
DJ's Tree Service	Colchester	\$19,050 for cutting listed trees; \$28,000 for 4 full days of cutting	Day rate for 5-person crew & equipment: \$7,000. Presumably includes traffic control.
Teacher's Tree Service	Shelburne	\$20,480.40 for cutting listed trees	Includes \$1,4840.40 for traffic control.

RECOMMENDATION: Accept the quote from McCullough Bros. Decide what to do about the Devino Lane trees.

Item III.2 Town Green Park Use Application: Youth Lacrosse Car Wash Fundraiser, Sunday, May 16, 11:00am – 4:00pm. Online is an [application for a Carwash and bake sale fundraiser](#) for Bristol Youth Lacrosse at the Town Green on Sunday, May 16, from 11:00am to 4:00pm. Ordinarily, the Recreation Department could approve this application; however four parking spaces on Park Place are proposed to be occupied, which requires Selectboard approval. The application provides detailed information about their plan for traffic control, sanitation, activities, and use of water.

Though not noted on the application, Recreation Director Meridith McFarland said in [e-mail](#) that the soap that they will use will be bio-degradable, they will donate \$20.00 for the water usage, and that Police Chief Bruce Nason was supportive of the request.

RECOMMENDATION: Approval per COVID-19 protocols. As of May 1, there can be 300 unvaccinated people plus any number of fully vaccinated people at outdoor gatherings. Masks are only required when in a crowd or with multiple other households 6-foot distance cannot be maintained. Follow this guidance whether you are vaccinated or not. Since people under age 16 cannot get vaccinated at this time, they are considered unvaccinated.

Item III.3. Holley Hall bell tower floor repair: consideration of structural engineer's recommendations and review of repair scope of work. Online is Knight Consulting structural engineer Barb Evan's [assessment and recommendations](#) regarding the stability and repair of the Holley Hall bell tower floor. Present during her April 9 site visit were myself, Assistant Recreation Director Alex Mihavics, and long-time Holley Hall steward Ted Lylis. Her [letter report](#) includes numerous photographs of the areas she observed.

There was not enough time that day for her to complete her review, which also would have required removing sections of the lathe ceiling over the clockworks to observe the joists. She recommended a follow-up site visit to verify the condition of the four joists and plank flooring that support the bell tower frame. She said "the existing joists are marginal for the weight estimate provided, and any deterioration may impair the ability of the joists and planks to safely support the weight of the bell tower frame."

At the April 12 meeting, and based on a summary of the site visit at that time, the Selectboard determined a follow-up visit and removal of the lathe ceiling was not necessary. Though the moisture content of the beams she tested was very low—an indication of the lack of rot—she was concerned about the live edge and water staining observed on some of the joists.

She recommends that the gaps in the wood framing above the bell tower level be filled and that the wood surfaces be maintained in a watertight condition to prevent wind-blown rain and snow to bypass the roofing and infiltrate the floor below. A number of photos in her letter report identify these gaps.

She also recommends that the proposed EDPM roof not be installed over the old metal roof.

Also at the April 12 meeting, the Selectboard agreed to accept Rooster Construction's proposal and scope of work to repair the bell tower floor subject to review by the Knight Consulting structural engineer. In an April 28 e-mail (attached online to the [letter report](#)), Barb Evans noted that Rooster Construction is not a certified installer of the proposed GenFlex roofing material and there does not appear to be any kind of warranty. She recommended a thicker membrane be used (90 mils instead of 60 mils), and noted Chris Hahn did not think it was necessary because the roof was under cover and not walked on or ballasted. She included a list of roof installers in the area who are apparently certified to install this type of roofing material.

I shared her report and recommendations via e-mail with Chis Hahn of Rooster Construction late this past week and noted that his March 8 proposal indicated the material prices were only valid for 15 days. I also asked if he felt any adjustments were necessary.

He previously expressed flexibility to remain available for this job, but acknowledged his schedule was filling up. To what degree the structural engineer's feedback and the time since his March 8 quote affects his availability and quote is not yet known. We have not had a chance to communicate more directly about any of these matters. More information may be available by Monday's meeting.

RECOMMENDATION: Determine next steps.

Item III.4. Continued consideration of amendments to Bristol's procurement/purchasing policy.

This item is a continuation of the February 8 discussion of proposed updates to Bristol's procurement or purchasing policy. With current and future federally-funded construction projects on the horizon, this is an effort to ensure our policies comply with current federal and state requirements.

Online is a [slightly updated work-in-progress draft](#). As noted in February, it is a product of consulting many different sources and examples from other municipalities. Potential penalties for missing deadline or delivery dates has been included. I did not receive any other feedback. Bristol's basic policies and dollar thresholds remain unchanged.

Also online are the following documents related to this topic:

- current [Bristol Purchasing Policy](#) (2011);
- Bristol [Conflict of Interest Policy](#) (2012); and
- VLCT [Model Purchasing Policy](#) with Guidance (2019).

Because some sections were adapted from different sources, the formatting of this work-in-progress draft is wonky and any final draft will be cleaned up and unified.

RECOMMENDATION: Discussion. Determine if additional information is needed. Consider adoption with or without adjustments.

Item III.5. Consideration of a proposed COVID-19 re-opening plan. As of this coming week, most, if not all, Bristol employees will have been fully vaccinated, and I will be returning to the office four days a week. The Town Office team would like to propose the following preliminary reopening plan:

- Open the office to the public Monday through Thursday starting October 17.
- Fridays the office will be staffed and open but the door locked. With Treasurer Jen Myers expecting to begin maternity leave in late May or early June, the office will be short-handed and this would allow for focused work and schedule flexibility if Town Clerk Sharon Lucia needs to take a day off.
- Visitors would still be required to wear a mask and maintain social distance.
- Appointments would still be required for researchers in the vault.

Because I have been able to work effectively from home most days for the past year, I would like to propose continuing to work from home one day a week. At first I thought it might be fixed to Tuesdays to accommodate the potentially late Selectboard meetings from the night before. Or perhaps the particular days could be flexible, depending on the week's schedule, such as Thursdays when I have a 7:30am meeting with the ACEDC Board that I might still be able to do by Zoom.

Admittedly, I am not a morning person. And this past year has certainly adjusted my "hours of operation." I am typically in gear by no later than 9:00am, but also continue later into the days and evenings. Consequently, I would also like to propose that my in-office hours begin by 9:00am rather than the opening hour of 8:00am.

How does this affect when to resume in-person meetings? The [Governor's amended order](#), due to be renewed or amended on or around May 15, has relaxed some of the restrictions, but masks and distancing are still required for indoor public spaces. I am hoping ARPA funds will be able to be used to invest in technology that supports hybrid in-person and Zoom meetings, both upstairs at Holley Hall and in the downstairs meeting room.

RECOMMENDATION: Discussion. Vote to approve or adjust the preliminary reopening plan.

Item III.6. Continued American Rescue Plan Act update and preliminary discussion. Unless any significant information comes down sometime on Monday, this is likely to be short discussion. No new information yet.

However, on Tuesday this past week, I joined Middlebury Town Manager Kathleen Ramsay, Vergennes City Manager Ron Redmond, new VLCT Executive Director Ted Brady, ACEDC Director Fred Kenney and others in an in-person meeting with Senator Leahy and Marcelle Leahy in Middlebury. Members of the press were also there taking notes and pictures. We were invited by Leahy's staff to meet with him to for him to hear our perspectives about the upcoming American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding.

We were united in expressing our gratitude for Senator Leahy's efforts on behalf of Vermont municipalities in this instance and over his long career. Kathleen cited many of the Middlebury facilities that now exist thanks to the Senator's support as well as current capital needs. Ron cited Vergennes' need to upgrade their wastewater facility and the increased demands for recreation and improved sidewalks.

I cited the fact Bristol is the downtown to the surrounding communities of Starksboro, Lincoln, New Haven, and Monkton and has many capital and public facility needs. And while the demand for recreation has increased, Bristol's Recreation Department took the biggest hit with needing to close the teen center, cancel programs, lost revenues, and reduced event capacities. Although we still do not know yet what the restrictions are going to be, I also suggested that municipalities be given more time and flexibility to get any of the projects done because (1) some projects may need multiple funding sources that will take time to package; (2) there may not be enough contractors or workers to go around if everyone is trying to get major projects done in the same timeframe; and (3) that the costs for contractors and materials will skyrocket. Folks really liked the fact that the Bristol Selectboard intends to solicit public input on the priority projects list the Selectboard ultimately develops after we know what the criteria are.

RECOMMENDATION: No action is likely to be necessary.

Item III.7. Review of Bristol Town Plan implementation matrix and Selectboard assignments.

Planning Commission Chair Kevin Hanson distributed spreadsheets to various stakeholders who were assigned with the responsibility for implementing various strategies included in the adopted Bristol Town Plan. [Online is a draft compilation](#) of implementation responsibilities assigned to the Selectboard. He/they are looking for feedback by May 15 with any thoughts or comments and suggests that, "we also consider any overlap of groups or level of involvement of tasks as currently stated that should be re-considered. Also, how your group may be considering structuring their associated tasks."

I commend the Planning Commission's initiative to engage the entities expected to help carry out the vision, goals, and implantation strategies of the Town Plan. It is an important step to help ensure that those charged with carrying out particular tasks are aware of it and can take the steps needed to incorporate the actions into their work plans and budgets. It is all too easy for town plans to collect dust on a shelf while well-intentioned volunteers move on to the next demanding thing. Although we can presume the entities were on board with the strategies when the proposed Town Plan was going through the drafting and public hearing process, new people may have come on board and others with institutional memories may have moved on.

RECOMMENDATION: Discussion.

Item III.8. Approval of the March 29, April 12, and April 26, 2021 meeting minutes. The March 29, April 12, and April 26, 2021 minutes are still in the process of being reviewed and are expected to be posted online and e-mailed prior to Monday's meeting. The original drafts are posted.

Item III.9. Authorize accounts payable warrant and any liquor licenses. [Accounts payable warrant.](#)

IV. OTHER BUSINESS.

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

- [Annual Core Area Wastewater System Evaluation](#), Green Mountain Engineering, April 2021.
- [Budget Status Report](#) through 04/30/2021.
- [E-mails](#) regarding cancellation of 4th of July celebrations, 04/29/2021.
- [E-mail from Agency of Natural Resources](#), 05/05/2021, re spring leak detection services.
- [Articles](#) from the *Addison Independent* regarding the Stoney Hill projects, 05/06/2021.
- [ACRPC May 2021 newsletter.](#)

VI. EXECUTIVE SESSION.

This is tentatively on agenda in the event the Selectboard wishes to deliberate regarding contractual negotiations per 1 V.S.A. §313(a)(1)(A) or personnel matters per 1 V.S.A. §313(a)(3).

West Street NRCS EWP Slope Repair Update

The U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) grant for this situation is/was slated to expire on June 10, 2021. I submitted our third request for an extension, this time to October 10, 2021. The state stream alteration permit has been received. The Corps of Engineers permit application is still in the process of being reviewed. If the EWP grant extension is approved and the COE permit is issued, the project would then be ready to go out to bid. Simultaneously, I would begin working on securing temporary access easements from the property owners. If these move forward, the Selectboard may be asked to consider making the Bristol Revolving Loan Fund available to the property owners to assist them in meeting their share of the required 25% match.

Munsill Avenue Sidewalk Scoping Project Update

The VTrans Bike Ped grant agreement has been received and I have stepped forward as the required Municipal Project Manager. That will not be complicated for a scoping study. The next step is to prepare and issue the RFP for an engineer to do the study. This will be a similar process as that for the Stoney Hill Sidewalk Scoping Study.

Pump House Generator and Stormwater Final Design Projects Out to Bid

The request for proposals for final design of the School Street and Elementary School infiltration chambers was put out to bid last month and the due date is May 14. The request for quotes for the pump house generator is also out to bid with a due date of May 14. Review of the results will likely be on the Selectboard's May 24 agenda.

Assessor Position Update

The deadline for the Assessor position was April 30, 2021 and no responses were received, other than from Terri Sabens reiterating her suggestion that we consider a multi-town Assessor position. The position will be readvertised this week with an updated due date of Friday, June 18, 2021.

Police Department Update

Andrew Biondi, who joined the Bristol Police Department on May 4, 2020, submitted his resignation this week with a heavy heart for personal reasons. He served the Town of Bristol well during his time with us and we wish him well and all the very best.

Bill James 110th Birthday Celebration

Bill James, who lives at 31 Fitch Avenue, will be turning 110 years old on July 5! A drive-by celebration is being planned by Ted Lylis for that Sunday, July 4. Below is a link to a video of last year's celebration:

<https://www.sevendaysvt.com/vermont/stuck-in-vermont-bristol-car-parade-celebrates-bill-james-109th-birthday/Content?oid=30763542>

Schedule

I intend to resume in-office hours this week, with one day a week working from home. When working from home, I can be reached by email at townadmin@bristolvt.org and phone. Messages left to 453-2410 ext 1 are forwarded to me by e-mail. I will respond either by phone or by e-mail, depending on timing, location, and cell/Internet connectivity.

Week of May 10

Monday: 9:00am +/- in Office.
7:00pm – Selectboard via Zoom.

Tuesday: Working remotely.

Wednesday: 9:00am +/- – in Office.

Thursday: 8:30am – Bristol CORE.
8:30am – VTCMA annual spring meeting
10:00am +/- – in Office.
10:30am – meet with Brett and Ian re BFD personnel policies.
12:45pm – VTCMA session: Leading Equitable Communities.
2:00pm - COVID-19 Briefing for Local Municipalities and Response Agencies.

Friday: 9:00am +/- – in Office.
9:00am – VTCMA annual spring meeting

Week of May 17

Monday: 9:00am +/- – in Office.

Tuesday: 9:00am +/- – in Office.

Wednesday: 9:00am +/- – in Office.

Thursday: 7:30am +/- – ACEDC Board meeting.
Working remotely.

Friday: 9:00am +/- – in Office.

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., May 10, 7:00pm via Zoom.
- Bristol CORE: Thurs., May 13, 8:30am, via Zoom.
- Conservation Commission: Thurs., May 13, 6:00pm, via Zoom.
- Planning Commission: Tues., May 18, 7:00pm, via Zoom.
- Bristol Energy Committee: Weds., May 19, 7:00pm, via Zoom.
- Selectboard: Mon., May 24, 7:00pm via Zoom.
- Development Review Board: Tues., May 25, 7:00pm, via Zoom.
- Selectboard: Mon., June 14, 7:00pm via Zoom.

Upcoming Agenda Items

- Review quotes for new pump house generator.
- Select consultant for infiltration chambers final designs.
- Consider use of the Bristol Revolving Loan Fund for solar agreements, emergency repairs from storm damage, or other activities.
- Continued Personnel Policy review and updates.
- Finalize Town Treasurer and Town Clerk job descriptions.
- Review of FY2020 audit.
- Water Ordinance revisions.
- Determine funding allocations for the Main Street Sidewalk and Lighting project local expenses.
- Continued consideration of the Public Works/Police Department site analysis next steps.
- Class 4 highways maintenance policy.
- Process to become a Certified Local Government (CLG).
- Other stuff.

Respectfully submitted,

Valerie Capels, Town Administrator