

Bristol Town Administrator's Report

January 2, 2022

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 documents available electronically at bristolvt.org/meeting-minutes in the **Selectboard** section. Live links are provided throughout this report to those documents when possible, as well as to outside sources. 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.

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=WFdGNUtJYWxleHMrenpqTkZmUUNGZz09>

Meeting ID: 879 1281 0018

Passcode: 619003

Join meeting by phone: 1 (646) 558-8656

Monday, January 3, 2022 Meeting Agenda and Materials

I. CALL TO ORDER: 6:00PM.

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."

NOTE: Agenda item VI.2 is review of the preliminary draft Town Meeting and Police District warning. Because it is not directly budget-related, the Selectboard may choose to pass over it until the next meeting. On the other hand, it may have an indirect relationship to budgets, such as the tax penalty rate and whether to vote on appropriations by Australian ballot.

Also, regarding agenda item VI.4, there will not be an accounts payable warrant and no new liquor license applications have been received.

II. EXECUTIVE SESSION. This item is to discuss personnel matters, compensation, and contract negotiations. A separate Zoom link will be sent to those participating.

III. CALL TO ORDER: 7:00PM.

IV. 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.

V. DEPARTMENT HEAD ROUNDTABLE.

This is an opportunity for department heads to briefly share information that may be of interest to the Selectboard and the public one or more topics that are not part of the agenda.

VI. REGULAR BUSINESS.

Item VI.1. Budget workshop: Public Works, Police, and other General Fund sections; preliminary Capital Improvement Plan. The proposed budgets are not available to post yet because the department heads are still in the process of coordinating with their Selectboard liaisons to review them. Some are expected to be accomplished by sometime on Monday. So, there may not be much, if any, opportunity prior to the meeting to review the proposed budgets; we will be seeing them live at the meeting via Zoom. Since we will have other opportunities to circle back, this will be useful to identify questions and/or areas that need more follow-up.

Tentative schedule:

- Jan. 3, **6:00pm** – Police Dept., Public Works, Clerk & Treasurer, Administrator, capital plans
- Jan. 10, **7:00pm** –and overall general fund; draft Town Meeting warning review

Jan. 13: Last day to file a petition with the Town Clerk for articles to be included on the Town Meeting warning.

- Jan. 17, **6:00pm** – Overall budget review; Town Meeting warning review

Jan. 24: Last day to submit to the Town Clerk nominating petitions for Town offices to be voted by Australian ballot.

- Jan. 24, **7:00pm** – Finalize budgets and Town Meeting warning.

Jan. 30: Last day for the Selectboard to post the warning for Town Meeting.

- Feb. 28: Bristol Town Meeting (floor meeting)
- Mar. 1: Town Meeting Day (Australian ballot).

RECOMMENDATION: Discussion. Adjustments as necessary.

Item VI.2. Review of preliminary draft Town Meeting and Police District warnings. Online are preliminary drafts of the [Town Meeting warning](#) and the [Police District Annual Meeting](#)

[warning](#). This is an opportunity to begin preparing for Town Meeting in the continued midst of the pandemic. The Legislature passed [Act 162](#) last year following the [lifting of the Governor's emergency order](#) to enable an all-Australian ballot Town Meeting; however, it only applied to 2021 and has sunsetted. So we are operating under the current state statutes, which means we are back to the traditional floor vote format. These draft warnings are based on a hybrid in-person and Zoom approach. The Legislature reconvenes this week and I learned after the agenda was posted that it is expected to present legislation in the first week or two to re-authorize (not require) all-Australian ballot voting.

So, this agenda item may be a bit premature. And because it is not directly budget-related, the Selectboard may choose to pass over it until the next meeting. On the other hand, it may have an indirect relationship to budgets, such as the tax penalty rate and whether to include an article requiring appropriations to be voted by Australian ballot. January 13 is the last day to file a petition with the Town Clerk for articles to be included on the warning, so other articles are likely to be added.

RECOMMENDATION: Discussion. No action is necessary.

Item VI.3. Review and approval of the July 26, August 23, September 13, ~~November 22~~, December 13, and December 20, 2021 meeting minutes. The reviewed [July 26 minutes](#) are posted online. It turns out the [Nov. 22 minutes](#) were approved at the previous meeting. All the original drafts are posted online in the [Selectboard agendas-minutes table](#). The reviewed docs are in progress and will be posted and e-mailed when they become available.

Item VI.4. Authorize accounts payable warrant and any liquor licenses. Since this meeting is off-cycle, there is not expected to an accounts payable warrant and no new liquor licenses have been received.

VII. OTHER BUSINESS.

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

- [Bristol RLF status report thru 2021-11-30.pdf](#)
- [2021 Equalization Study Results 2021-12-21.pdf](#)
- [E-mail Governor CDBG awards press release 2021-12-23.pdf](#)
- [USEPA-WaterISAC Advisory on Cybersecurity Recommendations Dec 2021.pdf](#)

Bristol Equalization Trends

The [2021 Equalization Study Results](#) shows that the Town of Bristol's grand list is moving closer and closer to the threshold requiring a town-wide reappraisal with a common level of appraisal (CLA) of 87.4%. A CLA below 85% triggers the need for a town-wide reappraisal. In [2020 the CLA](#) was 92.25% and in [2019 the CLA](#) was 96.6%. It is likely a reflection of a hot real estate market where newer purchases are exceeding the fair market value.

The Listers have alerted us that this is something we should be [preparing for now](#). On the next page is a table listing the CLAs of various municipalities. I wanted to get a sense of where Bristol

fell among other communities. I also wanted to get a sense of the number of other municipalities that may be facing town-wide reappraisals around the same time we will. That could add pressure to finding professional assistance and suggests we should get on it sooner rather than later.

Schedule

I generally plan to get in the office around 9:00am most days. I plan to still work remotely one day a week, most often on Tuesdays. On those days I can be reached by email at townadmin@bristolvt.org and by 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. Winter travel conditions are likely to require some wiggle room on all of these plans.

Week of January 3

Monday: In the office.
 2:00pm – phone meeting.
 6:00pm – Selecboard meeting (me via Zoom).
 Tuesday: Working remotely.
 Wednesday: In the office.
 Thursday: In the office.
 Friday: In the office.

Week of January 10

Monday: In the office.
 7:00pm – Selecboard meeting (me via Zoom).
 Tuesday: Working remotely.
 Wednesday: 9:15am – Dr. appt. in Berlin. Should be in the office by noon.
 Thursday: In the office.
 Friday: In the office.
 10:30am – 12:00pm – ARPA Webinar.

TOWN	2021 CLA
Addison	93.89%
Barre City	92.57%
Barre Town	103.79%
Bristol	87.40%
Fayston	89.74%
Hinesburg	87.87%
Lincoln	100.17%
Middlebury	93.40%
Monkton	87.78%
Montpelier	80.76%
Moretown	85.90%
Orwell	100.67%
New Haven	87.25%
Ripton	83.61%
Rutland City	88.65%
Rutland Town	96.38%
St. George	81.60%
Starksboro	82.68%
Waitsfield	89.05%
Warren	85.24%
Waterbury	86.46%
Vergennes	86.97%

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. 3, **6:00pm**, Holley Hall and via Zoom.
- [Planning Commission](#): Tues., Jan. 4, 7:00pm, via Zoom.
- [Selectboard](#): Mon., Jan. 10, 7:00pm, Holley Hall and via Zoom.
- [Development Review Board](#): Tues., Jan. 11, 7:00pm, Holley Hall and via Zoom.
- [Conservation Commission](#): Thurs., Jan. 13, 6:00pm, Holley Hall and via Zoom
- [Selectboard](#): Mon., Jan. 17, **6:00pm**, Holley Hall and via Zoom.
- [Bristol Energy Committee](#): Weds., Jan.19, 7:00pm, via Zoom.
- [Selectboard](#): Mon., Jan. 24, 7:00pm, Holley Hall and via Zoom.

Upcoming Agenda Items

- Budget preparations: Recreation Dept., Fire Dept., General Fund, follow-ups.
- Discussion of requiring masks in Town buildings.
- Response to Lewis-Teets complaint.
- Class 4 highways and private roads maintenance policy.
- Appointment of volunteers to new Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee.
- Appointment of volunteers to new ARPA Funding Advisory Committee.
- Selectboard priorities for use of ARPA funds; solicit community input.
- Begin thinking about town-wide reappraisal schedule and RFP for professional assistance.
- Continued Personnel Policy review and updates.
- Continued consideration of the Public Works/Police Department site analysis next steps.
- Process to become a Certified Local Government (CLG).
- Other stuff.

Happy New Year!

Valerie Capels, Town Administrator