

Town of Bristol, Vermont
Selectboard Meeting Minutes of
Monday, February 21, 2022

Selectboard members present: Chair Pecker Heffernan, Vice-Chair Ian Albinson (late), Joel Bouvier, Michelle Perlee and Darla Senecal.

Members absent: none

Staff present: Town Administrator Valerie Capels, Fire Chief Brett LaRose, Board Clerk Sharon Lucia, Police Chief Bruce Nason, Police Officer Josh Turner,

Others present: Kate Bentley (Bristol CORE), Elizabeth Blair, Dukehart ??, John Elder (Addison Allies Network), Paul Forlenza (Lincoln SB), Clove Haviva, Sarah Heusner, Keeley, Shawn Kimball (NEAT), Jim Quaglino, Sally Roth, Elizabeth Sayre, Ben Skolozdra, Jessica Teets, Town Moderator Jennifer Wagner, Wilfried & Nancy ??,

I. Call to Order. Chair Pecker Heffernan called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

1. Review agenda for addition, removal, or adjustment of any items per 1 V.S.A. §312(d)(3)(A). There is one addition, and no removals, or adjustments.

Val advised one addition, the New England Police Benevolent ground rules for negotiation that requires rep of town to sign. Copy was provided; pretty standard format; Attorney John Klesch signed first time. Can add here or to police district discussion.

Michelle appoint Valerie as town designee to sign the New England Police Benevolent rules; Darla seconded. No discussion, motion carried.

Michelle also indicated that we need to add appointing an Alternate to the DRB to take Paul Jackman's place as he has resigned.

Michelle made motion to appoint Josh Crandall to finish Paul Jackman position (which expires in March 2023). Ian seconded. Motion carried.

II. Public Forum. No one.

III. Annual Police District Meeting Public Information Meeting. (6:30 pm)

Discussion of the police budget and warning. One article asking voters of the police district adopt the proposed 2022-2023 budget in amount of \$504,579.00 with \$405,062.00 to be raised by takes. The amount raised by taxes is .1% increase from last year.

Joel ask about the discussion regarding the increase of the 10% increase in year 5 v. the doing a 3% increase for years 3-5. Bruce explained how the discussion came about and using the undesignated fund balance to cover some of the increase for the 4th officer. Using the percentage so the taxpayers do not get hit all at once for the increase.

IV. Annual Town Meeting Public Information Meeting. (7 pm)

Peeker noted that people who wish to speak need to be recognized by our Town Moderator, Jennifer Wagner or put questions in the Chat as that will be monitored. He turned the meeting over to Jennifer Wagner, Moderator. (7:00 to 7:51 pm meeting)

She asked for introductions of the Selectboard. Informational session only to hear community comments and ask questions. No amendments can be made. Discussion of articles that will be voted on March 1. Can vote by absentee ballot. Discussion about how to get your questions and concerns in front of the selectboard. Making sure name is on your screen and explained how to change that. Civil communications. Went over the ground rules about speaking.

Jennifer read each article on the Town Warning. Will only be reading the Article just once for an informational meeting. Town report is on-line if you have not picked up a paper copy.

Article 1 – Election of Officers

Article 2 – Property Taxes; interest rate for delinquent taxes; and due dates

Article 3 – Real Estate Tax Penalty

Article 4 – Public Works Budget

Article 5 – Selectboard Salaries

Article 6 – Arts, Parks & Recreation Department Budget

Article 7 – General Fund Operating Budget

Article 8 – Transfer of \$30,000 from the Undesignated Fund Balance to the Capital Building Fund

Article 9 - Transfer of \$52,500 from the Undesignated Fund Balance to the Capital Road Fund

Article 10 - Transfer of \$25,000 from the Undesignated Fund Balance to the Capital Paving Fund

Article 11 - Transfer of \$20,000 from the Undesignated Fund Balance to the Capital Reappraisal Reserve Fund

Article 12 - Transfer of \$22,500 from the Undesignated Fund Balance to the Capital Fire Department Apparatus Reserve Fund

Article 13 – Transfer funds to the Town Reserve Accounts

Article 14 – Town of Bristol ratify Town of Lincoln’s vote to withdraw from the MAUSD. Paul Florenza did speak to this article and Ian asked Paul to clarify that the Town of Lincoln school was to be closed and Ian indicated that the superintendent’s proposal was meant to be repurposed.

Article 15 –Whether the Town of Bristol will permit the retail sales of cannabis in the Town of Bristol. Clove Haviva commented in chat and wanted to know if there was any negative as had not heard of any. Peeker asked Bruce to comment on this Article. Chief Nason advised everything he has read and received so far, has no concerns. There are statutes and guidelines that will be followed for them to move forward. Jim Quaglino also made a statement about the message we are sending the youth of our community allowing cannabis to be sold in our town. It is not federally approved or accepted. Joel asked a question about whether any town who approved this would not be given a federal grant because they are selling cannabis in the town. Question of Sally Roth said she thought Vergennes and Salisbury are allowing the sale of cannabis

Article 16 – Appropriations to the Lawrence Memorial Library –Clove Haviva asked if the Town owns the building, why is the amount of the budget so high. It was explained that is their operating budget, that is the cost of operating the building and the library. Salaries are a large part of that and breaks down from there.

Article 17 – Appropriate \$29,000 to Bristol Cemetery to maintain Greenwood Cemetery.

Article 18 through Article 45 are all the individual appropriations and were read – Jim Quaglino asked what Article 27 was for. John Elder replied regarding the Addison Allies – assistant group for migrant workers. Founded in 2017 and mostly entirely volunteer. He assists in teaching English to the workers. There are 350-650 migrant workers in Addison County. They provided language lessons to the worker's at the Hills Farm, help with rides to doctor's appointment, help with those claiming asylum. Lean organization taking food, furnishing and helping with medical and other crisis. These workers are important to our local farming community. Asking for funding because COVID has taken a toll on their volunteer base.

Joel Bouvier – discussed page 1 and the dedication to our long time Moderator and prior Selectboard Member Fred Baser.

Joel Bouvier – Article 23 – want to recognize that the Bristol Recreation Club is 100 years old this year. They will be planning a celebration but no details yet.

Closed the informational meeting of the Selectboard at 7:51. There will be another informational meeting the following Monday as well.

V. Department Head Roundtable.

Chief Bruce Nason - nothing new

Sharon, Town Clerk – lots of requests for Absentee ballots and elections are next Tuesday. Town Reports available at Town Office, the Post Office and outside in the silver box outside the town office and at the library.

Brett LaRose, Bristol Fire Department – Regarding the Town's new fire pumper which was ordered last year Deputy Chief Eric Forand provided a report. There is a delay in estimated delivery from HME – The pumper will be delayed six months and the new estimated arrival date is 9/13/2022. Ian asked what is the likelihood that it will be pushed even further out. Brett advised it is always possible but is hoping not and will be able to deal with not having the vehicle; they have already adapted because they are without that vehicle currently. Sharon advised it is not just vehicles, they have been waiting since October for a new copier.

Eric Cota, DPW (given by Valerie)– minor repairs being completed to trucks from week of storms.; new truck will be built April 4. Mike will be going out to deal with ditches, etc. and expect to have a long Tuesday night due to weather conditions.

Ian thanked DPW crew and he spoke to Eric who said that someone would be out tomorrow morning, Ian saw that Josh was out later that day cleaning up the sidewalks today. Josh was out and saw that someone slipped on the ice and he called Eric and he went and did it. Peeker said

Eric didn't call Josh or anyone to come in today. He went out and pushed back and cleaned up the road. He needs to call others in to help deal with it and not do it himself.

VI. Regular Business.

1. Bristol Fire Department request for authorization to install three flag poles at the Fire Station.

Valerie said the original agenda item indicated for three new poles which is incorrect it is for one additional pole. Michelle made motion to allow the fire department to add the additional pole. Ian seconded. It was noted that NH Munsill is paying for this flagpole in a fund created for the three Bouviers (Joel's father, Eric Bouvier and Jeff Bouvier) that passed away and money was given to the Fire Department. Ian asked about alignment. Joel said it will be in front of others and will make a triangle. The American flag will be on the front pole.. Motion carried.

2. Grant application authorization request: Bristol Police Department to replace vehicle and officer radios.

Bruce advised they currently have six radios in their inventory used in vehicle and one in station. Looking to replace four (three in vehicles and one at the station). They are portables and having issues with some of them. Do not have all quotes yet; Josh is working on quotes. It is a small window of opportunity. They would not be purchasing anything above what they would be awarded. Would also like to order a mobile traffic barrier, which is more sturdy than what we have and create a little more protection for a traffic area. Ian asked when the radios were last purchased. Bruce advised radios were last purchase in 2013 but that does not mean it was 2013 technology. This is a Homeland Security grant and requires no match.

Joel made motion for grant authorization for radios and traffic barriers; Ian seconded. Motion carried.

3. Grant application authorization request: Downtown Transportation Fund for the Basin Street project.

Valerie advised the Town had applied for this last year but it was not awarded so will be applying again for \$200,000 (\$20k match); will also be seeking other sources of funds and allocating funds through the capital roads capital fund as well. The application is due March 7 and requires a resolution to agree to 20% match by the Town. Last year it was a 50% match and this year is 20% match. Total project cost couple years ago was \$700,000 plus. This project would be eligible for ARPA funding as well as being covered under ADA, pedestrian, and public safety improvements. Basin Street is the only access to our septic field.

Michelle made motion to authorize Valerie to apply for the Downtown Transportation Fund grant; Joel seconded. Motion carried.

Michelle made motion to approve Resolution required for the Downtown Transportation Fund grant; Ian seconded. Motion carried.

4. Consider whether to hold remote-only meetings per S.222 “An act relating to authorizing temporary Open Meeting Law procedures in response to COVID-19”.

Ian wanted to bring people’s attention to it. He thinks that a hybrid approach is still good due to the direction COVID is heading. Committees should have a choice whether they want to do a hybrid or remote meeting. This is a separate act than the Town Meeting act which would ordinarily require public meeting space.. There was discussion about Town Meeting and whether doing remote only, in person or hybrid. Selectboard is fine with a hybrid model for commissions, boards, and committees and allow the public to attend in person if they want.

5. American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding update.

Valerie reported that the VLCT came out with analysis of US Treasury’s s final guidance. The gist is still to wait. It is a very broad analysis. The Advisory meeting will be meeting on March 7 and that will be mostly organizational and review VLCT’s guidance. Valerie is going to put together all the requests that have been received in a spreadsheet. There was discussion about what the Selectboard wants to give to the ARPA committee which they would like to see on the list for funding.

6. Review and approval of the August 23, September 13, December 13, and December 20, 2021, and January 3, January 10, January 17, January 24, January 27, and February 7, 2022 meeting minutes.

Michelle Perlee made a motion to approve the January 3, with minor changes. Joel seconded. So voted. It was noted that December 20, 2021 minutes were already approved.

7. Authorize accounts payable warrant and any liquor licenses. \$57,111; Liquor License for Champlain Farms.

8. Selectboard roundtable.

Peeker Heffernan. None.

Joel Bouvier. Articles 13 and 12 – one says apparatus reserve fund and one says vehicle reserve fund; they should be the same. Article 22 needs to include softball and needs to add it for next year. The MAUSD Board wants to be part of sidewalk scoping study to the high school.

Darla Senecal. The community health needs assessment is available. The three priorities that came through was access to health care, mental health, and housing. Very detailed report and was put together through Porter Hospital. Darla will send a link. Other report is the State of VT children and what’s trending broken down by county as well as State wide issues with children.

Ian Albinson. The second meeting for the bicycle advisory group is happening on Feb. 24. Efficiency Vermont will be doing a walk-through of Town buildings tomorrow which was

organized by the Energy Meeting. Munsill Avenue sidewalk scoping meeting happening tomorrow.

Michelle Perlee. None.

9. Town Administrator Report. Valerie had nothing to add to her written report.

VII. Other Business.

1. Correspondence, reports, correspondence received. Nothing was reviewed.

VIII. Adjourn.

Michelle Perlee made motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:14 p.m. Joel Bouvier seconded. So voted.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon A. Lucia
Board Clerk

Michelle Perlee
Selectboard Member

Valerie Capels
Town Administrator