

**Town of Bristol, Vermont
Selectboard Meeting Minutes of
Monday, September 14, 2022**

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

Members Absent: None.

Staff present: Town Administrator Valerie Capels, Public Works Foreman Eric Cota, Fire Chief Brett LaRose, Board Clerk Sharon Lucia, Police Chief Bruce Nason, Zoning Administrator Kris Perlee.

Others present: Jenny Austin, PE (DuBois & King), Richard Butz, James Cole, Jim & Deb Cossaart, Matt Daylor, Randy Disorda, Carl Engvall, Theresa Gile, Kevin Harper, Porter Knight, Linda Lucia, Jim Quaglino, Sally Roth, Ben Skolozdra, Gerry Slager, Mike Winslow.

I. Call to Order. 7:02 pm

1. Review agenda for addition, removal, or adjustment of any items per 1 V.S.A. §312(d)(3)(A).

Valerie Capels recommended that agenda item V.4 (permit application) be postponed and to add contract negotiations if we go into executive session for a Bond Counsel discussion. She also offered a correction that agenda item V.4 should be Building Energy not Efficiency Vermont.

2. Overview of Zoom meeting operation and procedures: rules for participation, mute microphone, recognition by Chair, etc.

II. Public Forum.

Mason Wade, III from Rochester announced that he is an independent candidate for Addison County Senate race.

III. Department Heads Roundtable.

Sharon Lucia, Town Clerk– Election materials should be here next week. They will be sent to everyone on the check list as of Sept. 9. There may be two local elections: MAUSD merger and Pine Street water project. There will be a water read this week and bills go out next week. Tax bills will be sent out the following week. Had a BCA hearing today.

Brett LaRose, Fire Chief – This past Saturday was the family gathering and awards event. Two FFs received awards from State Convention in Bennington which was not an in-person event so was presented at the 9/10 event: Terry Farr VT FF of the year award (28 year veteran) and Capt. Matt Lathrop, Line Officer of the year award (27 year veteran). Other standing awards: training award to FF Anthony Robideau; Dept. FF of the Year Caleb Rockwood, and outstanding contributor award to Lt Adrian Ludka. Also

recognized years of service awards to Roy Catella, Kerrin Hoff, and Adrian Ludka (5 yr); Carl Gile and Kris Perlee (10 yrs); Truck Captain Jarrett Kimball (15 yrs); and Capt. ~~am~~ Amos Martin (20 yrs).

Anthony Delmonaco – Just got back from the New England Government Officials Finance Officers Conference in New Hampshire. Some new information to unpack with Valerie and others. Made contacts.

Bruce Nason – none.

Eric Cota, DPW Foreman – Working with three people other two still in class, so work is slow. One truck is back on the road; one truck is down until next week. Drainage issue on Basin Street that needs to be dealt with. Sand is almost 2/3 drawn ~~on sand~~. There are a couple bidders on the old truck so far.

Meridith – First week with new coordinator Freddie Cannon and he loves it. She just got back from the Five Town practice; first race was last weekend 5th place; 25 racers (grades 5-12) in Northeast Kingdom. Dance classes start for the fall sessions. Gymnastics starts 10/1. Hunter safety course upstairs to-night with about 50 people. The Murder Mystery sold out pretty quickly (55 characters). Harvest Festival is 9/24 (10-4); trying to get trolley to truck people from Rec field to town park.

Kris Perlee – No major updates, a lot of permits going through. Working with a small business inquiring about new manufacturing company in town.

IV. Public Hearing: Adoption of an Ordinance to Regulate Traffic and Motor Vehicle Speeds within the Town of Bristol.

- Proposal to reduce village street vehicular speed limits to 25 miles per hour (mph).
- Opportunity to consolidate other Bristol vehicular speed limit ordinances into a single document.

Public Hearing.

Valerie summarized a number of changes from the previous review and since it was posted and published:

Section 5.3 should be combined with Section 5.4; Lincoln Rd and Briggs Hill Rd should go in the 35 mph Section 5.4 and Section 5.3 should go away.

Section 5.8 was highlighted regarding signage to see if there were any concerns regarding where signage should be located.

If Section 5.3 is eliminated are there any 30 mph roads? Yes: Upper Notch; Upper Meehan & Meehan and possibly more. Need to identify and use accurate names.

Gerry Slager did a nice job illustrating the speed limit signs on the map for the village area but it is not town wide.

There was discussion about if East St becomes 25 mph is there an issue to transitioning to 40 mph (and vice versa). Also if North Street is 25 mph. Monkton Rd & West would be the same [issue](#).

There was discussion about Section 4.1 and whether it should be broadened to include the language (traffic control devices) mentions police; include emergency responders, such as Fire Dept. Eric explained it is in state statute; only Police authority can override a traffic control device. Even the DPW cannot override stop signs or other traffic control devices. Mike Winslow said he does not have any experience with this, and to just put what's in Statute.

It was noted that a 50 mph speed limit sign is missing after Rocky Dale.

The Selectboard affirmed having 25 mph on South Street extent to Rounds Road and not stop at Hewitt Road bridge because it is very narrow through there.

Section 5.1 – errors in road names and not correct road numbers, such as Hardscrabble and Meehan Roads.

Valerie will make changes and have another public hearing, hopefully final.

Kris Perlee referred to state statutes and the “Setting Speed Limits, A Guide for Small Towns,” (VTrans 2016) and questioned the rationale for lowering speed limits in certain areas. Lowering the speed limit to 25 on Lawrence Lane does not make sense. He cited several sections of the VTrans document, that local officials should not succumb to pressure from citizens to lower the speed limit, that local officials tend to set speeds too low, and that it should be based on a traffic study. He questioned the rationale of going from 30 to 25 mph.

Lawrence Lane is about 200 ft in length and is a dead end. There was agreement to add a section for 15 mph roads and include Airport Drive. Add Meadow Lane (no sign) and North Meadow Lane – 25 mph is too fast. Bruce noted that 25 mph would be the maximum safe speed limit.

Mike Winslow reported that [the](#) Town asked the ACRPC to [perform](#) traffic studies for about six village streets about two or three years ago. A number of them did support the 25 mph speed limit. The guidance cited related to town-wide speed limits but does not reference villages, which might be different. He recommended looking at Middlebury's model with lists of roads with different speeds. Pecker noted that drivers need to be going over 30 mph before the BPD can do anything now. Not everyone will do 25 mph, but keeping drivers at 30 mph or under would achieve the goal.

Richard Butz lives on East St. He has issues with younger drivers in hopped up cars come up fast and are noisy. Have seen several instances of close calls at the crosswalk.

He supports 25 mph from the High School to the Lord's Prayer Rock. It will also reduce noise.

Sally Roth lives on Crescent St. Some people use it as a shortcut to Mountain St, roaring up through. She would be in favor of lowering the speed limit. She expressed concern about a Casella truck reversing down Crescent St and sometimes up the street; it's too easy to not see a child or a dog and should not be allowed.

Gerry reported a number of the side streets do not have speed limit signs other than Devino Lane.

Linda Lucia lives on West St and agrees with Richard Butz. West Steet is like a racetrack. When the Creeme stand is open it's an accident waiting to happen. And the volume and loudness of cars coming out of Maplefields is a concern.

Joel reported from a text message that the lowest a road can be posted is 25 mph per 23 VSA §1007b.

Mike Winslow reported that the 2020 ACRPC study had the following results: Liberty St 35 mph, Maple St 25 mph, Mountain St 25 mph, North St 25 mph, Pine St 25 mph, Plank Rd 40 mph, Pleasant St 25 mph, and Taylor Ave 20 mph. Those represent the 85th percentile of what drivers were actually doing.

There was discussion about the speed limit on Plank Rd. It is 35 mph now. Darla, Peeker, and Ian agree with lowering it to 25 mph from North St to Jay Dr and 30 mph to Burpee Rd. Joel can support 25 mph to Jay Dr. and 35 mph to Burpee Rd. Michelle disagreed. Valerie will reflect the 25 mph to Jay Dr and 30 mph from Jay Dr to Burpee Rd in the next version for continued discussion.

V. Consent Agenda.

1. Approve request from the Stampede 2.0 for Walk-a-Thon and 5K run for Sunday, Oct. 2, beginning and ending at the Town Green.
2. Approve VTUMS recommendation to amend the Bristol Water Use Ordinance Appendix B Fees to include a new fee of \$25 for inaccessible touch pads.
3. Approve a minor adjustment to the FY2023 municipal tax rate due to a change in the local agreements calculation.
4. Approve use of the Capital Building Reserve Fund for:
 - Approximately \$600 for Energy Committee's request that an energy audit be conducted for Lawrence Memorial Library by Building Energy, and
 - Approximately \$750 for the Preservation Trust of Vermont's assistance to conduct building assessments for Lawrence Memorial Library and Holley Hall.
5. Approve water connection application with the following conditions for the Cossaarts at 73 Maple Street:
 - The water line is to be Type K copper:

- The service line shall be bedded in four inches (4”) of sand below and twelve inches (12”) of sand above;
 - Because this is a new tap on the water main, the Water Operator must be contact by the permittee or their contractor at least two weeks in advance of the installation so the water tap can be scheduled with an approved vendor; and
 - VTUMS will perform the water line installation on the Town’s side of the service (from the curb stop to the main) and witness the customer side by their contractor from the curb to the home.
 - Conditions of the work in the right-of-way permit shall apply.
6. Approve curb cut application with the following conditions for the Cossaarts at 73 Maple Street:
- One tree be trimmed looking toward Pine Street;
 - The driveway needs to be at least twenty feet (20’) wide at the road entrance;
 - The road base needs to be put in 8” to 12” deep from the road back to the other side of the sidewalk;
 - The new sidewalk in the driveway entrance needs to be 6” deep and at least 4,000 psi mix.
 - Conditions in the work in the right-of-way permit shall apply.

Peeker made motion to approve consent agenda. Michelle seconded. So voted.

VI. Regular Business.

1. Introduction of Firefighter candidates James Cole and Randy Disorda: Fire Chief Brett LaRose.

Fire Chief Brett LaRose introduced Firefighter candidates James Cole and Randy Disorda. Background checks and pre-employment screening have been done. Randy comes from Brandon with certification James Cole from Nevada and will get enrolled as soon as possible.

Peeker made motion to accept candidates. Joel seconded. So voted.

Brett presented the historic signature book for them to sign. They are #333 & 334 in book.

2. Airport Drive Sidewalk Scoping Study Alternatives Public Meeting: Jenny Austin, DuBois & King.

Jenny Austin said this would be the last meeting with the Town; the next meeting is with the ACRPC (TAC) next week. After this meeting a final scoping study will be shared with Valerie. She presented the various alternates:

1a & 1b: Curbed sidewalk on east side

- 2a & 2b: Sidewalk with grass strip on east side
- 3a & 3b: Sidewalk with grass strip on east with shifted road (more pricey).

She then reviewed the various environmental, utility, and cost impacts of each option. Option 2a & 2b were the least cost and least impactful of the options. She will prepare a final report reflecting any comments from this meeting.

3. Consider options for a future location of the Bristol Police Station and steps forward.

Valerie reported that we currently lease space from Bristol Works. The lease is up for renegotiation and renewal in 2023. Do we continue to lease (not investing in anything)? If we don't continue, where do we go: Bristol Fire Station property or the Bristol PD & DPW together plan? When the Fire Station was done, the architect did a rendering including the Police Department building with the two entities sharing space. A new large stormwater pond is there now with the Stoney Hill Business Park in addition to the Town's stormwater pond. Could there be ways to share the use of those pond. That would be an engineering question. Kevin Harper gave permission to approach engineers with that question. Perhaps one stormwater pond could be removed for more parking. Though Green Mountain Engineering is no longer available, the primary engineer that designed both projects is now a consulting engineer.

There was discussion of next steps. Cushman Design designed both the Fire Station project and the Stoney Hill project and know what's there. Breadloaf Construction worked on the DPW/BPD site analysis and are very familiar with the programmatic needs of a Police Department building. There was consensus to reach out to Cushman Design regarding their availability and interest. Pecker noted he would like to have one entrance to both buildings.

4. *Tentative:* Continued review of proposed consolidated Driveway Access and Work in Right-of-Way permit application and fee adjustments for each.

This item was postponed.

5. *Tentative:* Consider selection of new Vermont Bond Bank Bond Counsel.

There was agreement to discuss this in executive session.

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

Valerie reported that the spaghetti dinner was successful with at least 20 participants. The next committee meeting is 9/19 and will be in person and Zoom. Major topics were affordable housing, childcare, outdoor activities, mental health care, sustainability, and taxes/

7. Review and approval of the August 22, 2022, meeting minutes.

This item was postponed.

8. Authorize accounts payable warrant and any liquor licenses. \$431,966.09.

9. Selectboard roundtable.

Darla – none.

Michelle – none.

Joel – Raised concerns about hedges continuing to interfere with sidewalks and sight distances, such as the hedge at Spring St/Mountain St (38 Spring St), Munsill and Pine, Mountain Street. We need to send a letter to the property owners to cut them back by a certain date or the Town will do it. He also asked Eric if the stop sign on Munsill Ave and Pine St could be moved more towards Pine St. Eric will need to check with Cyrus regarding the location of any water lines. Bruce noted that drivers must still proceed cautiously. He asked if anyone had a chance to look to see how the West St slide repair held up after all this rain. He asked Valerie if we will be ready for the Pine Street bond vote in November. She said that is related to topic in executive session.

Peeker – Canopy is starting to come down with trucks are hitting good size limbs, such as Ron LaRose's tree on North St, Pine St, and Liberty St. We need to look into trimming them back to legal height. Eric has already talked with Brett Sargent to see if he would be interested in doing one road a year. We will need to [up the tree](#) budget ~~up~~. Eric said something like [that](#) happened just yesterday. A truck carrying nighttime work lights hit a limb on East St and smashed some of the lights. It was agreed to notify property owners that parts of their trees will be trimmed. Valerie suggested a post in FPF. There are some that should be done now and add it as a budget item.

Ian – none.

10. Town Administrator's report.

Valerie had nothing to add to her written report.

VII. Other Business.

1. Correspondence, reports, correspondence received.

- [FY2023_Bristol_Budget_Status_Report_thru_2022-08-31.pdf](#).
- [E-mail_BFD_ceiling_repair_appreciation_2022-09-03.pdf](#).
- [Bristol_Energy_Committee_Meeting_Notes_2022-08-24.pdf](#).
- [Bristol_Ford_F-350_Bid_Notice_2022-09-07.pdf](#).
- [National_Opioid_Settlement_Allocation_Notice-Vermont_and_Payment_2022-08-31.pdf](#).

Joel asked about the status of the Emerald Ash Borer Committee. Valerie said that with Alex's departure, it lost momentum; however, members of that committee have been active in forming an ad hoc tree committee to focus on all Town trees. The committee may have felt their work was done. At least one of the trees on the Town Green was inoculated.

Darla asked about what we will be doing with the money [from the Opioid Settlement](#). Valerie will need to review the settlement language to clarify whether the Town will continue to receive payments over the next 10 to 18 years. Darla noted there is a local Substance Abuse Treatment and Recovery Group in Addison County. She recommended we ask to hear from them for their recommendations, as well as from Mountain Health. Bob Donnis is advocating for money to Turning Point. The amount \$1,530.

- [ACRPC_Newsletter_Sept2022.pdf](#).

VIII. Executive Session. Contract negotiations per 1 V.S.A. §313(a)(1)(A) and personnel matters per 1 V.S.A. §313(a)(3).

Michelle Perlee made motion at 9:51 pm and invite Bruce to attend. Contract negotiations per 1 V.S.A. Peeker seconded. So voted. The Selectboard met in executive session from 9:51pm to 10:40pm. Upon returning to open session, the following actions were taken:

Peeker made a motion to adjust part-time Police Officers' hourly rates as discussed. Darla seconded. So voted.

Peeker made a motion to authorize Police Chief Nason to hire the fourth Police Officer and to promote Andrew Graham to Sergeant. Michelle seconded. So voted.

There was consensus to authorize Valerie to reach out to Brian Monaghan regarding his availability to serve as Bristol's bond counsel.

IX. Adjourn.

Joel made motion. Peeker seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 10:47pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon A. Lucia
Board Clerk

Valerie Capels
Town Administrator