

**Town of Bristol, VT
Selectboard
Minutes of Meeting
Monday, May 8, 2023**

Members Present: Ian Albinson, Joel Bouvier (Vice-Chair), Peeker Heffernan, Michelle Perlee, Darla Senecal (Chair)

Members Absent: None.

Staff Present: Valerie Capels (Town Administrator), Eric Cota (Public Works Foreman), Brett LaRose (Fire Chief), Sharon Lucia (Town Clerk), Bruce Nason (Police Chief)

Others Present: Cyrus Marsano (VTUMS), Jill Marsano (VTUMS),

I. Call to Order. Darla Senecal called the meeting to order at 7:07 pm.

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

A banner display request from Mount Abe was added to the agenda under Other Business.

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

II. Public Forum.

Nobody present requested the opportunity to address the Board.

III. Department Head Roundtable.

Bruce (Police Department):

- Warm weather means the Department is busier in general

Eric (Public Works Department):

- Reminded all of the scheduled road closure/culvert installation on Hardscrabble Road.
- Green Up Day pickup completed – about a ton of trash and 45 tires collected.
- Ian reported on a pile of trash that needs to be picked up.
- Ian asked that a crossing bollard be placed on North/Pleasant when one is available. Eric confirmed he will get one for this location.

Sharon (Town Clerk):

- Water bills have gone out, there are still a few issues to take care of.
- Sewer readings are coming up.
- Voter checklist purge will be completed and challenge letters sent out after the BCA meeting.
- Dog licenses being are still being issued, about 225 are completed. There is a new dog bite to report.
- Plank Road and North Street will be busy due to Route 17 road closure.

Jill and Cyrus (Water and Wastewater Systems – VTUMS):

- Pre-bid meeting for Pine Street water line next week, looking for cost savings as part of the review, blue paint markings are needed for bidders to evaluate the project – please provide public announcements for this.

- Jill will be contacting folks about their water service, so that should also be noticed. She will send appropriate verbiage.
- Ian asked about service being turned on at Hub water fountain. This will be addressed now that Jill has been notified.
- Jill will get budget information to Valerie and Anthony in preparation for the next Board meeting.

Brett (Fire Department):

- Reminder that May 13 is statewide recruitment effort, the Department will be holding some special activities and demonstrations, as well as food, in an open house format.
- The new one-way drive has been constructed at the Fire Station. Brett thanked Peeker and Eric for this work. Blacktop will be applied soon.

IV. Regular Business

1. Consider bids and selection of a contractor for the Varney Cemetery tree removal and for Notch Road ditching (tentative).

Eric outlined some details of the bids received for tree removal at the cemetery, one for \$10,000 and one for \$18,500. It was confirmed that the trees have been slated for removal by the Tree Warden. The low bid includes tree removal; the higher bid includes using equipment that would not cause trees to fall on the cemetery grounds, and the cut trees would be piled at the roadside. Both bids are for removal at fence height, and both bidders are aware that the work needs to be completed before the adjacent field is planted. That the Cemetery Reserve and Maintenance Funds both have amounts available was outlined.

MOTION: Ian made a motion to accept the \$10,000 bid for removal of trees at Varney Cemetery. The motion was seconded by Peeker. All voted in favor.

The Notch Road ditching work will be discussed once all the bid materials have been received.

2. Consider approval of one or more ARPA funding allocation proposals.

Ian provided a synopsis of several of the twenty Tier 1 recommendations provided by the committee appointed to review ARPA allocation proposals. He provided Board members with a spreadsheet outlining the work or project planned, the type of entity requesting funding, the amount requested, other potential funding sources, where in the process of planning/completion the project is, and other details. The proposals discussed included:

- Bristol Family Center sprinkler system – new bid information is being gathered.
- Grant position – discussed later in this meeting.
- Turning Point Center – an updated proposal for funding a new position was received, further information is being detailed and will be provided. Bob Donas explained that a request is being made from each town served. Ian will gather more information.
- Holley Hall air conditioning and heat pumps – it needs to be determined if these systems are feasible in the upstairs portion of the building.

- Skate park renovations –Taylor and Meridith are gathering cost information.
- Farmers’ market re-establishment – Bristol CORE is working on a Better Places grant, and currently requests \$1,000 to support that proposal. An additional \$10K/year for the following two years is requested.
- Outdoor Library space – CoCo Moseley is putting together a proposal for this. It was noted that the septic location needs to be considered when determining where to place a structure.
- Pine Street pedestrian pathway – Ian does not believe this project can be completed within the ARPA expenditure timeline, but suggested that a pushbutton flashing sign at North and Pleasant might be considered.
- Bus shelters – Ian is pursuing the permitting necessary for these, and is determining the logistics of placing one on Park Street where the old school bell is currently located. He confirmed that the funds requested are needed for site preparation.
- Electric charging stations – Richard and Sally have advised that Level 3 chargers should be installed, at a much higher cost than the original Level 2 chargers proposed. There needs to be further information gathered regarding location relative to 3-phase power availability, aesthetics, and other grant opportunities for this work.
- Rescue squad upgrades – Ian explained that \$95K is for a new ambulance and the balance of the \$130K request is for updated training equipment. Brett asked about emergency communications, and it was explained that Will Elwell did not include any cost related to this in his request as it has not been decided where a tower will be located and therefore the full amount of infrastructure cost is unknown.

There was concern expressed by some Board members that several of the proposals appear to be for different projects than what was originally outlined. It was agreed that some of this may be due to staffing changes and adjusted priorities, and that more detail should be gathered related to details of the project, benefits, and costs involved. It was decided to also request information regarding each project’s timeline and whether other funding has been sought/awarded. It was also agreed that some ARPA funds may still be designated for Town needs that are not included on the committee’s list.

MOTION: Peeker made a motion to allocate \$1,000 of ARPA funding to Bristol Core, to be earmarked for Farmer’s Market use in leveraging a grant for a further \$10,000. The motion was seconded by Michelle. All voted in favor.

Valerie explained the process of completing a draft Resolution for projects awarded ARPA funding, noting that one will be completed for each meeting’s approval of ARPA allocations.

3. Review and potential approval of the Grant Writer and Administrator position job description.

Valerie explained the nuances between a position with the responsibilities of writing grant proposals for all departments and administering any grants received, and a position that would have a broader scope as a community development specialist. There was more support for the former, with the possibility of the position expanding into community development work and potentially assistant Treasurer responsibilities. A starting salary within the \$22-\$30 per hour range was agreed upon. Some edits were suggested for the job description that had been drafted.

MOTION: Joel made a motion to approve the job description and proceed with advertising for the hiring of Grant Writer and Administrator, using ARPA money to fund the position, with the final amount to be determined upon hiring. The motion was seconded by Ian. All voted in favor.

4. Consider approval of a proposed amendment to the Bristol Police Station rental agreement at BristolWorks! and extension to 2026.

Valerie outlined that the current lease is for ten years, with an annual adjustment in rent each year. This amendment is in accordance with that lease, and also extends the lease for three years.

MOTION: Ian made a motion to approve the proposed amendment to the Bristol Police Station rental agreement. The motion was seconded by Michelle. All voted in favor.

5. Discuss potential tax sale of 547 Rockydale Road property, formerly owned by Rollie Benedict, deceased.

Sharon reported that the amount of back taxes owed on the property is approximately \$10K, and reported on the relatives whose whereabouts are known. Michelle explained that in order to initiate a tax sale, necessary attempts at locating all descendants, such as publishing notifications, must be undertaken.

MOTION: Joel made a motion to undertake the steps necessary to begin the process of holding a tax sale on the Benedict property, as there are currently five years of unpaid taxes on the property. The motion was seconded by Ian. All voted in favor.

Valerie explained that the Town will need to be prepared to submit a bid and take ownership if there are no other bidders at the sale.

6. Consider grant application authorization request to apply for a \$4,000 capacity grant through the Municipal Energy Resilience Program.

Valerie explained that the purpose of this grant is hiring a person to prepare future grant applications for increased energy resilience at Town properties.

MOTION: Michelle made a motion to authorize an application for a \$4,000 capacity grant through the Municipal Energy Resilience Program. The motion was seconded by Ian. All voted in favor.

7. Review and approval of the April 10 and April 24, 2023 meeting minutes.

MOTION: Michelle made a motion to approve the April 10 and April 24, 2023 minutes with changes. Peeker seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

8. Authorize accounts payable warrant and any liquor or tobacco licenses.

The warrant was for the amount of \$58,537.74.

MOTION: Ian made a motion to approve the following License application, with the condition that service only take place in a closed-in area. The motion was seconded by Michelle. All voted in favor.

- Wild Hart Distillery – Special Event Permit request for June 5, 2023

9. Selectboard Roundtable

Joel reported that work on the flashing school sign is still ongoing.

Michelle thanked the community for their outstanding Green Up Day participation.

Ian thanked Eric for delivering picnic tables to the Town Green, and noted that bus shelter work is ongoing.

Darla was happy to report that the swing mats at the playground have been returned.

10. Town Administrator's Report.

Valerie had no items to add to her written report.

VII. Other Business.

1. Correspondence/reports received were reviewed.

2. Banner Request

MOTION: Ian made a motion to approve the request from Mount Abe to hang a banner over West Street from Memorial Day to June 24. The motion was seconded by Michelle. All voted in favor.

3. Gathering for Peter Ryan

It was announced that a gathering to celebrate Peter Ryan's retirement will be held on May 11th.

VIII. Executive Session

MOTION: Michelle made a motion to enter Executive Session in order to discuss personnel per 1 V.S.A. §313(a)(3) and potential real estate negotiations as per 1 V.S.A. §313(a)(2). The motion was seconded by Peeker. All voted in favor.

The Selectboard met in executive session from 9:17pm to 10:30pm. Upon returning to open session, no action was taken.

IX. Adjourn.

The meeting adjourned at 10:35pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Chamberlin, Recording Secretary

Valerie Capels, Town Administrator