

**Town of Bristol, VT
Selectboard
Minutes of Meeting
Monday, June 26, 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), Zac Farnham-Haskell (Rec Coordinator), Brett LaRose (Fire Chief), Bruce Nason (Police Chief), Taylor Welch (Teen Center Director)

Others Present: Cris DaBica, Matthew Davis, Beth Ekroos, Thomas Fox, Paul Jackman, Jill Marsano (VTUMS), Bill Mount, Steve Palmer (VTM Engineering), Jim Quaglino, Keith Schnell

I. Call to Order. Darla Senecal called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

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

Michelle suggested adding real estate negotiation to the executive session so she could provide an update.

II. Executive Session

MOTION: Michelle made a motion to enter executive session in order to discuss personnel matters per 1 V.S.A. §313(a)(3), real estate negotiations per 1 V.S.A. §313(a)(2), and potential contract negotiations per 1 V.S.A. §313(a)(1)(A). Joel seconded. Kris Perlee was invited to attend. The motion passed unanimously.

The Selectboard met in executive session from 6:00pm to 6:55pm. Kris left the meeting at 6:40pm. Upon returning to open session no action was taken.

III. Call to Order. Darla Senecal called the regular meeting to order at 7:01 pm.

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

It was agreed to add as item 1A consideration of Scout Troop 543's request to use the former dog pound buildings as a storage location.

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

IV. Public Forum.

Beth Ekroos asked if the letters provided at the June 12 meeting regarding the Masterson property were provided to the DRB. Valerie explained that these were not shared directly with the DRB, but were attached to the Selectboard meeting minutes as requested.

V. Department Head Roundtable.

Eric (Public Works Department):

- Summer work, including mowing, is underway and going well.
- Eric will be on vacation and has work lined up for the crew. He can be called if necessary.

Bruce (Police Department):

- It was a busy Saturday with two events. Parking could have been better for the yard sale but the Department managed things.
- Fourth of July – Bruce asked for courtesy and caution regarding blocking driveways and hydrants.

Jill (VTUMS):

- The water reading is almost complete. Issues with the hand-held equipment are being addressed.
- A questionnaire regarding the line inventory will go out with the bills.
- A reminder to keep plantings from covering up the touch pads will also be included. It is up to the Selectboard when to start issuing related fines.

VI. Public Hearing Continued – Water and Sewer District Annual Meeting.

Review of operating budgets, capital budgets, and upcoming projects.

Jill, Valerie, and Anthony worked through the available financial information. Jill provided a written summary of their findings. The following points were brought up:

- Discovery of capital reserve funds of approximately \$38K, leaving a current capital reserve balance of about \$33K
- Actual revenues are at \$47,171, closer to what was budgeted than had been reported earlier
- Increases to the base charge had been approved but never billed
 - There should be related increases to the usage charge and surcharge amounts, but these have not been considered/approved
- With those increases included in projected billing, there remains an approximate \$6K shortfall that needs to be addressed
 - The four external grease traps/dosing siphons that are pumped by the town could be billed directly
 - The rates for all users could be raised approximately \$28/quarter. This would be in addition to the raises that will be seen due to incorporating the previously approved increases
- The matter of monitoring users who are suspected of sending too much into the system in terms of solids/grease is a separate issue that needs to be addressed.
- Communication with users should be provided in order to give some advance notice of the changes in billing rates.
- Expense amounts have been updated based upon actual numbers.
- Capital reserve contribution is down in order to be sensitive to the rate increases. The contribution can be increased after FY2024 as the \$12,000 bond payment have ended.

MOTION: Ian made a motion to approve the FY23-24 Sewer District budget, incorporating the strategy of billing the four properties with external pumping completed by the Town. The motion was seconded by Peeker. All voted in favor.

VII. Consent Agenda

MOTION: Ian made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Michelle seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

- Approve the Town Clerk's request to close the Town Office on Monday, July 3 in addition to being closed on Tuesday, July 4, 2023.
- Approve the Green Mountain Stage Race's request for use of Town roads for their annual bicycle event on Sunday, September 3, 2023.
- Approve a one-year leave of absence request for Firefighter Greg Swain.

VIII. Regular Business

1A. Consider request for storage of Scouting equipment.

Bill Mount explained that the Troop is looking to store cook stoves, propane tanks, troop tents, and other cooking and camping gear. No food will be stored at the site. Eric indicated that he has no concerns with the proposal. He has seen no evidence of mice now that dog food is no longer stored in the building. There was some discussion of insurance coverage; Bill noted that he would obtain any additional coverage deemed necessary. Joel pointed out that, if ever necessary, the Town should retain the right to improve the building to again serve as the dog pound.

MOTION: Joel made a motion to allow use of the former dog pound building or storage use as proposed by Scout Troop 543, with the condition that if the Town needs to use the building in the future, they will provide a 90-day advance notice that the storage use is no longer an option. The motion was seconded by Ian. All voted in favor.

1. Consider acceptance of Munson Earth-Moving's bid for the Pine Street waterline replacement project at \$617,850; review of the bid tabulation results and next steps: Steve Palmer, VTM Engineering. Steve Palmer provided detailed information regarding the seven bids that were received, outlining the review process undertaken, the quote information provided, and summary of the firms providing the bids. He then reviewed the approved budget and revised estimates, covering both the design and construction phases of the project. He indicated that this will likely come in at about \$100K below budget. Steve also confirmed that paving is included in the bid, but only for the width of the water line trench. He explained the different methods through which contingency charges may be handled, and spoke of his plans for communications with residents, as this will be a disruptive project.

MOTION: Peeker made a motion to award the project to Munson Earth-Moving for \$617,850, subject to related loan approval by DEC's CWSRF Program. The motion was seconded by Ian. All voted in favor.

2. Consider bid results and select a contractor for the Notch Road ditching project.

Valerie noted that the bids received were outlined in her Town Administrator's report. She subsequently learned that Masterson had provided an updated bid in June of \$38,500. Eric explained that he had spoken with each bidder regarding closing the road during the week and reopen it for weekends. He indicated that each of the three bidders felt it would be a week or ten-day long project.

MOTION: Joel made a motion to award the contract to Masterson for \$38,500, with coordination to be arranged with Eric for a reasonable time frame. The motion was seconded by Michelle. All voted in favor.

3. Consider Bristol Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee mission statement and Pine Street traffic calming recommendations: Cris DaBica.

Cris DaBica first presented the group's mission statement, explaining that it was purposefully made to be broad, as the Committee is taking a long view toward making Bristol safer and more welcoming for bicyclists and pedestrians.

He then provided information regarding traffic calming on Pine Street, explaining that the preference is for including advisory lanes to be striped along that road, but the narrowness and other factors will make that difficult. Instead, at this point, the Committee is recommending the installation of additional stop signs, lowering the speed limit to 25 MPH, and some intersection reconfiguration at Pine/Munsill.

Some concern was expressed by both Board members and members of the public present, indicating that this work may not be necessary as they had not heard concerns from either walkers or bicyclists regarding problems with vehicular traffic.

Cris noted that Pine Street is not technically wide enough for two lanes, and so is not sufficient to accommodate pedestrian traffic safely without some mitigating measures. He also explained that in parallel with Pine Street concerns, the Committee will be looking at some other areas in Town for the next phases to be addressed. He indicated that advisory lanes are the ultimate solution for both Pine Street and a couple of other locations.

Valerie pointed out that any additional stop signs will require an update to the traffic ordinance in order to be enforceable.

Ian made a motion to support the plan, but it was not seconded. After some further discussion, it was decided that this matter requires further discussion, and it was agreed to put it on the agenda for the September 25 meeting.

4. Follow up on Lower Notch Road neighborhood complaints and demands for zoning enforcement regarding Masterson's construction activities.

Tom Fox read and submitted a statement regarding a Zoning Fee penalty for Masterson's application, noting that permit applications submitted after development has been initiated are subject to a fine.

There was some discussion regarding the validity of the fee in this situation, and it was indicated that it was unknown whether the late penalty had been charged/paid.

Board members explained that this matter is now being reviewed by the DRB, and that the Selectboard will not be addressing any of the issues until that process is complete.

Matthew Davis expressed concerns that permitting is taking place after the property has already been an active work site and noted that a commercial activity access permit has not been issued. Valerie explained that the Selectboard is waiting for results of the DRB hearing before issuing a curb cut permit. The original residential application was inadvertently misplaced and never processed.

Beth Ekroos asked whether Town permits or Act 250 permits take precedence and why the Town was only reviewing the contractor's yard while Act 250 application materials also include a building. The logistics and authority of both permitting requirements were explained.

5. Eagle Park fishing platform repair and Lincoln Road riverbank stabilization project updates and next steps.

Valerie explained that no bids had been received for the Eagle Park project, and that a request to FEMA for an extension of the grant agreement will be needed if the work is not completed this summer. Feedback will be sought from the four firms who participated in the pre-bid meeting in order to better determine the reasons behind the lack of bids.

Valerie indicated that the Lincoln Road project bidding information had been published. A pre-bid site visit is planned for Tuesday July 11, 2023 at 10:00am and the deadline for bids is 10:00am, Friday July 21, 2023.

6. Review and approval of the May 8, May 22, and May 24, and June 12, 2023 meeting minutes.

MOTION: Michelle made a motion to approve the May 8, May 22, May 24, and June 12, 2023 minutes with the changes that had been provided. The motion was seconded by Peeker. All voted in favor.

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

The warrant was for the amount of \$55,822.40.

There were no liquor or tobacco license applications to be approved.

8. Selectboard Roundtable

Michelle asked if the Special Event liquor licenses approved for Pocock will need to be reapplied for, as the event was postponed until August. It was agreed that Sharon should be consulted about this.

Joel raised the issue of whether to prohibit dogs from being present at big events, particularly on the Green. It was noted that a statement recommending that dogs not be brought to such events is often included on related communications. Ian agreed to bring this up as it relates to Pocock and institute a 'no-dog' policy. It was discussed that the same could be included in the application materials for park rentals.

Darla commented that the water buildup in the road near her house has gone down. Eric explained why this occurs and indicated he will take a look at the situation. He noted some other areas where this type of situation will also be addressed.

Ian provided some ARPA funding updates:

- The septic system at the library has been located in the driveway. It was hoped that a structure could be placed on the lawn, but it was confirmed by other Board members that the leach field should not be covered. It was suggested that a connection to the wastewater system might be a solution that allows a structure to be put in place as desired.
- The Bristol Family Center has learned that they would need a tank and other infrastructure installed in order to put the sprinkler system that was approved in place. These additional costs are prohibitive. Valerie suggested that a connection to the water system might be a less costly solution. Ian raised the possibility of using additional ARPA funds to pay for this connection.

Ian reported that two bus shelters have been delivered and he is working to get them in place, but the issues surrounding the building housing the bell have not been fully ironed out. He asked for suggestions regarding an alternative placement of a shelter.

Joel reported that he is looking into having 'This is a Purple Heart Town' signs installed at the entrance to Town, as he has noticed these at other local towns.

9. Town Administrator's Report.

Valerie explained that she had received a request from Hermit Thrush to use the two parallel parking spaces in front of the store for an event. She noted that the owners have since decided to not hold the event this summer, but that guidance is needed for determining a process to follow with any similar requests in the future. Bruce expressed safety concerns with using any parking spaces on Main Street, regardless of the details about which way the spaces will be accessed, etc. unless the entire street is closed, such as for Pocock Rocks. It was agreed that if any similar requests are made, the Town's Department Heads should be consulted before proceeding.

IX. Other Business.

1. Correspondence/reports received were reviewed.

X. Adjourn.

The meeting adjourned at 10:27 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Chamberlin, Recording Secretary

Valerie Capels, Town Administrator