

**Town of Bristol, VT  
Selectboard  
Minutes of Meeting  
Monday, December 18, 2023**

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

**Members Absent:** None

**Staff Present:** Valerie Capels (Town Administrator), Sharon Lucia (Town Clerk), Meridith McFarland (Rec Director), Bruce Nason (Police Chief), Kris Perlee (Assistant Town Treasurer)

**Others Present:** Kevin Brown (DRB), Tom Fox, Mark Gibson, Theresa Gile, Kevin Hanson (PC), Porter Knight, John Moyers, Jim Quaglino, Sally Roth, Jessica Teets, Helen Young.

**I. Call to Order.** Darla Senecal called the meeting to order at 6:03 pm.

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

Consideration of quotes received for Town Report publication was added under Other Business.

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

**III. Public Forum.**

John Moyers reported that the Green Mountain Power streetlight at the pump house is still flickering and asked if the Town can help rectify this.

**IV. Department Head Roundtable.**

Meridith McFarland (Rec Director):

- Many successful holiday events took place
- Winter sports are ongoing
- Budget development

Bruce Nason (Police Chief):

- Advised caution on rain covered streets

**IV. Regular Business**

**1. Review and potential approval of the Community Resource Specialist job description and allocation of ARPA funds for the first year.**

Bruce summarized that the new position would support the Department's focus on providing for a safe and caring community, as well as free up officers for other work. He explained that the person in this position will follow up with folks who have been in crisis, with the goal of reducing the number of repeat incidents. The Specialist will also be able to assist with dog-related calls, property issues, and so forth. It was confirmed that a vehicle will be required. It was also confirmed that that this will be a Town employee, a civilian position, working under supervision of the Police Department, even if the Department transitions to town-wide coverage. This specification will be added to the job description. Bruce agreed to include in the description some more defined duties as well, such as animal control duties.

There was some discussion regarding for how long ARPA funds should be used to cover the expenses related to the Specialist position, with it being noted that the Board had anticipated a year's worth of

coverage. Porter suggested that ARPA funds only be used for the rest of the current fiscal year, as well as for the infrastructure pieces needed.

**MOTION:** Peeker made a motion to approve the Community Resource Specialist Job Description with the edits agreed upon incorporated. The motion was seconded by Michelle. All voted in favor.

There was further discussion regarding the use of ARPA funds, with it being noted that full FY2025 budget information has not yet been reviewed and that the goal of ARPA expenditures is to serve as many community members as possible, with this position being established to benefit many people for many years.

**MOTION:** Peeker made a motion to allocate up to \$120K in ARPA funds to support the Community Resource Specialist position for one year from date of hire. The motion was seconded by Ian. All voted in favor.

**2. Grant application authorization request: up to \$40,000 through the VTrans Better Roads Program for Lincoln Road riverbank repair project.**

**MOTION:** Peeker made a motion to authorize a grant application through the VTrans Better Roads Program for Lincoln Road riverbank repair work. The motion was seconded by Ian. All voted in favor.

**3. Grant application authorization request: up to \$50,000 through the Vermont Forest & Parks Urban & Community Forestry Program for tree removal, tree trimming, tree planting, and portable watering tank.**

It was confirmed that the amount being requested is up to \$50K, and that the tank is for use by a pickup for tree watering.

**MOTION:** Ian made a motion to authorize a grant application through the Vermont Forest & Parks Urban and Community Forestry Program for tree removal, tree trimming, tree planting, and a portable watering tank. The motion was seconded by Michelle. All voted in favor.

**V. Public Hearing Proposed Amendments to Bristol's Unified Development Bylaws.**

Timing of any follow-up review and discussion prior to warning a Town vote on adoption was discussed. The Board will either complete this work by the end of January for a vote on Town Meeting Day by Australian ballot or will need to hold a special vote if the document has not been approved until after January. Valerie offered a reminder that the grant awarded for the work on the UDRs requires completion by the end of January 2024 in order to keep the full amount awarded and qualify for the match forgiveness.

Kevin Hanson indicated that plenty of educational explanations were offered in response to questions raised during the Planning Commission's Public Hearings, but that no substantive changes have been made to the draft UDRs by the PC.

Joel explained that the draft UDRs are still under consideration by the Selectboard. The hearing was then open for comments.

Tom Fox had provided feedback regarding Business Yards at the previous hearing, and at this point requested that Business Yard be removed as an allowable use in the RA5 District. There was some discussion regarding the distinction between a Residential District and a neighborhood. John Moyers reiterated that there was not a lengthy PC-level discussion regarding adding Business Yard as a use in the RA5 District and that he believes the definition of Business Yard allows for too broad a range of activities.

Mark Gibson spoke of the apparent contradiction between ADUs being a use by right and the 80% height limit in the UDRs for ADUs in relation to one-story primary residences. Board members explained that they intend to address this discrepancy.

John Moyers indicated his disagreement with needing two permits for one building if part of the building will be used as an ADU. He believes the language formerly in the Regulations regarding review for ADUs is actually more permissive, for example providing the possibility of an ADU associated with a duplex, while also serving to address adverse impacts, and asked the Board to consider reinstating the related language. Kevin Hanson had spoken earlier of the PC's decision that the standards outlined in the earlier language are not consistent with the intent of ADUs.

Kevin Brown cautioned against adjusting regulatory language based upon any particular situation that might have been addressed differently. Kevin also pointed out that ADUs may not be regulated differently than single-family residences.

It was discussed that potentially some size considerations be put in place for the Village areas.

Kevin Brown pointed out that the Business Yard definition does not include trash/recycling activities, and that trash/recycling business are not included as a use in any district, meaning that type of use is not allowed.

Kevin Brown explained the logistics of Conditional Use Review by the Town and review by the State for development in the floodplain, indicating that the UDR language should be modified to provide for State review prior to any DRB hearing held for the same application. Suggested language submitted for the Board's consideration was reviewed and adjusted.

The Public Hearing was closed.

Receipt of an email from Tom Fox related to questions about the UDRs was acknowledged.

#### **IV. Regular Business (Continued).**

##### **4. Review of preliminary budget information.**

Valerie indicated the budget development is still a work in progress, but was able to share a spreadsheet and highlight some audit report numbers. She noted that the audited FY22 budget includes a higher than anticipated undesignated fund balance, but that FY2023 auditing is proving to be challenging and no final figures are yet available for that year.

Kris explained that he and Sharon have been working with folks from NEMRC to reconcile the accounts, noting that there has been no reconciliation since October 2022. It was recommended that Selectboard approve funds for use in hiring NEMRC to provide assistance in bringing everything up to date. Board members asked that an estimate of what this work will cost be provided for consideration at the next meeting.

Valerie explained she suggested meeting on Wednesday, December 27 at 4:00pm when it appeared to be a quick meeting to sign the warrant. It was agreed to schedule a Selectboard meeting for December 27 for deliberation on the proposed bylaw amendments pending confirmation of people's availability.

##### **5. Review and approval of the December 4 and December 11, 2023 meeting minutes.**

Approval of these minutes was postponed until the next Selectboard meeting.

##### **6. Authorize accounts payable warrant and any liquor or tobacco licenses.**

The warrant was for the amount of \$102,970.73

No liquor licenses needed to be considered for approval.

##### **7. Selectboard Roundtable.**

Michelle asked about a timeline on fixing the lights on Firehouse Drive. Valerie indicated she has been reaching out to the several parties involved in getting this work completed but has not yet received any concrete answers.

Joel noted the Memorial Park sign had some wind damage. Michelle indicated that the school was repairing this.

Joel asked about balancing the Town's check book. Valerie noted this has been a challenge with no Treasurer.

Joel asked about progress on the Water Service Line Inventory data gathering. Valerie noted that an update will be provided at an upcoming Selectboard meeting.

Ian noted that the Act 250 Amendment Application for the bus shelter has been submitted.

**8. Town Administrator's Report.**

Valerie had nothing to add to her written report.

**VI. Other Business.**

**1. Correspondence/reports received** were reviewed.

**2. Consideration of quotes received for printing of Town Report.**

Ian outlined that two quotes had been received, each for the printing of 300 books. 802 Print provided the lower quote of \$1,178.25, with Repro providing a quote of \$1,338 or \$1,285 with a 2-year agreement.

**MOTION:** Joel made a motion to accept the quote from 802 Print for providing 300 copies of the Town Report. The motion was seconded by Peeker. All voted in favor.

Porter inquired about the inclusive language suggestions which had been provided. Ian said he included this information in his communications with Town groups this year and will provide the information to external groups as well.

**VII. Adjourn.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Carol Chamberlin, Recording Secretary

Valerie Capels, Town Administrator