

**Town of Bristol, VT
Selectboard
Minutes of Meeting
Monday, March 25, 2024**

Members Present: Ian Albinson, Joel Bouvier (Chair), Michelle Perlee (Vice-Chair), Jessica Teets

Members Absent: Peeker Heffernan

Staff Present: Valerie Capels (Town Administrator), Eric Cota (Public Works), Brett LaRose (Fire Chief), Sharon Lucia (Town Clerk), Meridith McFarland (Rec Director), Bruce Nason (Police Chief), Kris Perlee (Zoning Admin, Asst. Treas., Asst. Clerk), Taylor Welch-Plante (Hub Director)

Others Present: Linda Andrews, Sally Burrell (Energy Committee), Theresa Gile, Porter Knight, Jill Marsano (VTUMS), Eric McDonnell (Fire Department), NEAT TV, Steve Palmer (VTM Engineering), Jim Quaglino, Ben Skolozdra, Sarah Stillman (Farmers Market Manager), Adam Thomas

I. Call to Order. Joel Bouvier called the 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).

There was agreement to add consideration of quotes for a new pick-up broom as item 1A under Regular Business.

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

II. Public Forum.

Sally Burrell encouraged attendance at the Energy Committee’s April 17 meeting, where an introduction to thermal energy networks and possibilities for installations in Bristol will be on the agenda.

III. Department Head Roundtable.

Eric Cota (Public Works) reported the crew is taking care of repair issues related to the recent snowstorm. The Firehouse Drive streetlights are now working. Wires were in a conduit about twelve feet from the second pole, but there was no blind box was in place, so a box has been installed and all lines tied in. One light has stopped working again, so either a bulb or sensor needs to be replaced. Board members directed Eric to determine the additional cost needed to repair the light, and proceed with replacing the necessary part if the expense will be \$500 or less.

Kris Perlee (Zoning, Asst. Clerk, Asst. Treasurer) reported that zoning permit applications are starting to pick up. All potential ZA candidates have withdrawn. Property taxes are due April 15 and dog licenses are due April 1. The school budget revote is scheduled for April 16.

Bruce Nason (Police Chief) reported that speed patrols are increasing as speeds are increasing in town with the good weather. He thanked Eric and the DPW crew for moving the speed sign from North Street to South Street and installing a new speed sign on North Street, so now entrances to town from all four directions have an electric sign in place.

Meridith McFarlane (Recreation Director) reported that community swim will be available during vacation break, lacrosse sign-ups are taking place, and they are preparing for spring – bike library, skateboard park, etc. getting set up.

Taylor Welch (Hub Teen Center) reported that February was busy, all is going well, and they are excited about upcoming projects. They are working on grant applications and planning for grant monies awarded.

Brett LaRose (Fire Chief) reported that repairs from high wind event are complete. They received their Act 250 permit for training structure and will be working on next steps.

IV. Regular Business

1. Bristol Fire Department: Fire Chief Brett LaRose and Firefighter candidate Eric McDonnell.

Brett introduced Eric McDonnell as a candidate for approval as a member of the Fire Department. Eric was present via Zoom, and introduced himself to the Board.

MOTION: Ian made a motion to approve Eric McDonnell's appointment to the Fire Department. The motion was seconded by Michelle. All voted in favor.

It was noted that the book-signing ceremony held for new firefighters will take place at a future meeting.

1A. Consideration of quotes received for pick-up broom attachment.

Eric outlined the three quotes which were received for a pick-up broom. He indicated that to continue contracting for this work would cost \$7,500 for one sweeping this year. Owning the equipment instead will allow for more frequent road cleaning, as well as sidewalk cleaning if necessary. He discussed that the water attachment which is available is not critical, as it is more effective to do the sweeping during a light rain. The lowest bid is for an attachment which is 10" smaller in width than the others, which Eric does not consider an impediment. Board members asked for confirmation that the low bid includes the cost for a water attachment; Eric will check on this.

MOTION: Ian made a motion to purchase the broom attachment from United provided that the water attachment is included in the price at a cost not to exceed \$28,800. The motion was seconded by Michelle. All voted in favor.

2. Water Commission: Consider water connection request by Adam and Amber Thomas for new water line for proposed 6-unit Planned Unit Development.

Valerie outlined that the focus at a previous meeting was a request for removal of a condition requiring a looped water line. That request was approved, but questions arose regarding where shutoffs to each service would be located. New plans had been submitted which include meter pits to be installed on both North and Pine Streets. Related communication from Jill Marsano and Steve Palmer was also available. The Thomas' are seeking preliminary approval of these plans from the Town so that they can move forward to other levels of review that are necessary.

Adam Thomas explained that their intention is to retain ownership of all the units and thus be responsible for all water use. There was some discussion regarding each unit having a separate shutoff, and the meter pits delineating the end of the Town's responsibility. Valerie suggested that a shutoff be put in place where the line splits for the two houses, which is a portion of the line over which the Thomases will have control.

There was discussion about whether tapping into the existing six-inch water main on Frances Place is an option. All agreed that it would be if it was in a public right-of-way. Joel does not believe it is a private drive or water line and recommended the Village Trustee minutes be reviewed from when it was approved in the 1980s. He believes all fire hydrants should be the responsibility of the Water District to maintain.

Joel asked that work on policies, including matters related to shutoffs and fire hydrants in or out of the right-of-way be completed in time for the June meeting. Specifically, he would like to see a policy authorizing access to any water district contractor to any shutoff, curb stop, or fire hydrant located on private properties and rights-of-way for maintenance or turn off for lack of payment.

MOTION: Michelle made a motion to provide preliminary approval for the plan presented by the Thomases, including meter pits on North and Pine Streets as depicted. The motion was seconded by Ian. All voted in favor.

3. Mulligan Dog Ordinance violation hearing order check-in.

Valerie reported that the neighbors indicated that the situation has improved, they are currently satisfied, and that they will report back if the barking again begins to reach an unacceptable level.

4. Consider request to allocate ARPA funds to support the Bristol Farmers Market

Taylor Welch and Sarah Stillman provided some background information regarding the request for \$10K/year (for three years) of ARPA allocations for the Farmer's Market. They explained that last year the Market wasn't planned with enough lead time for farmers to prepare, and that it is anticipated participation by local farmers will increase each year. Sarah explained that these markets are one strategy for addressing food security needs.

Board members asked several questions regarding matters such as attendance numbers, the number of farm vendors, and how the funds will be used. Ian explained that half the money is for compensation of the Market Manager and some for entertainment at the events. He noted that the goal is for the market to become self-sustaining. Meridith confirmed there is no fee for use of the Town Green.

Sally Burrell and Porter Knight both spoke of the positive impacts of the market; Porter also stressed that the ARPA Committee intended to provide funds for providing support for local food producers, and noted that there may be alternative means to that end, such as providing tables or coolers to new farmers just starting out. Sarah explained that markets are an avenue for getting food to local people, and that she plans to put programs in place for shopping with assistance program funds. She also noted that markets provide a low barrier of entry for small farmers, and provide a venue where they are able to receive retail prices.

MOTION: Michelle made a motion to confirm allocation of \$10,000 of ARPA funds for Farmers' Market support in 2024, and to reevaluate the need for 2025. The motion was seconded by Jessica. All voted in favor.

MOTION: Michelle made a motion to reserve \$20,000 of ARPA funds for potential Farmers' Market support in 2025 and 2026. The motion was seconded by Jessica. All voted in favor.

5. Continued appointment and/or reappointment of Town officers or representatives.

An updated worksheet of current members, with those wishing to be reappointed noted, was available.

MOTION: Michelle made a motion to reappoint members as outlined on the worksheet. The motion was seconded by Jessica. All voted in favor. Those appointed included Kevin Brown, Brenda Tillberg, and Josh Crandall to the Development Review Board; Tanya Bashaw and Kevin Masse to the Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee; Sally Burrell to the Energy Committee; and Peter Bouvier to the Equipment Committee.

Valerie noted that Richard Butz is not interested in continuing to be a representative to the Addison County Regional Planning Commission and that Cecil Foster is interested in serving on the Revolving Loan Fund board if a vacancy arises. Ben Skolozdra and Mark Gibson have both expressed interest in serving on the Maple Broadband Committee, for which a delegate and alternate position are both open. Ben was present and spoke of his interest in this work.

MOTION: Michelle made a motion to appoint Ben Skolozdra as the delegate and Mark Gibson as the alternate representative to the Maple Broadband Committee. The motion was seconded by Ian. All voted in favor.

6. April 8, 2024 eclipse planning update.

Valerie provided information regarding the continued planning for the eclipse, during which heavy traffic is anticipated throughout the state. Emergency services staff have plans in place, and the Police Department is prepared to monitor traffic and parking. Valerie noted that it had been decided not to provide portable toilets, as that might encourage camping in inappropriate locations. One concern raised in preparation meetings was the potential use of Mountain Terrace to access the Bristol Cliffs hiking trails. Board members agreed that the road should be closed to all but local traffic during the day on Monday and suggested that a letter be sent to residents of the road. Valerie will be posting information to Front Porch Forum, Facebook, and Instagram. Porter suggested directing people to the Recreation Field where the Scouts already have an event planned and schools will be closed. The Bristol Recreation Club intends to have a port-o-let installed.

7. Consider approval of MAUSD application to install a banner over West Street over Memorial Day weekend to honor graduating students.

MOTION: Ian made a motion to approve the MAUSD application to install a banner over West Street over Memorial Day weekend 2024. The motion was seconded by Jessica. All voted in favor.

8. Grant application authorization request: Addison County Regional Planning Commission Small Grants Program.

Valerie explained that the Addison County Regional Planning Commission (ACRPC) is inviting applications for up to \$10,000 in small grants to municipalities. A proposal has not yet been decided. There is a short timeline involved. She recommended that something be selected for work that is already planned to be taken on. Board members offered suggestions of projects that might be appropriate for this grant program, including studying use of the Town barns after the Public Works Department moves out, assessing improvements needed for "Big Red" at the Rec Club field, exploring locations for new bicycle racks and benches, or a guardrail study to identify locations, priorities, and a budget for installation of new guardrails in town. Valerie mentioned it was agreed to pursue submitting a request. Valerie will have a letter available for Board signatures at the next meeting.

9. Approve the VTrans Annual Financial Plan for FY2024.

MOTION: Michelle made a motion to approve the VTrans Annual Financial Plan for FY2024. The motion was seconded by Ian. All voted in favor.

10. Approve the VTrans Certification of Compliance for Town Road and Bridge Standards and Network Inventory.

MOTION: Michelle made a motion to approve the VTrans Certification of Compliance for Town Road and Bridge Standards and Network Inventory. The motion was seconded by Ian. All voted in favor.

11. Review and approval of the January 29, February 1, February 12, February 26, March 4, and March 11, 2024 meeting minutes.

MOTION: Michelle made a motion to approve the minutes of January 29 and February 1, 2024. The motion was seconded by Ian. All voted in favor.

Approval of other minutes was postponed until the next Board meeting.

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

The warrant was for the amount of \$64,742.30.

MOTION: Ian made a motion to approve a tobacco and tobacco substitute license renewal for Shaw's. The motion was seconded by Michelle. All voted in favor.

13. Selectboard roundtable.

Ian reported that the Walgreens bus shelter is in place and that the wind damage to the structure will be repaired and asphalt put in place at the base when the weather is suitable. He also explained that the shelter to be placed on Firehouse Drive needs some alterations in order to be able to withstand the winds that come through that area.

Ian will be connecting with the person who has agreed to paint the Howden hall sign posts. The sign is ready to be installed once the posts are prepared.

Ian noted that he and Richard Butz had met with representatives of Drive Electric VT to look at potential charger locations, and begun discussions with individuals who might host an installation on private property, particularly where there is 3-phase power available. Locations near the playground and outside Holley Hall are also being investigated for practicality considerations related to 3-phase power. Locations for Level 2 chargers are also being explored, and quotes for installation costs will be gathered once locations are more definitive.

Joel indicated that he has seen an increase in people running stop signs and wanted to pass that information along to the Police Department.

Joel noted that he would like to discuss at a future meeting the possibility of creating a schedule where each Department Head provides a report at alternate meetings rather than needing to be present and report at each meeting.

14. Town Administrator's report.

Valerie highlighted a couple of items included in her written report.

V. Other Business.

1. Correspondence/reports received were reviewed.

VI. Adjourn.

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Chamberlin, Recording Secretary

Valerie Capels, Town Administrator