

**Town of Bristol, VT  
Selectboard  
Minutes of Meeting  
Monday, November 13, 2023**

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

**Members Absent:** Peeker Heffernan, Darla Senecal (Chair)

**Staff Present:** Valerie Capels (Town Administrator), Eric Cota (Public Works Foreman), Bruce Nason (Police Chief), Taylor Welch (Hub Teen Center)

**Others Present:** Linda Andrews, Sally Burrell, Dale Dingler, Randy Durand, Colby Gile, Theresa Gile, Marin Howell (Addison Independent), Patricia Hunt, Jill Marsano (VTUMS), Jim Quaglino, Dave Sharpe, Nancy Skidmore, Ben Skolozdra (Energy Committee), Jessica Teets

**I. Call to Order.** Joel Bouvier called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

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

Several items were added to the agenda, including consideration of an Errors and Omissions Report, a discussion regarding meeting on December 4, the appointment of Brad Cameron to the Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee, and that the first item in Regular Business is a Water Commission matter.

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

**II. Public Forum.**

Nobody present requested time to address the Board.

**III. Department Head Roundtable.**

Eric Cota (Public Works):

- Typical repairs were needed after the first snowstorm, but all has been taken care of.
- Freightliner front end has been ordered, no news on when it will be in.

Brett LaRose (Fire Chief):

- 2007 pumper tanker body work is complete and the vehicle has been returned.
- Lakes Region will be coming to complete the punch list on the new pumper.
- Working on budget, everything has increased, trying to determine where cuts might be possible.

Bruce Nason (Police Chief)

- Acknowledge great job by Sargeant Graham and Francis Smith at the recent North Street incident.
- Reminder that overnight parking bans are in effect.

**IV. Regular Business**

**1. Water Commission: Consider concerns by Dale Dingler regarding 17 School Street water connection and leak repair.**

Joel and Valerie reported that they met with Jill regarding this issue, which has arisen because Mr. Dingler is planning to open up the house for use by the end of the month. He had the water turned off for the past 18-24 months while the house was vacant and being renovated, as there is a significant leak in the line supplying the house. Mr. Dingler asked about the possibility of repairs taking place before the end of the month.

Jill explained that the condition of the line is questionable, that the quality of the entire line in that area is poor, and that no documentation exists of where the house line meets the main line (or where other nearby curb stops are located). For these reasons, as well as cold weather complications, she expressed concerns regarding doing any work on the line until the spring.

Mr. Dingler indicated that he had lined up a contractor to complete any directional boring necessary to replace the old line and noted that he would prefer to put in less expensive plastic line rather than copper for the 175 feet from the main line to the house. Because copper only comes in 100-foot lengths and would require a joint, he believes that running copper for that distance could lead to problems. Use of a directional bore will prevent the need to dig up and repair the driveway to the house. Jill noted that pulling a sleeve through with the bore equipment, through which copper could then be run, would prevent any impacts to the copper line. She explained that copper is longer lasting and easier to locate if necessary in the future.

After further discussion of the difficulties that may be created by doing the work at this time of year, it was agreed that the water supply to the house should be turned on with no work completed on the lines at this point, with a plan to run a copper replacement line in May. At that point, two days can be scheduled to do the work, notification can be provided to neighbors due of possible impacts to their water supplies, and the current buffalo box can be replaced with a new curb stop. This will also provide Jill with the time necessary to complete some research and line location for the immediate area.

**MOTION:** Joel made a motion to turn the water back on to the 17 School Street residence, with the understanding that there will be leakage on the Town's side of the meter, and that a copper line will be put in place at some time between May 1 and May 15, 2024. The motion was seconded by Ian. All voted in favor.

Coordination between Mr. Dingler and VTUMs will happen in the spring and Mr. Dingler will arrange to have the directional bore work done in the time frame indicated.

## **2. Consider winter maintenance options for Briggs Hill Road related to the actual and impending slope failures.**

Eric outlined that a portion of the bank below Briggs Hill was lost during a summer rain event, and there is now an approximately 20-foot long section of the road settling, bringing the guardrails to only about a foot above the top of the road surface. He explained the road could be kept open in both directions and winter maintenance addressed as usual, keeping an eye on the situation to ensure it isn't getting worse. Alternatively, Eric indicated the road could be closed or made one-way for the winter months, although this would require purchasing the necessary signage and barriers and would impact the school bus route. His suggestion was to keep the road open as usual, as he has not seen any further settling recently.

The possibility was raised of placing a barrier directly over the slumping road section and place signage warning 'be prepared to stop,' but Eric explained that the section is on a hill, which would make this difficult for motorists in both directions. He indicated that snowbanks would likely help the situation, and that he will put some orange barrels at the site to provide a visual warning.

Board members agreed to follow Eric's suggestions and keep the road open at this point.

**3. Update on the Howden Hall sign replacement and consider slight design modifications.**

Ian provided an update on the mounting brackets he designed for the Howden Hall sign, explaining that they will not hold paint well, and proposed that the sign's outline be changed to black in order to have the brackets blend in once the sign is mounted.

**MOTION:** Michelle made a motion to approve the change in the sign border from green to black to match the mounting hardware. The motion was seconded by Joel. All voted in favor.

**4. Park Use Application: Outdoor Live Nativity at the Town Green, Sunday, Dec. 10, 2023, 12:00pm – 5:00pm.**

**MOTION:** Ian made a motion to approve the Outdoor Live Nativity at the Town Green, Sunday, Dec. 10, 2023, 12:00pm – 5:00pm. The motion was seconded by Michelle. All voted in favor.

**5. Consider approval of the Energy Committee's request to establish a Bristol Energy Committee Instagram page to promote information about events and energy-related information.**

Ben Skolozdra was present to discuss how best to post the Energy Committee's updates on Instagram. He had proposed that the Committee establish their own Instagram account, but Board members had concerns regarding the management of a new account as well as moving something along these lines forward for just one Committee when there is work being completed to revamp/reorganize the Town's website and social media posts. It was agreed that, for now, all Energy Committee posts should go through Valerie for placement.

**MOTION:** Ian made a motion to request that the Energy Committee send material to the Town Administrator for posting to the Town's Instagram account. The motion was seconded by Michelle. All voted in favor.

Dave Sharpe spoke of the benefits for the Town's economy that might be realized by installing faster-charging Level 3 chargers for electric vehicles. Ian explained that progress is being made on installation of upper end Level 2 charging stations, which are also fairly fast.

**6. Consider appointment of Jessical Teets to the Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee. Also to consider appointment of Brad Cameron, as noted during review of the Agenda.**

Joel had some questions regarding how volunteers are recruited and what the need is for additional Committee members. Valerie confirmed that open positions are posted on the Town's web site. She said one term is up in March 2024 and the other is up in March 2025. Ian also provided additional information on the Committee, noting the difficulty they have had in getting a quorum at meetings.

**MOTION:** Ian made a motion to appoint Jessica Teets and Brad Cameron to the Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee, one for each term that is open and for them to decide who fills which seat. The motion was seconded by Michelle. All voted in favor.

**7. Review and potential approval of an updated Zoning Administrator (ZA) job description.**

Valerie provided some background about how the ZA position has evolved. Originally conceived as a full-time position including economic development, the position is now part-time and includes E911 Coordinator duties. It was agreed to discuss the job description in more detail after Board members have had more opportunity to review it and when the full Board is in attendance, with Kris Perlee joining the discussion.

Linda Andrews, Randy Durand, Dave Sharpe, and Sally Burrell requested that the draft job description be emailed to them. Randy said he also has concerns about the current zoning permit application.

The issue of posting permit notices was also raised. It was explained that this should be taken up with the Planning Commission, as they are responsible for updating the regulations and procedures.

**8. Consider grant application authorization request from the Hub Teen Center to the Vermont Prevention Lead Organization.**

Taylor explained that the funds, if awarded, will be used to focus on staffing, that increased staffing may allow for new programming, and that the position would be for 20 hours/week with no benefits. The grant would cover the cost of the Town's employee-related expenses. Taylor indicated that Hub positions have been successfully grant-funded in the past. She noted that she would apply for further funding from the same source in June.

**MOTION:** Michelle made a motion to authorize the Hub Teen Center to submit a grant application to the Vermont Prevention Lead Organization. The motion was seconded by Ian. All voted in favor.

**9. Consider appointment or selection of individuals to serve on a new Local Hazard Mitigation Plan Update Committee.**

Valerie suggested that the Committee consist of a Selectboard member; a representative from each of the following: Public Works, Fire Department, Planning Commission, Conservation Commission, Water and Sewer, ACRPC; and a member of the public. It was suggested that a representative of Bristol Rescue also be included. Valerie indicated that Andrew L'Roe (RPC) and Kristen Underwood (Cons Comm) are willing to serve. Eric confirmed that he will attend meetings as his workload allows. The Board decided to ask Peeker of his interest, and Joel offered to be part of the Committee if Peeker declines.

Valerie explained that a consultant will be doing the bulk of the work, and that there will likely be 2 or 3 hour-long meetings during which the Committee will provide input and feedback. She will reach out to Planning Commission Chair Kevin Hanson and post a notice on Front Porch Forum to engage a member of the public.

**10. Review and potential approval of revised Bristol Revolving Loan application materials.**

This item was postponed.

**10A. Consider approval of the Listers Errors and Omissions Report.**

**MOTION:** Michelle made a motion to approve the Errors and Omissions as outlined by the Listers. The motion was seconded by Ian. All voted in favor.

**11. Review and approval of the September 25, October 16, and October 30, 2023 meeting minutes.**

**MOTION:** Michelle made a motion to approve the minutes of September 25 and October 16, 2023, with the changes provided incorporated. The motion was seconded by Ian. All voted in favor.

Approval of the minutes of October 30, 2023 was postponed.

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

The warrant was for the amount of \$413,805.13.

No liquor licenses needed to be considered for approval.

Joel asked about the invoice from VTUMS for the Pine Street water line project. Valerie explained that because VTUMS' time was not included in the original DWSRF loan documents, payment through the loan is not currently eligible. Because the loan would have included 50% forgiveness, VTUMS offered to apply a discount equivalent to what would have been loan forgiveness and is proposed to come out of Water Dept. contracted services. It was agreed that including some amount as a buffer will be useful when building a budget for upcoming work, as this type of situation is likely to arise again.

**13. Selectboard Roundtable.**

Michelle asked about a van that has been regularly parking overnight on the back of Park Street, noting that she has spoken to Meredith regarding this as she believes it is a Recreation vehicle; however found that it was not the recreation van but one of the private school vans. Bruce said he has noticed this and is working to address the situation.

Joel asked how the new appraiser is doing. Valerie said the listers have not needed to engage him for assistance much. He is also working with the Listers on an RFP for reappraisal services in a limited capacity as he does not want to be disqualified from providing a proposal. She noted that the RFP should be ready soon for Board review.

Joel raised the topic of budget development, suggesting that it might be useful to place a cap on increases. Several other points were raised, including that costs have risen for both materials and services, and it was agreed to discuss this matter further at the November 27 meeting.

Valerie reported that many service organizations to whom the Town has provided funding in prior years are intending to increase the amount requested this year, and that it was unclear whether they should petition for the increase requested, or for the full amount being requested. Board members confirmed that petitions should be for the full amount.

**14. Town Administrator's Report.**

Valerie reported that she and Freeda met with Floyd Davison and Joel Fitzgerald at the MAUSD office regarding a grant application for the sidewalk on Airport Drive and that the group will be working on a cooperative agreement on how best to proceed.

She also reported that it had been brought to her attention that action is needed regarding notifying residents along Firehouse Drive of winter parking restrictions. Bruce noted that he has been working on eliminating overnight parking on that street, as it is prohibited. It was discussed that signage may be needed.

**V. Other Business.**

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

**VI. Adjourn.**

The meeting adjourned at 9:07 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Chamberlin, Recording Secretary

Valerie Capels, Town Administrator