

**Town of Bristol, VT
Selectboard
Minutes of Meeting
Tuesday, May 28, 2024**

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

Staff Present: Valerie Capels (Town Administrator), Brett LaRose (Fire Chief)

Others Present: Betsy Blair, Elissa Cobb, Colby Gile, Tyler Hebert, Marin Howell (Addy Indy), Porter Knight, Cyrus Marsano (VTUMS), Jill Marsano (VTUMS), Steve Palmer (VTM Engineering), Jim Quaglino

I. Call to Order. Michelle Perlee 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).

No adjustments were necessary.

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

II. Public Forum.

Nobody requested time to offer comments.

III. Department Head Roundtable.

Jill Marsano (VTUMS) reported they are getting financial and other information ready in preparation for upcoming public meeting. They will be pumping cell one and making some repairs to the rotted effluent structures of the septic tanks. The upcoming leak repair on South Street will require the road be closed. Adequate notice will be provided. A leak at Taylor and Pleasant needs some exploration. Curb box repairs are expected to be completed by end of June. They will be working on a faucet replacement at Pleasant and Liberty. Cyrus recommends frost-free and Jill suggests moving it out of the snowplow path.

Brett LaRose (Fire Chief) reported that possible agenda items in upcoming weeks include utility truck quotes and review of implications of the new OSHA rule, which could be substantial.

Eric Cota (Public Works) provided Valerie with a written update to share. She reported that grader repairs are underway and there will be grading this week. They are exploring different strategies to move a beaver at the culvert by the Elementary School. They will be starting roadside mowing. Crosswalk painting coming up. Eric will be on vacation the weeks of June 17 and June 24. Extra equipment and supplies have been ordered for upcoming projects, including the drainage work on Pine Street and Munsill Avenue. Street sweeping is likely to be completed just before crosswalk painting is scheduled.

IV. Regular Business

1. Bristol Fire Department: Fire Chief Brett LaRose and Firefighter candidate Tyler Hebert.

Chief LaRose introduced Tyler Hebert and indicated that all background checks are complete. Tyler chatted briefly with Board members.

MOTION: Peeker made a motion to accept Tyler Hebert into the ranks of the Bristol Fire Department. The motion was seconded by Ian. All voted in favor.

Tyler then added his signature to the historical book of Bristol firefighters.

2. Consider formation of a Bristol Equity Committee and potential appointment of candidates.

Porter Knight provided some background on the previous equity work completed and the receipt of a second Vermont Community Foundation (VCF) Equitable Communities Grant to move forward with projects to put actions behind the Selectboard's Declaration of Inclusion. She explained that the first step proposed is the formation of a committee to generate ideas and undertake agreed upon projects once approved by the Selectboard. She provided some examples of tasks that might be considered, including 'All are welcome' signage, support for minority owned businesses, sponsoring equity-related forums, equity mapping, provision of resources, and others.

There was some discussion among the Board regarding whether this level of equity and inclusion work is necessary in Bristol. Porter and others providing examples of racism and discrimination based upon other situations they experienced or witnessed. It was agreed by the Board that input from a committee for action items will be expected, and that the group would not be formed for discussion purposes only. Porter explained that a decision to not form a committee would necessitate returning the second round of grant money which had been received, as the committee is the basis for which all the grant-funded activities will stem.

Two of the candidates, Betsy Blair and Elissa Cobb, spoke of their interest in serving on the Committee. Valerie indicated that four other people had expressed interest as well. Porter noted that the grant was written for a committee of 5 – 7 members, and proposed beginning with a group of 5, with the intent to increase to 7 members with an aim of increasing the diversity of representation.

Six people in total had expressed interest in serving on the Committee. Michelle noted that Betsy had served on groups for the Town previously, and that Michelle would like to see others be able to join this time. Betsy indicated her willingness to serve as an alternate member.

MOTION: Michelle made a motion to form an Equity Committee and appoint Elissa Cobb, Ainaka Luna, Darla Senecal, Krista Siringo, and Trevor Wilson to the Committee, with Betsy Blair to serve as an alternate. The motion was seconded by Peeker. All voted in favor.

3. Consider ARPA funds allocation request of \$12,000 to support EV charger grant application. Ian confirmed that support of EV chargers was already part of the ARPA list. He then outlined the benefits of the Wells property location for Level 3 charger installation, including the reduced cost due to availability of 3-phase power nearby. He explained that the Town will not be involved in the project, as the installation will be on private property. Norwich EV will handle the logistics. The ARPA funds requested will be paid out over the 5 years for which a lease will be set up. Joel expressed his opposition to ARPA funds being used on private property.

MOTION: Peeker made a motion to allocate \$12K of Town ARPA funds to support the EV Charger Grant application over five years. The motion was seconded by Jessica. The motion passed, with Joel opposed.

Ian had drafted a letter of support for the project from the Town.

MOTION: Peeker made a motion to authorize the Town Administrator to sign the letter of support on behalf of the Selectboard. The motion was seconded by Ian. All voted in favor.

4. Review of annual Fire Station annual stormwater inspection report: Steve Palmer, P.E., VTM Engineering, PLC.

Steve reported that there is a good maintenance routine at this site, there are no issues, and the report has been submitted to DEC.

5. Review of annual landfill and stormwater inspection reports: Steve Palmer, P.E., VTM Engineering, PLC.

Steve provided an overview of vegetation management and other site maintenance, noting that some minor reseeding is needed, and that the site continues to improve each year. The swales are holding up well, with some minor tree removal and one culvert installation needed. The solar permit is separate, requiring a permit due to the addition of some impervious surface during that installation. Annual mowing should take place in this area.

6. Review of annual wastewater system inspection report: Steve Palmer, P.E., VTM Engineering, PLC.

Steve indicated that this area has also improved over the past three years. Trees need to be kept at bay here as well. He explained the challenges of the new criteria imposed since the system was installed, particularly due to this being designed for residential rather than commercial use. The BOD (biological oxygen demand) levels have exceeded the allowed limits, which means that no new users may be added, even though there is capacity in the system.

Jill outlined plans to gather composite samples at particular locations at the same time that samples are taken from the splitter box in June. This information will help to determine where the excess FOG (fat, oil, grease) is originating. She and Steve noted that there may be some simple solutions, particularly if ineffective grease traps are the source of the problem, and that most towns address these situations through requirements placed on the customer through the Ordinance.

For the system in general, Steve explained that some annual maintenance is required, and some minor repair work is planned, all of which Jill and Cyrus are managing well. Jessica left the meeting at this point.

7. Update on preparations for the June 10 annual Water Dept. and Sewer Dept. annual budget meetings.

In addition to some of the tasks outlined by Jill and Steve earlier in the meeting, it was noted that work will continue in the coming week on Ordinance edits, in preparation for the June 3 meeting.

8. Continued review of updated and revised Revolving Loan Fund policies, guidelines, and application materials.

Michelle outlined the four items for which decisions were needed:

- Removal of the language regarding the administrative fee
- Whether the application fee should be flat or a percentage

- Continuation of the 5-year balloon option
- The need to send statements to borrowers

It was agreed that there should be an administrative fee to cover overhead, and that the application/administration fee should be a flat fee of \$250. It was agreed to offer both 5-year and 10-year options, but to eliminate the balloon option. It was also agreed that statements should be sent. Michelle noted that there already exists language regarding a late fee in the policy.

MOTION: Peeker made a motion to have Michelle complete the draft policy based upon the conversation held at this meeting. The motion was seconded by Ian. All voted in favor.

9. Consider grant application authorization request from the Energy Committee to the Municipal Energy Resilience Program (MERP) for \$4,000 to support energy efficiency public outreach.

Valerie noted that that this request is for two separate \$2K payments: one to Climate Economy Action Center (CEAC) to support their navigator project and the other to the Energy Committee. No match is required for either.

MOTION: Peeker made a motion to authorize the MERP grant applications as outlined by the Energy Committee. The motion was seconded by Michelle. All voted in favor.

10. Consider acceptance of quote from Sargent's Welding & Crance Service for installation of moveable rails on the universal fishing platform at Eagle Park.

Valerie noted that the quote is within the project budget, and that Sargent's is able to perform the work within the timeline of the project.

Some concern were expressed regarding the proposed plans for the railings, and alternative solutions were discussed. It was agreed that more information is needed. Valerie will invite the engineer to either a site visit or an upcoming Selectboard meeting.

11. Consider Lister's request for thirty-day extension for filing the Town of Bristol's Grand List.

MOTION: Peeker made a motion to approve the Lister's request for a thirty-day extension for filing the Town of Bristol's Grand List. The motion was seconded by Michelle. All voted in favor.

12. Review and approval of the February 12, February 26, May 1, and May 13, 2024 meeting minutes.

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

Approval of the other minutes was postponed until a future meeting.

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

The warrant was for the amount of \$92,249.84

No liquor license applications had been submitted for review.

14. Selectboard roundtable.

Michelle noted that there are some street lights that continue to work intermittently at the Rockydale bridge.

Joel expressed that the Board might follow up on the request heard recently regarding a large animal policy.

Joel thanked Allan Clark for fixing the fountain.

Joel asked for an update on the letter planned to be sent to the Governor regarding funding for the Pine Street water project. Valerie has not yet updated the letter, but noted that the Drinking Water staff at DEC have been much more proactive in reaching out about upcoming project work.

Joel asked about the Rec Department closure on Friday of the prior week. Valerie indicated that this was an individual administrative circumstance and that the Department will not regularly be closed on Fridays.

15. Town Administrator's report.

Valerie reported that a binder containing an interesting collection of purchase information for the Lathrop property Hewitt Road had been provided to the Town.

V. Other Business.

1. Correspondence/reports received were reviewed.

The change in appraisal for the Seth Hill Water Works property in Lincoln was acknowledged. It was suggested that David Brynn might have a sense of whether the \$2K/acre valuation of the property is reasonable. Grievances must be filed by May 29; it was decided not to grieve the change in appraisal.

Michelle offered to check with Kevin Brown to ensure that the paperwork for the Current Use tax penalty for the Hewitt Road property was filed.

Ian made note of not receiving Better Roads funding for the Lincoln Road riverbank repair, due to the road already being in compliance with the standards.

It was agreed to add the scheduling of a Selectboard road trip to the next meeting's agenda.

VI. Adjourn.

The meeting adjourned at 9:57 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Chamberlin, Recording Secretary

Valerie Capels, Town Administrator