

**Town of Bristol, VT  
Selectboard  
Minutes of Meeting  
Monday, January 22, 2024**

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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), Eric Cota (Public Works), Sharon Lucia (Town Clerk), Meridith McFarland (Rec Director), Bruce Nason (Police Chief), Kris Perlee (Assistant Town Treasurer), Freeda Powers (Grant Administrator)

**Others Present:** Kevin Hanson (PC), Brighton Luke, Jill Marsano (VTUMS), Jim Quaglino

**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).**

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 present requested time to address the Board.

**III. Department Head Roundtable.**

Eric Cota (Public Works) reported that tree damage from the recent wind storms has been documented for submission to FEMA if appropriate. Estimates on removal of windblown trees have been received. The crew is adjusting to the winter work/schedule.

Sharon Lucia (Town Clerk) reported that presidential primary ballots are in and she has been fielding many questions regarding elections and other items.

Jill Marsano (VTUMS) reported they have received only three responses so far to the Google service line inventory form. They placed multiple notices on doors recently; six people at home granted access. Joel suggested coordinating with Lister visits and/or making weekend visits. Valerie said she will make an effort to get more notice out when budget is complete. Jill added that hydrants have been shoveled out and they are learning from the Pine Street record drawings what should be required so that these will contain more complete information for the next water line segments that are worked on. The Pine Street drawings have all curb stops and house numbers, but many actual structures are not depicted.

Frieda Powers (Grant Administrator) reported she has fully documented current and recently closed out grants. Five applications were recently submitted; we are now waiting to hear results. She has been assisting with reimbursement requests and putting together the necessary documentation. She will provide a spreadsheet of all recent activity.

#### **IV. Regular Business**

##### **1. Budget workshop: review and potential adoption of the General Fund and Police Department budgets.**

Valerie reviewed the General Fund budget, noting that the current iteration reflects an overall 8% increase, which is reduced to a 4.3% increase when the increase to the Grand List is taken into consideration. There was discussion regarding and agreement on providing information regarding anticipated tax revenues, including those related to delinquent tax amounts, in conformance with past protocol in order to provide comparable information from year to year. The conversation also led to agreement that a future agenda item should address the sending of notifications related to the renewal of dog licenses, and the potential assessment of associated late fees.

Public Works Department budget items were reviewed, with the following noted:

- General contracted services line is up \$7,800, for road sweeping operations.
  - Eric would like to discuss purchasing a pick-up broom at a cost of about \$24K, would use the \$7,800 from general contracted services toward the purchase if approved. Owning the broom would allow for more than once yearly road clean-up and could be used after storms, etc.
- Tree work line has increased, but may be able to reduce this, as a grant for this work has been applied for, with no match required.
- The previous planting grant is not closed out; the planting is completed, but there might still be some training work for the Tree Warden.
- An additional \$12K is included in revenue for grants-in-aid grant receipts which are paid every year to reimburse for drainage work. The formula for how these are derived is not yet defined.
- Personnel/health insurance amounts might change if new people join the health plan.
- Sand cost is difficult to predict; Eric generally purchases whatever is budgeted for.

##### **V. Public Hearing: Proposed Amendments to Bristol's Unified Development Regulations (UDRs).**

Darla opened the hearing. Kevin Hanson had provided a memo outlining the Planning Commission's response to the changes made to the UDRs by the Selectboard. How to proceed with adoption of the final document was considered, with it being noted that agreeing to change sections of the regulations to comply with the PC's recommendations will constitute substantial changes and will require further hearings to be held by the Selectboard. The time required for the process will preclude the ability to warn a vote for Town Meeting and will also mean that the associated grant's matching forgiveness will be forfeited. It was agreed that the amount of the match was not large enough to have that be a deciding factor. It was pointed out that not accepting some of the PC's recommendations might have a detrimental impact on people wishing to develop in certain districts, as well as the Zoning Administrator's ability to

ensure that the regulations are adhered to. With elections scheduled in both August and November, it was decided to take the time to hold the hearings necessary to revert some of the language back to what was originally presented by the PC and make any further adjustments agreed upon.

Some of the issues raised by the PC were discussed. Ian explained that the Village Mixed District allows for several uses other than residential, and the Selectboard decision to include a limit on structure footprint was based upon residential use only. The PC had purposely not included a footprint dimension for this District. Selectboard members agreed to revise this section back to what the PC had intended.

It was confirmed that the footprint limitation for principal buildings in RA5 is 5,000 ft<sup>2</sup>, and so that is the size for the main structure at a Business Yard. It was agreed that increasing this maximum be recommended to the PC for the next iteration of the bylaws.

Brighton Luke spoke of how the limitations being placed on ADU dimensions is impacting his current plans to develop an ADU. He was advised to speak with Kris Perlee regarding his plans.

No other members of the public provided comments. Darla closed the public hearing. **There was consensus among the Board members to accept the PC's recommendations and hold a subsequent hearing for the latest iteration of the draft UDRs. It was also agreed PC members should be provided an opportunity to comment when the next hearing is scheduled and provide a new memo for the Selectboard.**

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

Budget discussion continued, with the following items reviewed:

- \$18K was added to the stormwater bond line.
- No major changes had been made to revenue lines.
- The new employee positions and related ARPA prorations were reviewed.
- Some items were noted for Valerie/Sharon to look into to ensure that actuals for the past couple of years were clarified and included on the correct line.
- Software expenses were clarified for all positions.
- Training needs, office supplies, and mileage for various departments were reviewed.
- Valerie and Sharon will clarify the hours needed for Lister responsibilities.
- Planning and Zoning numbers were reviewed.
- It was suggested that the spreadsheet formulas be reviewed for consistency where possible; it was understood that NEMRC has some constraints related to this.
- Meetings and elections reflect that there are three elections in the coming calendar year.
- Selectboard stipends were reviewed and there was agreement to increase them.

- Parks, Buildings, Public Safety, and Fire Department areas of the budget were reviewed, and no significant changes found to be necessary.
- Ian will check in with Library staff to ensure that no salary-related expenses are being paid in excess.

Valerie noted that some appropriations will be adjusted for the next budget draft, and that the following meeting would include Reserve Fund considerations as well as remaining departmental budget review.

**2. Review Town Meeting and Police District warnings.**

The Warnings were reviewed and edited during the meeting, and items that should be explained for clarity in the Town Report were outlined. The Warnings will be completed and approved when the budget numbers are finalized.

**3. Authorize use of the Technology Reserve Fund to purchase three new computers: Teen Center, front counter/cash register, and Administrative Assistant.**

Valerie explained that the Teen Center prefers a Mac rather than a Windows PC because they have specific needs, such as creation of graphics and compatibility with the Recreation Department technology. Ian pointed out that the quote received from Dell for PCs is higher than what the same models can be purchased for elsewhere. It was agreed that the best pricing should be sought.

**MOTION:** Ian made a motion to approve an expenditure of up to \$3,200 for the purchase of three new computers as proposed. The motion was seconded by Peeker. All voted in favor.

**4. Approval of Annual Certificate of Highway Mileage without changes.**

**MOTION:** Michelle made a motion to approve the Annual Certificate of Highway Mileage as presented. The motion was seconded by Joel. All voted in favor.

**5. Review and approval of the December 18 and December 26, 2023 meeting minutes.**

**MOTION:** Michelle made a motion to approve the December 18 and December 26, 2023 meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Peeker. All voted in favor.

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

The warrant was for the amount of \$75,808.36.

**MOTION:** Peeker made a motion to approve a Second-Class Liquor License for Maplefield's and Bristol Beverage, a Tobacco License for Maplefield's and Bristol Beverage, and a First-Class, Third-Class, and Outside Consumption Liquor License for Snap, with continuation of the same

conditions for Outside Consumption which were previously approved. The motion was seconded by Ian. All voted in favor.

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

Ian asked for feedback from Board members regarding the current draft of the Town Report, which he noted is still a work in progress. Valerie noted that ARPA fund recipients were asked to file a report. Ian indicated that a report from the ARPA Committee had been received and he would follow up regarding information from individual recipients.

Ian reported that the Howden Hall sign is complete and he will work on the installation when the weather is suitable. He will also look into needed repairs to the Holley Hall sign.

Joel noted that the southern end Firehouse Drive street lights are still not working. Valerie said the source of problem has been found but that a plan for addressing it is not yet in place.

Michelle thanked Sharon and Kris for their efforts to cover the Treasurer's work responsibilities.

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

Valerie noted that she is keeping budget preparation work moving along. Sharon noted that she and Kris are working to get the auditors documents they are requesting for their FY2023 review.

## **VI. Other Business.**

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

## **V. Executive Session**

**MOTION:** Michelle made a motion to enter executive session for the purpose of discussing personnel per 1 V.S.A. §313(a)(3). The motion was seconded by Peeker. All voted in favor.

The Selectboard met in executive session from 9:42pm until 10:05pm. Upon returning to open session, no action was taken.

## **VIII. Adjourn.**

The meeting adjourned at 10:05pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Carol Chamberlin, Recording Secretary

Valerie Capels, Town Administrator