

Town of Bristol, VT
Selectboard
Minutes of Meeting
Monday, August 12, 2024

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

Staff Present: Mark Bouvier (Lister); Valerie Capels (Town Administrator); Eric Cota (Public Works); Sharon Lucia (Town Clerk); Meridith McFarland (Recreation Director); Bruce Nason (Police Chief); Kris Perlee (Assistant Town Treasurer and Assistant Town Clerk); Freeda Powers (Grant Administrator); Taylor Welch (Hub Teen Center)

Others Present: Elizabeth Blair, Sally Burrell (Energy Committee), Richard Butz (Energy Committee), Michelle Caniyo (Addison Housing Works), David Flaschenriem (Energy Committee), Marin Howell (Addison Independent), Maddison Shropshire (ACRPC), Ben Skolozdra (Energy Committee)

I. Call to Order. Joel Bouvier called the meeting to order at 6:32 pm.

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

No changes were made to the agenda.

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

II. Public Forum.

Nobody requested time to address the Board.

III. Department Head Roundtable.

Public Works: Eric reported that storm recovery continues with roads mostly open now. Pine Street drainage work started today; road closures will be needed later in the week. A narrow section along Lincoln Road will also need closing when that work takes place. Valerie added that there will be a meeting of the project team to determine the best logistics for when grinding and paving this area, as well as the integration with the riverbank restoration work. It was agreed that full rather than partial closure is safer and will allow for faster completion of the work.

Police Department: Bruce reported that Pocock Rocks is Saturday and Main Street will be closed. He thanked Sargent Andrew Graham for his recent work with an individual with a cognitive disability and his efforts to resolve the situation and get this person the assistance needed.

Listers: Mark reported the Grand List has been lodged. An RFP for a town-wide reappraisal has been published, with responses due on September 19. It will likely be several years before this work begins and is completed. There has been no major change in the Grand List numbers; the most recent development has been for smaller projects such as additions and outbuildings.

Town Clerk: Sharon reported the Primary election is the focus this week.

Recreation Department: Meridith reported that Zac left on July 3 and that Taylor and volunteers are helping to run programs. They've begun recruitment and have lined up some interviews. The last summer camps are this week. Some new programs have been added for fall: soccer, field hockey, taekwondo, and a theater group. Pocock Rocks is coming up followed by the Harvest Fest.

Assistant Town Treasurer/Assistant Town Clerk: Kris reported that the Zoning Administrator transition is going well; AZ has been using him as a resource. Valerie noted that Kris and Sharon have been working on the accounts as well as the water rate structure review.

Hub Teen Center: Taylor reported the Hub has been open this summer and the running camps are popular. They received close to \$5,000 from Martin's Hardware. The skate park planning process is ongoing.

IV. Consent Agenda

1. Approve driveway access permit application #2024-02DA for Carl and Ed Shepard at 125 North Street for 25-foot wide driveway per Public Works Foreman's recommended conditions.
2. Approve Community Celebration event on the Town Green hosted by Addison Housing Works, Friday, Sept. 13, 4:00pm – 8:00pm.
3. Approve the proposed Jackman's Pre-Buy fuel contracts for Holley Hall, the Fire Station, Town Garage, Pottery Kiln, Pottery Meter, Pump House, and Hub Teen Center.
4. Approve issuance of a letter of support for Tandem's grant application to the Regional Economic Development Grant Program for improvements to their space on Main Street.

MOTION: Pecker made a motion to approve the consent agenda. The motion was seconded by Ian and passed unanimously.

Michelle asked if the pre-buy plan saves money. Sharon explained the Town gets refunded any difference and verified that the Town is not eligible for the fuel exemption tax. Valerie clarified the Town would not be administering the Tandem grant if awarded. Michelle questioned if the food truck and alcohol serving area logistics for the Community Celebration are adequate. Michelle Caniyo of Addison Housing Works indicated that volunteers will be assisting with keeping alcohol in the designated area and that West Street was suggested as the best location for food trucks. Eric confirmed that the 25' driveway width is standard.

V. Regular Business

1. Public Hearing (~7:00pm): Bristol Capital Improvement Plan: FY2025-FY2030.

Valerie provided an overview of the updates she had made to the document, noting the progress made on the narrative section of the Plan, including descriptions of the level of effort spent over

the past few years as well as a synopsis of each project and recommendations for moving forward. These updates were completed for the Police Station, the Public Works Facility, and other projects.

She noted that she has also been working on the spreadsheet information included, providing expense information for projects as well as expenses for capital work covered through the General Fund. Further details were provided regarding the Capital Roads Fund, which even with anticipated reimbursements has a projected negative balance. Valerie included some suggestions on ways to address this, including the use of ARPA funds, undesignated fund balances, and initiating a Local Options Tax (LOT). There was brief discussion about the logistics and options for establishing a LOT. Joel noted that tax revenue data through the Vermont Tax Department could be used to develop estimates.

Valerie indicated she will welcome any feedback on the draft Plan by phone, e-mail, or directly.

2. Update of the Hub Teen Center Skate Park Project and request for an additional \$60,000 allocation of ARPA funds.

Taylor provided an update of funds allocated and what has been spent to date, noting that some grant receipts have also covered some of the expenses. She explained that asphalt and wood skate parks are no longer suitable, and that concrete is the format of current, newer parks, as it needs fewer repairs and has a much longer life span. She is working with others on developing a design for a new park and anticipates the project will cost approximately \$660K. Taylor indicated that potential grants are being explored, and that the goal is to support the new park through grant and fundraising efforts, rather than requesting taxpayer funds, so no request for additional ARPA funds is being made at this time.

3. Energy Committee Presentation of the Municipal Energy Resilience Program (MERP) Level II assessments for Holley Hall, Lawrence Library, and Howden Hall (Richard Butz).

Richard Butz, David Flaschenriem, and Maddison Shropshire reviewed the contents of the MERP Energy Assessment reports, first providing an overview of the MERP program and its purpose of providing energy resilience assessments of municipal buildings. Following the report phase of the program, grants will be made available for the work required to reduce the energy burden/footprint of those buildings. The recommendations in the MERP reports were reviewed and suggestions were offered on which solutions should be explored further. Maddison outlined that the Regional Planning Commission has the ability to support this work and is able to assist in putting together strong grant applications in time to meet upcoming deadlines. She explained that there is up to \$500K available, and that a project's priority level is part of the scoring mechanism used in grant application evaluation.

David went through the report details for each building; after which the Board requested that more detailed cost estimates be provided for some of the work in order to better evaluate which projects to prioritize and move ahead on. Ian noted that some costs may be impacted by historical building considerations. It was agreed that some of the projects requiring a change to a building's primary heating system will need additional consideration.

4. Consider Energy Committee proposed mission statement and by-laws.

Richard reviewed the proposed bylaw revisions, explaining they are a result of Energy Committee discussions regarding the types of efforts they are comfortable pursuing. He noted that Middlebury's documents were used as a template and that related discussions had been held with the RPC's energy committee. In general, the consensus is that the Committee should be promoting energy savings and the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. Richard noted that the MERC work fits in well with this mission. He also explained that certain targets will need to be met over the coming years, and that the Town's transportation emissions and weatherization efforts are not in compliance with those targets, although the number of heat pumps in town has hit target levels.

Board members expressed their willingness to follow through on efforts that will make a real difference, but caution regarding undertaking projects just for the sake of doing something.

Michelle provided some specific feedback on the language included in the bylaws document and offered to provide her notes to Richard for review. Jessica asked for clarification regarding to whom the Committee serves as an advisory group – the Selectboard or the town/residents in general. She also provided some input regarding energy workshops and tabling efforts at the upcoming Harvest Festival. Sally Burrell also provided some input regarding the Committee's work in facilitating connections between residents and appropriate parties for energy reduction. Other suggestions were offered for revisions to the language.

It was agreed that the draft will be updated and brought back to the Selectboard for further review.

5. Review of meeting minutes.

MOTION: Michelle made a motion to approve the minutes of June 3, July 29, and July 30, 2024. The motion was seconded by Ian and passed unanimously.

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

The warrant was for the amount of \$71,889.69.

7. Selectboard roundtable.

Ian reported that he is waiting for further information regarding the installation of EV charging stations. He also provided some updates on bus shelters, noting that the asphalt has been put

down at the Shaw's location (which will allow for driver logistics to be adjusted as intended), and that a few changes are needed at the Firehouse drive shelter.

Michelle thanked Eric and road crew for their clean-up efforts. Eric outlined some recently completed tree work and reported that he is working to obtain quotes on tree canopy and sidewalk trim work. There was agreement announcements should be issued in advance regarding this work using social media and postings in public places.

8. Town Administrator's report.

Valerie provided some updates to her written report, including her upcoming schedule and Local Hazard Mitigation Plan update work, which is under some time constraints in order to hold a public meeting and have the draft submitted to Vermont Emergency Management.

Upcoming meeting agenda items were reviewed, including scheduling a public hearing for the upcoming vote on the changes to the UDRs. It was agreed to begin meetings at 6:30 on a regular basis.

VI. Other Business.

1. Correspondence/reports received were reviewed.

VII. Executive Session

MOTION: Michelle made a motion to enter executive session for the purpose of discussing personnel matters per 1 V.S.A. §313(a)(3). The motion was seconded by Peeker and passed unanimously.

The Selectboard met in executive session from 8:34pm to 9:02pm. Upon returning to open session, the following action was taken:

MOTION: Peeker made a motion to award Recreation Director Meridith McFarland a bonus of the agreed amount in recognition of her efforts to hold the Recreation Department programs together at the busiest time of year. The motion was seconded by Jessica and passed unanimously.

VIII. Adjourn.

The meeting adjourned at 9:05pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Chamberlin, Recording Secretary
Valerie Capels, Town Administrator