

**Town of Bristol, VT
Selectboard
Minutes of Meeting
Saturday, January 25, 2025**

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

Staff Present: Brett LaRose (Fire Chief), Kris Perlee (Assistant Town Clerk and Treasurer)

Others Present: Brian Plante II, Jim Quaglino

I. Call to Order. Ian Albinson called the meeting to order at 1:05 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 address the Board.

III. Regular Business

1. Budget workshop: budget review for General Fund budget, Recreation Department, Police Department, Fire Department, Public Works Department, and other sections if available.

Ian provided an overview of the entire budget, noting that there is now one personnel section, which has eliminated the need to divvy up expenses between Departments for positions where work involves efforts for various areas of town management. He noted that some level of Departmental reporting which includes salary/benefit information is still possible when required.

It was noted that total salaries/benefits have risen due to both new positions being created and filled as well as increases in health insurance, retirement, and so forth.

Revenues and expenses were reviewed, with it being noted that some line items still need adjustment due to recoding efforts. Specific areas which were noted to still require information/confirmation included:

- Tree Planting lines
- ACO expenses
- Non-district services provided by the Police Department; for this iteration, it was agreed to change the line in the General Operating budget to \$15K to match the related Police Department revenue line
- Recreation fees to be clarified, as well as Recreation Department Tree Planting
- Ian is working with Brett to finalize the Fire Department Capital Budget
- Adjustment of Contracted Repairs, which in the draft includes the full projected cost of Grizzler repair, to be set at \$15K, with the remainder of the repair cost to be taken from Reserves.

There was further discussion of what mechanism to use in determining whether repair costs should be taken from the annual repair line or from reserve; whether to use the type of equipment, cost of repair, or other information as a standard. It was agreed that allocations to the Capital Road Equipment Fund should be looked at and likely increased in order to stay on the schedule that has been outlined.

Town Report presentation of the budget was reviewed, with it being discussed how much to present in summary and what level of detail to provide. It was agreed that there are residents who prefer to see the line item details, and also noted that the totals should include capital allocations.

Further explanation of Police Department salaries was provided, with it being noted that there is some balancing provided for the new position through the associated part-time salary reduction. It was also noted that expenses will go up next year due to completion of the COPS grant. There was agreement that more effort should be put into working toward a discussion/decision regarding town-wide Police coverage.

The continued increase in special appropriations requests was noted; it was agreed that the organizations included all provide important services, and acknowledged that to date the requests have always been approved, even when included in Australian ballot during COVID.

Reserve Fund allocations were discussed; it was acknowledged that the Capital Technology Fund should be increased to at least \$15K for the coming year in anticipation of a new web site and other needs. It was agreed that the allocations to Reserves will be discussed in more detail at the next meeting, when a report of the current balances in each of the funds is available.

It was explained that there is no confirmed unassigned fund balance to be transferred to other lines, as the audit for the past two years is still being completed.

The current draft of the budget reflects a 9.68% increase overall; this will change as line items are refined.

IV. Other Business.

1. Correspondence/reports received were reviewed.

V. Executive Session.

MOTION: *A motion to enter Executive Session pursuant 1 V.S.A. § 313 (a) (3) [Personnel], inviting Kris to join, passed unanimously.*

The meeting entered Executive Session at 3:03 pm and returned to open session at 4:35 pm. No further action was taken by the Board.

VI. Adjourn.

The meeting adjourned at 4:36 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Chamberlin, Recording Secretary