

**Town of Bristol, VT
Selectboard
Minutes of Meeting
Monday, January 27, 2025**

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

Staff Present: Brett LaRose (Fire Chief), Sharon Lucia (Town Clerk and Treasurer), Bruce Nason (Police Chief), Kris Perlee (Assistant Town Clerk and Treasurer), Taylor Welch (Hub Youth Center Director)

Others Present: NEAT, Jim Quaglino, Christopher Ruggiero, Jon Ruggiero

I. Call to Order. Joel Bouvier called the meeting to order at 6:35 pm.

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

The minutes from January 25 were available for review.

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

II. Public Forum.

It was asked if there were any updates regarding the hiring of new Town Administrator; the Board indicated that there was no new information to report.

III. Regular Business

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

Joel explained that there was not much left to review, but some things still need to be looked at. Ian presented various sections of the budget, including both summary pages and details, and the following was noted/discussed:

- Town Budget
 - Clarification of the negative actuals for FY24, this is related to ARPA funds
 - Grizzler repair clarification, only partially from Reserve
 - Balances of Capital Reserve funds needed
 - Increase of Capital Equipment Reserve allocation to \$150K
 - Upcoming truck purchase will be almost \$200K
 - Skate Park Reserve to be funded by former ARPA money this year
 - The budget increase of 8.5% is due in part to the creation of three new positions; without those, the increase would be about 5.32%
- Police Department Budget
 - Some slight reductions had been made to specific lines, bringing the budget increase to under 10%
 - Translates into 11.59% tax increase for Police District property owners
- Fire Department Budget
 - No Capital Funds included
 - Only change since last review is \$3K increase in utilities for equipment dryer operation
 - 3.03% increase
- Recreation Department Budget
 - Confirmed that program revenues indicate that only \$10.5K of expenses require tax support

- Other needs are salaries and benefits, generally the programs are primarily self-supporting
- Department of Public Works Budget
- The logistics of accounting for Mt. Abe salt use were clarified; adjustments will put in place for the upcoming year

Ian explained that, although some specific numbers need to be finalized in order to include correct amounts in the Warning, the overall total could be approved at this time.

Jessica asked that the Board consider making adjustments to the Reserve Fund allocations, potentially to determine where some allocations might be reduced in order to build up heavy demand Reserves more quickly. After some discussion, it was agreed to drop the allocation to the Reappraisal Reserve to \$7500. There was also concurrence that Reserve Fund balance information should be available in the future during budget planning.

MOTION: *Michelle made a motion to adopt the FY26 budget as presented, in the amount of \$3,770,202. The motion was seconded by Peeker, and passed unanimously.*

2. Final Review of draft Town Meeting and Police District warnings.

Ian first reviewed the Police District Warning with the rest of the Board. There was some discussion of adding an item to this Warning or to the Town Meeting Warning to allow for discussion of a town-wide Police District, but it was agreed to not do so.

The Bristol Annual Meeting Warning was reviewed. Ian and Sharon will work together on ensuring that the header contains all the necessary date and other information. No changes were proposed to the Articles, other than the addition of appropriate dollar amounts.

3. Review of draft 2024 Town Report.

Ian presented the most recent draft of the Report, noting the edits made since the previous meeting, and asked that Board members review the draft and let him know of any changes that are necessary. The Report needs to be completed by early February.

4. Review of meeting minutes.

Approval of the minutes was postponed.

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

The warrant was in the amount of \$121,692.20

Jon Ruggiero, the new owner of the Bobcat Café, was present, and explained that he will be retaining the name and has no plans to change the business operations. No outdoor consumption is anticipated.

MOTION: *Michelle made a motion to authorize Sharon to approve a 1st and 3rd Class Liquor License for the Bobcat Café. The motion was seconded by Ian, and passed unanimously.*

6. Selectboard roundtable.

Jessica will be meeting with volunteers regarding promoting Town Meeting, and asked that an agenda item be included in the next meeting so that their proposals may be discussed.

Joel asked that, to the degree possible, actuals and audited amounts be available to the Board when they next work on the Annual Budget for the Town. Kris explained it is not always possible to provide accurate current information for items such as large ongoing projects, but that the new system should allow for a better provision of actual spending to date.

7. Town Administrator's report.

Ian had nothing further to report.

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 Sharon and Kris to join, passed unanimously.*

The meeting entered Executive Session at 8:48 pm and returned to open session at 8:59 pm.
No further action was taken by the Board.

VI. Adjourn.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Chamberlin, Recording Secretary