

**Town of Bristol, Vermont
Selectboard
Minutes of Meeting
Monday, February 24, 2025**

Members Present: Ian Albinson, Joel Bouvier (Chair), Michelle Perlee (Vice-Chair), Jessica Teets
Staff Present: Eric Cota (Road Foreman), Sharon Lucia (Town Clerk), Meridith McFarland (Rec Director), Bruce Nason (Police Chief), Kris Perlee (Assistant Treasurer and Assistant Town Clerk); Taylor Welch (Hub Director)
Others Present: Dennis Hasko, Jill Marsano (VTUMS), Theresa Gile, Garland Gates, NEAT, Jody Schroeder, Colby Gile, Porter Knight, Todd Warnock, Erika Murphy, Kristen Underwood, David Rosen, Jim Quaglino, Sarah Stott, Howard Jennings

I. Call to Order. Joel Bouvier called the meeting to order at 6:30 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 speak.

III. Annual Police District Meeting Public Information Meeting.

The Hearing was opened at 6:43 pm.

No questions were raised regarding the FY26 Police District Budget.

The Hearing was closed at 6:45 pm.

IV. Department Head Roundtable.

Bruce Nason (Police Chief):

- Work on some larger cases continues, anybody with information was asked to contact Bruce.

Eric Cota (Road Foreman):

- Outlined some recent equipment repairs
- Sidewalk clearing is ongoing
- New camera setup for road monitoring is working out

Sharon Lucia (Town Clerk):

- Election coming up next Tuesday
- Auditing work continues

Taylor Welch (Hub Director):

- Busy with multiple events
- The recent dinner event was successful, may become monthly
- Skate park design meeting held recently

- The Hub has been busy

Meridith McFarland (Rec Director):

- Been very busy during school vacation
- Community swim happening this week
- Dances and other events
- Keeping up on salt clean up on Holley Hall floor
- Several programs are running
- Summer camps are filling up

Freedra Powers (Grants Administrator):

- Heard from AOT regarding funds being available for West Street sidewalk scoping study
- Also waiting for reimbursement for slope restoration, this should be provided later this week
- FEMA– successfully wrapping up work from 2019

Jill Marsano (VTUMS):

- Water system is running well, no freezing issues on the Town side
- Bristol West application for construction funding has been submitted
- March read coming up, residents asked to clear snow from readers
- Requested budget actuals to date for next year's budget preparation
- Have learned that meters are warrantied for ten years
- The new provider may be able to help with meter upgrades as well
- Hydrants will be shoveled out as the temperature warms and it is VTUMS responsibility
- Bristol West construction permit has been issued
- Service Line Inventory is not currently active, but a new round of funding is coming up to potentially assist with completing this work

V. Consent Agenda

MOTION: *A motion to approve the Consent Agenda, consisting of the items listed below, passed unanimously.*

- Approval of Annual Certificate of Highway Mileage without changes
- Approval of Gran Fondo annual bicycle event on Bristol roads
 - It was requested that the Town be listed as an additional insured; Todd Warnock indicated that this will be addressed.

VI. Regular Business

1. Discussion on Skatepark Project Land Access.

Taylor explained that the Land and Water Conservation Fund grant which is being applied for as part of the Skatepark Project requires that the land on which the skatepark is located have guaranteed public access, and that this can be accomplished through the Rec Club either ceding the land or providing an easement for public access. Taylor explained that an easement is the preferred option, and that the deed adopted for either of these options may specify that this change will only be put in place if the grant funds are awarded. David Rosen confirmed that the Rec Club is on board with granting a public access easement, although they are seeking assurance that the area will continue to be used for recreation.

Board members indicated their support for the granting of an easement, although Ian suggested that it encapsulate the entire area so that there is more flexibility moving forward. Taylor explained that there will likely be some skate features incorporated into the sidewalk approaching the skate park, Freeda indicated that she will seek clarity on how the sidewalk will be related to any funds awarded or easement granted. Once there is agreement on details, an attorney will be engaged to draft the easement.

2. Discussion on Federal Funding Impacts/Tariffs for Town of Bristol.

Kristen Underwood was in attendance as a concerned resident, and explained that an ad hoc group had been meeting to discuss the impacts for the Town related to the changes in the federal funding scene, about which much is unknown at this point.

Freeda was able to provide some information regarding the current grant picture for Bristol, and noted the following:

- Contacts for State programs have all advised to proceed with projects, and have not outlined any specific reasons for concern
- FPR has recommended submitting invoices for Tree grants now rather than waiting another three months as outlined in the grant agreements
- AOT and ARPA contacts have both advised that grants awarded should not be impacted

Freeda noted, however, that Kristen is doing some investigation, and it was also indicated that tariffs may have impacts on long-term budgeting. Ian reported that he is working on invoicing for funds which have been awarded.

Kristen reported on her investigation of the sourcing of funds which have been provided to the town, and noted that she also keeps up to date through contacts with others around the state who have similar concerns.

3. Continued review of a new Livestock Running At Large Ordinance.

Kevin Brown had provided some further information regarding options other than adopting a new Ordinance as strategies for addressing loose livestock. Bruce noted that there are also calls received regarding chickens; it is not only large animals that should be addressed if an Ordinance is put in place. Kris explained why these matters cannot be addressed through Zoning ordinances.

An important aspect of enforcing an ordinance will be ensuring that there is a location available should an animal need to be impounded; Jessica will inquire how neighboring towns address this.

It was also agreed that the draft ordinance which has been reviewed by the Board needs more detail in outlining various processes to be followed in enforcing the rules outlined.

4. Continued discussion on Statewide Municipal Code of Ethics - Act 171, appointment of Town Ethics Liaison to the State Ethics Commission.

The list of Town officials and staff who are required to take the training was reviewed, and it was noted that the TA is typically appointed as the liaison for the Committee.

MOTION: *A motion to appoint the Town Administrator as the State Ethics Committee liaison, with the Interim Town Administrator filling the position until a Town Administrator has been hired, passed unanimously.*

Ian will look into what information is required to be posted to the Town website.

5. Consider whether to participate in the VT 250th Anniversary statewide celebrations initiative.

This will be a three-year long series of events; it was suggested that members of the Historical Society or July 4th Committee might be interested in serving as a liaison if the Town decides to participate. It was agreed to reach out and determine if there is interest before adopting the related Resolution.

6. Review of meeting minutes.

MOTION: *Michelle made a motion to approve the minutes of February 10, 2025 with the amendments she had proposed. The motion was seconded by Jessica, and passed unanimously.*

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

The warrant was for the amount of \$119,734.46

MOTION: *A motion to authorize the Town Clerk to issue a second class liquor license to RL Vallee and Shaw's and a tobacco license to RL Vallee and Westco was approved unanimously.*

8. Selectboard roundtable.

Jessica confirmed a food truck being present for Town Meeting; there was some discussion regarding parking and ensuring safety/driver/pedestrian visibility – a location in the alleyway was agreed upon.

Ian thanked the National Bank of Middlebury for the new chairs provided for the Holley Hall meeting space.

9. Town Administrator's report.

Ian noted that he has been working on the following:

- A final loan reimbursement submission for the waterline inventory project
- MERP project – details have been sent to contractors, waiting for responses, one has declined
- Lawson Lane water loan
- Police negotiations are close to wrapping up
- Some interest in the TA position, with no standout applications yet, but what has come in will be provided for review by the Board/staff members

VII. Other Business.

1. Correspondence/reports received were reviewed.

VIII. Adjourn.

The meeting adjourned at 8:34 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Chamberlin, Recording Secretary