

**Town of Bristol, VT  
Selectboard  
Minutes of Meeting  
Monday, June 10, 2024**

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

**Staff Present:** Valerie Capels (Town Administrator), Eric Cota (Road Foreman)

**Others Present:** Cyrus Marsano (VTUMS), Jill Marsano (VTUMS), Steve Palmer (VTM Engineering), Jim Quaglino, Roy Schiff, Kristen Underwood (Conservation Commission)

**I. Call to Order.** Michelle Perlee 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).**

Under downtown designation renewal add the street closure for Pocock rocks. Also some additional minutes for approval.

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

**II. Public Forum.**

Nobody requested time to offer comments.

**III. Regular Business**

**1. Continued consideration of quote from Sargent's Welding & Crane Service for installation of moveable rails on the universal fishing platform at Eagle Park.**

Roy Schiff provided an overview of the work needed at the fishing platform, outlining the repairs already completed and the need to address the potential for debris loading and subsequent damage to the railings. Strategies for making the railings removable during flood events have been looked into, taking into account their weight and size, which make them somewhat difficult to maneuver. The railings perpendicular to the water flow create the main area for blockage, and so those are planned to be removable.

Concerns were expressed regarding the timing of rail removal in response to heavy rain or imminent flooding, with the need to balance maintaining the safety provided by the railings for those using the platform with that of preventing damage to the rails and platform from debris discussed at length. The option of seasonal removal was also considered as part of the conversation. Kristen Underwood noted that most damage is experienced during late fall/early winter rains and at during spring thaw.

Valerie explained that, while FEMA has granted an extension of time for the funds to be expended, any change in the scope of work proposed would likely be difficult to have approved.

In considering a proposal to devise a mechanism for moving all the rails to the parallel river side of the platform, Roy explained that some load bearing calculations would be needed in order to ensure that is a viable solution. He will provide this and other relevant information at the June 24 Board meeting.

**IV. Public Hearing – Downtown Designation renewal application.**

Courtney Radford, Bristol CORE Executive Director

Courtney explained that she is seeking approval to move ahead with the renewal application, which if approved will keep the Downtown Designation in effect for another eight years. She provided an overview of the application materials she will be including and the benefits provided to the Town due to the Designation. The first draft of the application is due in early July, and the final review/approval will take place in September. She and Valerie confirmed that the Designation is a benefit for the Town and local business community when applying for grants, working on capital projects, and so forth.

Courtney also outlined that she is developing a 5-year strategic plan for Bristol CORE, and outlined the goals to be included in that plan.

**MOTION:** Ian made a motion to approve Bristol CORE's proceeding with the renewal application for Bristol's Downtown Designation. The motion was seconded by Jessica. All voted in favor.

#### Other updates

Bristol CORE requested approval of the closure of Main Street for the Pocock Rocks event.

**MOTION:** Ian made a motion to approve the street closure request for Pocock Rocks on August 17, 2024 from 1 pm to 9 pm. The motion was seconded by Michelle. All voted in favor.

Ian noted that he has learned that State review/approval of this closure is not required.

#### **V. Public Hearing – Water and Sewer District Annual Meeting.**

##### Preliminary discussion of water line extensions outside the public right-of-way.

Valerie explained that this change to the Ordinance is the most time sensitive to finalize, with decisions about easements and financial responsibility pertinent to current development projects and likely to be important for others coming up as well. She indicated that the group working on the draft document is proposing that any distribution line should simply be part of the Town system, and connections outside of the public ROW would require easements be in place for granting the Town access for maintenance and repair work. The cost of all legal and construction work for these connections is proposed to be borne by the applicant/developer. She explained that current applications be approved with conditions that reflect these Ordinance changes to be put in place.

Valerie pointed out that this would be for new connections now and going forward, and that too many different configurations/situations exist currently to be able to roll them all into the new requirements. She emphasized the difference between distribution and service lines, and noted that Kevin Brown is developing a template for easement language.

Jill outlined the steps and testing needed for connections to be established, and indicated that Steve Palmer needs to be consulted when a new service is planned for.

There was a brief discussion of the logistics of approval for the Jay Drive development currently underway.

Review and approval of operating budgets, capital budgets.

Sewer System Budget

Valerie noted that she had updated the administrative line item numbers, explaining that it would be simpler to condense these into one line item.

There was discussion that interest/penalty charges are not common, but do occur, and may be reflected in the user fee line and should be separated and placed in the related budget line.

It had been unclear at the previous meeting how many billing periods are reflected in the budget spreadsheet; it was confirmed that 12 periods are included, and so the revenue is short of what was budgeted for. This is due to users not using the full amount of flow that was accounted for in developing the budget. The possibility of incorporating a flat base rate was discussed.

Water System Budget

Valerie reported that she had not been able to locate any information regarding fund balances, and will speak with the auditors as well as Justin in the coming weeks in order to learn more. She also explained that the accounting system is basically an accrual system, more information regarding this will also be provided at an upcoming meeting.

Discussion of the budget primarily focused on the anticipated 14% increase being largely due to the additional debt incurred, and that if any undesignated fund balance amount is available it should be used to reduce the debt number. It was assumed that any balance gets transferred to the Town's General Fund, but that needs to be confirmed.

Other points were made during the discussion:

- Capital and Capital Equipment amounts should be separate
- Water system fees to the State were outlined
- Smart meters would be beneficial
  - High cost to switch - \$500K to \$1M
  - Doing in phases creates logistical issues when using two reading systems
- Repair of currently broken meters should be undertaken
  - 19 currently not reading at all
  - 90 currently reading 0
- Knowing how Bristol's rates compare to others in the area would be helpful
  - This information is published and Jill provided a link

Preliminary discussion of alternative rate structures.

Valerie suggested establishing a base rate using EUs as the basis for the amount billed; she is continuing her compilation of related information for consideration by the Board. The difference between the State and Town calculations was again discussed, with agreement that it would be beneficial to be utilizing the same information for ease of understanding funding calculations.

Bristol waterline replacement schedule review, including Bristol West waterline replacement project 60% design plans review.

Steve Palmer presented information regarding the 1905 Waterline Replacement Project, which has been planned to be completed in four phases. Currently he is working on finalizing plans for Phase 2 – Bristol West.

Steve explained that the schedule previously outlined is not feasible, and that much of the design work for Phase 3 should be undertaken earlier than anticipated in order to have things be completed with optimal timing for necessary bond votes and funding application submissions. He indicated that Phase 2 is on schedule for a November 2024 bond vote, to be followed up by a January 2025 DWSRF funding application. Funds from that are likely to be available in July 2025, for a two-year construction phase in 2025-26.

He proposed that the Board approve a change in the schedule, and the related Engineering Services Agreement, for Phase 3 to reflect planning for a November 2026 bond vote, a January 2027 funding application, and construction in 2027-2028.

Steve noted that an alternatives analysis for the Rockydale Phase will also be necessary.

As part of the 60% Design Review, Steve then provided some detailed information regarding the streets impacted and the work to be completed in that phase, indicating his willingness to meet with anyone who would like more detailed information. He made note of the following:

- The streets are generally narrower than Pine, and will be shut down in segments as the work progresses
- The current system needs to remain operational while the work is done
- Plans are being incorporated for sensitivity to trees while working around stormwater, sidewalks, and other infrastructure
  - Directional boring would still impact trees and is not the best way to install new lines for longevity
  - Further details will be discussed with the tree warden
- Infiltration chambers on School Street were noted by Board members as needing consideration
- The 'spaghetti' intersection at West Street is a candidate for direction boring, as there is too much going on underground to make digging feasible
- The best timing for the work, including considerations such as school buses, was discussed
- The potential for addressing Munsill Road separately to be completed at the same time as planned stormwater work is undertaken was noted

Jill provided the following information:

- Out of 99 missing SLI responses, 17 are in this project area
- Results submitted indicate that there are fewer than 30 galvanized service lines, and one lead service line in the project area

There was a discussion regarding including all service line work in the project. Jill pointed out that would entail a significant cost increase, as well as the additional design, legal, and archeological effort

needed. It was agreed that property owners should be notified of the opportunity to contract with the firm doing the Town work in order to have individual lines replaced at the same time at a potentially reduced cost, and the possibility of offering an incentive for property owners to do so was discussed.

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

#### **2. Water Commission: Water service connection application, 29 Ezra's Way: Jeffrey Lunstead.**

It was outlined that this is for one house, on one lot, and that copper pipe will be used for the connection from the curb stop to the house. Jill indicated no other requirements for installation, other than 48 hour advance notice of the connection being made so that VTUMS can be present as required.

**MOTION:** Peeker made a motion to approve the Water Service connection for 29 Ezra's Way as applied for by Jeffrey Lunstead. The motion was seconded by Ian. All voted in favor.

#### **3. Set date for annual Public Works road trip.**

It was agreed to meet on July 15, 2024 at 3 pm for the road trip.

#### **4. Review and approval of the February 12, February 26, May 1, May 13, and May 28, 2024 meeting minutes.**

**MOTION:** Michelle made a motion to approve the minutes of May 13 and May 20, 2024 with the changes she had provided. The motion was seconded by Peeker. All voted in favor.

Approval of the other minutes was postponed.

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

The warrant was for the amount of \$106,913.46

No liquor license applications had been submitted for review.

#### **6. Selectboard roundtable.**

Ian reported that TVT is working on getting a shelter installed at Stoney Hill Business Park, and that he continues to explore placing one on Park Place.

Ian is working on Town Office safety upgrades, and will have something to present in a couple of weeks.

Michelle indicated that she and Ian have discussed changes to the Subdivision regulations currently under review as part of the proposed UDR update, and that they will attend the next PC meeting in order to review this further with that group.

Jessica noted that the Bicycle Pedestrian Safety Committee is attempting to set a meeting date that has enough members available for a quorum.

Jessica reported that the Library will be asking for time on an upcoming Board agenda to discuss their outdoor space request for expansion of summer programming. Ian noted that they are still waiting for energy equipment update quotes for the Library building. He also raised the topic of the stair repair needed there, and it was decided that he and Jessica will work on drafting an RFP to be published. Peeker noted that a State permit will be needed for that work.

Joel asked about progress on ash tree work, and Valerie noted that Eric is working on this with the ad hoc Tree Committee. Peeker noted that there is still a leaning tree at the cemetery that needs to be addressed.

Joel asked about sidewalk work, and Valerie indicated that there is some possibility of addressing Garfield Street in the fall; there was some further discussion of this matter.

Joel noted that he had sent information regarding pedestrian/bicycle road striping to the rest of the Board members.

**7. Town Administrator's report.**

Valerie had nothing to add to her written report.

**VI. Other Business.**

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

Valerie highlighted that a response had been received from state officials in response to the Board's letter to Governor Scott.

**VII. Adjourn.**

The meeting adjourned at 10:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Carol Chamberlin, Recording Secretary