

**Town of Bristol, VT
Selectboard
Minutes of Meeting
Monday, December 2, 2024**

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

Staff Present: Valerie Capels (Town Administrator), Eric Cota (Public Works Foreman), Sharon Lucia (Town Clerk), Freeda Powers (Grant Administrator), Taylor Welch-Plante (HUB Teen Center)

Others Present: David Flaschenriem, Colby Gile, Theresa Gile, Kelly Hammond, Marshall Hammond, Missy Holland, Marin Howell (Addison Independent), Dennis Hysko, Erica Murphy, NEAT TV, Bryan Plant, Allison Pouliot (Energy Committee), Jim Quaglino, Elise Shanbacker (Addison Housing Works), Jeff Sturtevant, William Turner, Tricia Waugh

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 to the agenda were necessary.

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

II. Public Forum.

Jim Quaglino thanked Valerie for her years of service to the Town.

III. Department Head Roundtable.

Eric Cota (Road Foreman):

- Winter work has begun, requested patience for new road crew members
- Minor maintenance items have been taken care of

Sharon Lucia (Town Clerk):

- Auditors' work continues, two years of review should be completed in January

IV. Consent Agenda.

MOTION: Peeker made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda, consisting of the items listed below. The motion was seconded by Ian. There was some clarification of match requirements and other grant details regarding the Basin Street and Skatepark projects, then the motion passed unanimously.

- Authorized removal of former Town Treasurer Justin Bouvier as an authorized signer from the National Bank of Middlebury bank account.
- Approve curb cut access permit application 2024-05DA, Dave Sharpe, 1201 Meehan Road per the Foreman's recommendations.
- Authorize submission of a grant application to the Vermont Municipal Highway and Stormwater Mitigation Program for approximately \$500,000 to support the construction of the Basin Street improvement project.
- Authorize submission of a grant application to the National Park Service Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) for funds to support the Hub Teen Center Skatepark project.

- Authorize submission of the Step II planning loan application to the Vermont Drinking Water State Revolving Loan Fund (DWSRF) for the Bristol East waterline replacement design; sign the loan application.

V. Regular Business

1. Continued consideration and possible acceptance of the Bristol Hub Skatepark design proposal from Nor'Easter: Taylor Welch-Plante.

Taylor reported that all the reference requests she initiated came back with very positive comments regarding Nor-Easter's work. She explained that the Nor'Easter team had let her know they have a landscape architect on staff and have relationships established with engineers whom they engage with when required for a project. Taylor did not have cost specifics for completion of engineering work but noted that the quote from Nor'Easter was at least \$50K lower than the other proposals received. Freeda noted that she is working with Taylor to complete grant applications, determine the amounts to be requested from each source, and so forth.

MOTION: Ian made a motion to accept the proposal from Nor-Easter for the design of skate park improvements. The motion was seconded by Jessica and passed 4-1 with Joel abstaining due to his role on the Recreation Club Board.

2. Municipal Energy Resiliency Program (MERP) grant award update and next steps: Energy Committee members.

Alison Pouliot of the Energy Committee explained that \$325,853 had been awarded to the Town through a MERP grant for work on Holley Hall energy efficiency measures. Because this amount is less than what was applied for, the consulting engineer, staff, and committee members are meeting to determine which aspects of the projects outlined in the application will be prioritized. Grant conditions allow for two years to complete the work. Valerie noted that the team is working with Ashar Nelson of Vermont Integrated Architecture on the project and that they plan to obtain a quote from him/his firm so that the Board can consider retaining him for the upcoming work.

MOTION: Ian made a motion to accept the MERC grant of \$325,853. The motion was seconded by Michelle and passed unanimously.

3. Public Hearing: Use of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds for Firehouse Apartments and other community development initiatives: Addison Housing Works.

Valerie noted that several related documents had been posted to the Town web site and that this hearing is an aspect of the CDBG requirements. Elise Shanbacker of Addison Housing Works reported that the Firehouse project was completed on time and slightly under budget. She noted that $\frac{3}{4}$ of the units are designated as low-income and the remaining 5 units are rented at middle-income rates. Early heat pump issues have been addressed, and a lot of positive feedback has been received. Elise also reported there is a 200-household waitlist for housing in the area and that there were three applications submitted for each of the initially available Firehouse units.

Bryan Plant, a Firehouse resident, spoke highly of the site and noted there is a definite need for this type of housing.

No questions were posed by members of the public. Joel closed the Public Hearing.

4. Review and possible adoption of a new Livestock Running At Large Ordinance; discussion of horses running at large on Carlstrom Road.

Joel provided some background information and Jessica explained that she researched and adapted other similar ordinances in surrounding towns when drafting the proposed Ordinance for Bristol. She highlighted that there is no requirement the Police Department impound loose livestock, and that the fines outlined provide for discretion on the part of the Police Department or other enforcement officials when determining what amount of fine to impose in particular situations. Valerie confirmed that Bruce had reviewed the language, and the draft presented, and this draft is based upon the feedback he provided.

There was some discussion about certain aspects of the draft, including:

- The burden imposed on the Town if an animal is seized
- Enforcement of paying for damages to neighboring properties
- What level of enforcement/determination of remedial actions is to be taken by the Police Department
- Involvement of the Selectboard in these matters when necessary. Add a paragraph or section for the Selectboard to conduct hearings and the ability to impose conditions.
- How to determine what constitutes adequate fencing
- Authorization of both the Police Department, the Town Administrator, and possibly the Public Works Department to be authorized as livestock control officers.

Jessica indicated she would make revisions based on the input provided. It was also agreed that a legal review should be provided before adopting a final version of this Ordinance.

5. Briggs Hill Road repair: consider update on FEMA funding, cost estimates, and next steps.

Valerie had provided Board members with related information from the engineer and explained that FEMA is offering to cover 90% of eligible damages resulting from the 2023 storm. She indicated that returning the road to its previous condition is not possible if current standards are to be met. Proposed improvements were outlined, including culverts and catch basins, which are estimated to be in the \$100K cost range. The repairs as outlined by the engineer to adjust the roadbed and stabilize banks are expected to be \$2.5 million. Eric explained that this work would include actual changes to the slope of the road, not simply addressing the bank stabilization. It was confirmed that FEMA is not reimbursing operating expenses such as traffic lights.

The possibility of authorizing the engineer to determine the extent of the additional damage to the road and banks resulting from the 2024 flooding was discussed. These repairs would only qualify for 75% reimbursement rate by FEMA. The question of whether the relocation of the road would possibly be covered by FEMA arose. It was noted the relocation of the road project would likely cost around \$10 million and so was not being pursued.

Valerie explained the ERAF rate reimbursement by the State, which would partially cover the Town's cost after FEMA has paid the percentage allowed for each year's damages.

There was some discussion of the difference in cost between the pinning and stabilization work that was completed this year on Lincoln Road (approximately \$600K) and the proposed cost for the work to be completed on Briggs Hill. Board members expressed that they would like to understand if the approach used on Lincoln Road might be used for the Briggs Hill site. The possibility of having engineering alternatives provided, possibly in conjunction with planning for the work related to the 2024 damages, was raised. There was also consensus that Lincoln stakeholders should be part of related conversations, including financial aspects. Valerie indicated that a request for an extension of the Briggs Hill funding approval until the end of 2025 has been approved by Vermont Emergency Management. We are waiting for word from FEMA.

MOTION: Peecker made a motion to authorize Dubois & King to complete a damage assessment for the 2024 storm impacts, and to provide alternatives to the currently outlined work to address the 2023 repairs that are needed. The motion was seconded by Ian and approved unanimously.

6. Consider approval of the proposal from Short Surveying, Inc. to complete the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) Letter of Map Amendment (LOMA) for the Rockydale site.

MOTION: Michelle made a motion to approve the proposal from Short Surveying to complete the LOMA work for the Rockydale site. The motion was seconded by Jessica and passed unanimously.

It was agreed that the funds used for this will be from the Planning line item of the budget.

7. Review and possible adoption of the new Emergency Management Director job description.

The draft job description provided by Ian was reviewed. Valerie noted that the time spent in meeting preparation, training, coordination, and more is considerable and that it would be best to have this completed by someone other than the Town Administrator. Ian explained that it would be set up as a stipend position, not an hourly employee.

MOTION: Michelle made a motion to adopt the Emergency Management Director Job Description as drafted. The motion was seconded by Ian and passed unanimously.

Ian suggested that the individual interested in filling this position be invited to speak with the Board.

8. Follow up on final details of the ARPA allocation resolution approved on Nov. 4, 2024.

Valerie reported that the auditors have approved the language which was agreed upon by the Board in their related Resolution, and that the document was available for signing.

9. Review of meeting minutes.

A motion to approve the minutes of October 21, 2024, passed unanimously.

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

The warrant was for the amount of \$2,975,177.05.

No licenses needed to be approved.

11. Selectboard roundtable.

Michelle thanked Bruce and the Police Department for their efforts over what was a rough weekend.

Joel noted he will not be able to attend the Dec. 30 Selectboard meeting.

12. Town Administrator's report.

Valerie had nothing to add to her written report.

The process to be used for interviewing Town Administrator candidates was discussed. It was agreed a committee would be formed to complete initial interviews and provide a recommendation to the Board regarding the candidates interviewed. Members of the committee will include Valerie, Sharon, Kris, two community members, a Selectboard member, Department Head representative Eric (if available), and potentially Bruce. The selection of community members was to be discussed in the executive session.

VI. Other Business.

1. Correspondence/reports received were reviewed.

Jessica commented on the email received voicing concerns about PVC pipe in the water system and it was confirmed that Steve Palmer had provided information in a response to the sender.

Thanks were expressed to Anna Daylor and Betsy Blair for their committee work for the Town.

VII. Executive Session re personnel matters per 1 V.S.A. §313(a)(3).

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

The Selectboard met in executive session from 8:30 pm to 10:10 pm. Upon returning to open session there was a consensus that Ian Albinson would serve on a Town Administrator Interview Committee both as a Selectboard representative and as Interim Town Administrator. Peter Coffey and Krista Siringo were selected as the community members.

VIII. Adjourn.

The meeting adjourned at 10:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Chamberlin, Recording Secretary
Valerie Capels, Town Administrator