

**Town of Bristol, VT
Selectboard
Minutes of Meeting
Monday, June 9, 2025**

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

Staff Present: Eric Cota (Public Works Foreman), Brett LaRose (Fire Chief), Sharon Lucia (Town Clerk), Meridith McFarland (Recreation Director), Kris Perlee (Assistant Treasurer and Assistant Town Clerk), Freeda Powers (Grant Administrator)

Others Present: Jim Quaglino, NEAT, Aaron Thomas, Tasha Ball, Ed Mayor, Jolyon Larson, Mike Winslow (ACRPC), Natalie Rigby (Fuss and O'Neill)

I. Call to Order. Peekar Heffernan called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

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

No adjustments were needed.

II. Public Forum.

Nobody requested time to address the Board.

III. Department Head Roundtable.

Eric Cota (Public Works Foreman):

- Sweeping is completed; dust cannot be avoided unless using a vacuum truck
- Ditching work and culvert flushing this week
- Week of 16th Lincoln Road will get topcoat applied
- Mowing has begun, will be doing mowing at Sycamore Park as well

Brett LaRose (Fire Chief):

- 50 calls for service so far this year
- Acknowledged resignation of TJ Ryan, thanking him for 34 years of service
- Participated in intern fair at high school recently – lots of interest from the students
- Have submitted annual recertification paperwork
- Will participate in annual Fourth parade
- Will be on standby for the fireworks, paperwork needs to be completed
- Small working group is reviewing specs for new rescue/pumper scheduled to replace mini pumper and heavy rescue unit
- Officially will transition in July to a competency- and proficiency-based training program, beneficial change from hourly-based
- Conex box has been in use regularly, this is a big benefit to the training program

Ian reported for Water and Sewer:

- Full water read is in process
- 2024 water quality report will be sent this month
- South Street one way on Wednesday for repair work
- Two meter repairs and two new connections have been completed
- Sewer sampling is in process
- Pumping of cell one this month, cell two in fall

IV. Consent Agenda.

Some information related to the Consent Agenda items was provided; there was some discussion regarding the purchase of a Mac for the new Town Administrator and the need for the July 4th Committee or the Town to provide insurance coverage for the Fourth of July events. The Board thanked PJ Ryan for his service on the Fire Department.

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

- Approve Special Event and Street Use/Closure Permit: July 4th
- Approve Curb Cut Application for 63 Basin Street
- Approve Work in Right-of-Way/Access Permit for Hillside Drive Lot #2
- Approve purchase of new laptop and accessories for Town Administrator using Technology Reserve Fund
- Approve updated Sycamore Park quote from John Swepston, Tree Warden
- Accept resignation of Peter J. Ryan from the Bristol Fire Department

V. Regular Business

1. Harvey Road Feasibility Study Local Concerns Meeting: Mike Winslow, ACRPC & Natalie Rigby, Fuss & O'Neill.

Ian outlined some background information on this project, and the development of the new Willowell School and a potential subdivision which will increase the use of the road, noting that a Class 3 designation allows for the receipt of State Highway funding for future maintenance and repair of the roadway, while the current Class 4 designation only provides for potential aid for the bridge if it is damaged due to flooding or other disaster.

Natalie then provided a presentation on the Class 3 Feasibility Study that her firm has been working on, noting that the current road width is generally 16' and that a bridge inspection revealed some expected deterioration but no safety concerns. She explained that improvements needed to meet Class 3 standards would include widening of the road, overhead utility relocation, and surface upgrades; and explained that the flow patterns of Little Notch Brook would be studied for consideration when determining what work on the bridge would be required. It was agreed that both one-lane and two-lane bridge options should be included in the report to be compiled. Natalie indicated that alternatives would be evaluated in July, a draft report available in August, and a final report completed in September.

It was confirmed that no load rating has been designated for the bridge, but that it has been used for delivery of concrete and other materials, by fire trucks, and Town plows. The pros and cons of the bridge being one lane or two lanes were discussed.

Ian indicated that the Town would be responsible for funding the improvements to the road, and that there would be grant awards sought to cover the associated expenses. There was some discussion regarding that the improvements proposed are not absolutely necessary, with it being noted that this is currently the only Class 4 road that is maintained by the Town and the potential for State funding if the roadway is upgraded to Class 3.

2. Review and Approval of MERP/ARPA Architectural and Engineering Services Proposal for Holley Hall and Lawrence Memorial Library.

Ian provided some background information regarding these projects, reminding the Board of the lack of response to their attempt to engage a design/build firm once the general outline of renovation plans had been

provided by Ashar Nelson/Vermont Integrated Architecture (VIA), and the Board's agreement to continue working with VIA to develop more complete designs for both buildings. A proposal has been provided by VIA in the amount of approximately \$118K, outlining what work they will take on in designing and overseeing the projects at both buildings, with subcontractors completing the five phases of the scope of work outlined.

The Board noted that this work is being completed using ARPA funds, although through various programs, and thus needs to be completed by the end of 2026.

MOTION: *Joel moved to accept the proposal from VIA for architectural and engineering services for the Holley Hall and Lawrence Library energy work. The motion was seconded by Michelle and passed unanimously.*

3. Review and selection of engineering firm for Mountain Street Stormwater Improvement Scoping Study.

Ian noted that the grant for this work was awarded in November 2023, and that the funds must be used by the end of 2025. An RFP had been published requesting outlines of the work to be completed, and five responses were received. Ian, Freeda, and AZ have reviewed and scored the responses, and are recommending that SLR be awarded a contract to complete this planning work. Ian explained that the lowest bidder's response led the committee to believe that the deliverable from that firm might not provide the detail being sought by the Town for this project. The proposal from SLR was reviewed, with positive comments provided by Board members.

MOTION: *Joel moved to accept the proposal from SLR for the Mount Street Stormwater Scoping Study. The motion was seconded by Michelle and passed unanimously.*

4. Discussion on Town-Wide Police Expansion.

Board members discussed the need to create a comprehensive narrative to enable residents' understanding of all the information relevant to the decision regarding whether to expand the services of the Police Department (PD) to cover the entire Town rather than just the area encompassed by the Police District. It was agreed that an important first aspect of town-wide discussions of the matter will be the provision of the underlying data and outlined that the following information should be gleaned from PD records.

- General call volume
- Nature of calls, to understand when VSP would be involved
- General VSP data would also be helpful, particularly which calls went to VSP that did not come into BPD
- Types of responses to calls – whether or not an in-person response was necessary
- Where calls to BPD originate – in District or out
- Amount of follow up needed after initial response

It was also discussed that an outline of increased expenses would be needed, and the logistics and timing of disbanding the Police District if there is a vote in favor of expansion. While it was agreed that legal advice will be needed to determine the configuration of the vote and other matters, it was indicated that the ballot question would likely be posed along the lines of beginning Town-wide operations 'as of July 1, 20XX.' One other thing noted was that any incident occurring within the District is addressed by the Department, regardless of the residence of those involved.

5. 2023 Audit Review.

Kirs and Sharon reviewed some of the highlighted aspects of the audit report, noting the audited balance of unassigned funds is \$85K, and outlining some areas where budget lines were overspent. It was discussed that keeping track of the various funds which had been set up to separate the financials for multiple projects has led to an intricate system that is difficult to maintain. Sharon indicated that the clean-up work necessary to

transition all this information to the new NEMRC system that was set up during the most recent budget development is ongoing, and she and Kris explained that accounting for and reporting this information will be more straightforward once this work is complete. Kris also noted that there will be a clearer overall picture of Town finances once the 2024 audit is complete; this is anticipated to be ready for review by the end of June. Sharon is also reviewing past Board decisions to allocate unassigned funds and determining whether those funds were actually transferred to the intended accounts.

6. Review and approval of past meeting minutes.

No minutes were available for review.

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

The warrant was in the amount of \$74,367.22

No liquor or tobacco licenses needed to be reviewed.

8. Selectboard Roundtable

Ian confirmed that he had received the email Michelle had forwarded from the Lincoln ZA.

9. Interim Town Administrator's Update

Ian reported that:

- West Street sidewalk scoping study proposals are being reviewed.
- Finalization of the water and sewer budgets will take place at an upcoming meeting; inspection reports from Steve Palmer will also be available.
- EV-charger bylaw amendments will be ready for approval shortly.
- He has been working on developing a spreadsheet to depict the progress of current and upcoming projects, which he reviewed with the Board.

Joel asked if any general sidewalk maintenance will be done this year; Ian explained that with all the other work underway, it was unlikely that there would be time to address this.

Peeker was advised to get bids from the two parties interested in purchasing the used generator.

VIII. Other Business.

1. Correspondence/reports received were reviewed.

IX. Executive Session.

MOTION: *A motion to enter Executive Session for the purpose of discussing personnel matters per 1 VSA §313(a)(3) passed unanimously.*

The meeting entered Executive Session at 9:39 pm and returned to open session at 10:22 pm.

MOTION: *Michelle Perlee moved to pay VMERS the full sum of money owed in an employee retirement grievance. The motion was seconded by Peeker Heffernan and passed unanimously.*

X. Adjourn.

The meeting adjourned at 10:23 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Chamberlin, Recording Secretary