

**Town of Bristol, VT
Selectboard
Minutes of Meeting
Monday, August 25, 2025**

Members Present: Ian Albinson, Joel Bouvier, Peekar Heffernan (Chair), Michelle Perlee, Jessica Teets
Staff Present: Eric Cota (Public Works Foreman), Gregory Faust (Town Administrator), Colby Gile (Public Works Crew), AZ Larsen (Planning and Zoning Administrator), Sharon Lucia (Town Clerk and Treasurer), Meridith McFarland (Rec Director), Brett LaRose (Fire Chief), Kris Perlee (Assistant Town Clerk and Treasurer), Freeda Powers (Grant Administrator)
Others Present: Dan Batten, Silas Clark, James Cole, Jordan Douglas, Nicole Fox (Fuss & O'Neill), Don Gale, Steven Heffernan, Cyrus Marsano (VTUMS), Jill Marsano (VTUMS), NEAT, Jim Quaglino, Sarah Stott, Greg Swain (Bristol Fire Department), Mike Winslow

I. Call to Order. Michelle Perlee called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm.

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

A contract approval was added to the Consent Agenda.

II. Public Forum.

Nobody requested time to speak.

III. Department Head Roundtable.

Sharon Lucia (Town Clerk and Treasurer):

- I could not hear anything Sharon was saying. 😞

AZ Larsen (Planning and Zoning Administrator):

- Several DRB hearings have been held
- Working on some process items
- GIS project is nearly complete
- LHMP public meeting to be held in September

Meridith McFarland (Recreation Director):

- Fall sports registration is open
- Fall dance is coming up
- Clay studio starts next week
- Holley Hall rentals – Tibetan art program in place
- Clock tower only rings correctly at 1:00, looking into what might be needed in terms of repair work

Freeda Powers (Grant Administrator):

- Two new grants are being lined up, one for Elder Eagles and one for fountain restoration

IV. Consent Agenda.

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

- Approve Municipal Letter of Attestation for Downtown Vibrancy Fund
- Approve Public Assemblages Permit – Sarah Stott
- Approve Public Assemblages Permit – Community Celebration with Addison Housing Works
- Authorize grant application to VT Arts Council for \$4k-\$6k to support the Bristol Elder Eagles program

- Authorize grant application to T-Mobile for max \$50k to support the Town Green Fountain Restoration project
- Set municipal tax rate for FY26: Homestead \$02.8179 Non-homestead: \$02.8321 Police District (PD) \$0.3565, indicating Homestead in PD: \$03.1744, Non-homestead in PD: \$03.1886
- Approve minutes from meeting of 8-11-2025
- Authorize warrant and any liquor/tobacco licenses
- Approve contract for Bristol Fire Station stormwater agreement for Tailwater Engineering

V. Regular Business

1. Harvey Road Class 3 Feasibility Study project update.

Nicole Fox of Fuss & O'Neill provided some information regarding the project background, alternatives considered, and feedback received; she explained that selection of a preferred alternative is requested, for which more detailed information will be developed. This project addresses the widening of Harvey Road and repair/replacement of the bridge that leads to what is currently a Class 4 section of road, but which has routinely been maintained by the Town as though it is a Class 3 road (plowing, grading, etc.). Nicole explained that the road may be reclassified as Class 3 even if no changes are made.

It was outlined that there is future planned development along this road, with the potential for a 15-lot subdivision as well as construction of a new Willowell School. The purpose and need statement for the project outlines the intent to change the road to Class 3, improving the roadway and the bridge to meet the higher demand anticipated.

Nicole reviewed the current road and bridge conditions, noting that the gravel road is 16' wide, and explaining that the bridge, spanning 44', is in good shape but rated 'scour critical' by VTrans due to its susceptibility to being undermined during a flood event. The roadway currently meets minimum standards of a Class 3 road.

She then outlined the proposed alternatives:

- Alternative 1 – no changes
- Alternative 2 – a one-lane bridge with an 18' gravel road, which is the minimum needed for two-way traffic; 1500' of roadway would be addressed. This would include improved road alignment, a new bridge, and some utility relocations. A temporary bridge, requiring temporary easements, would be necessary. The cost of the one-lane bridge is estimated to be \$2.25M, and the roadway costs to be \$750K, assuming full reconstruction and not simply widening.
- Alternative 3 – a two-lane bridge with a 22' gravel road, which is more comfortable for two-way traffic. This would include the same work as outlined for Alternative 2, with the addition of culvert replacements and the need for a minor ROW property acquisition. The bridge cost is estimated at \$2.55M, and the roadway at \$900K.

The costs outlined include the necessary engineering work and a hydrology study, as well as the construction costs. Nicole indicated that a draft report will be finalized shortly, with a final report anticipated by the end of September.

There was some discussion, with it being noted that statute allows for developers on Class 4 roads to be responsible for road improvements, as well as the additional FEMA assistance which Class 3 roads are eligible for. Board members will discuss this further before providing Fuss & O'Neill with a decision.

2. BFD Social Media Plan discussion – Chief Brett LaRose & Greg Swain.

Greg outlined plans for initiating social media pages for the Department, explaining that the purpose is to let the public know what the Department undertakes, celebrate achievements, and engage/potentially recruit a younger membership. The posts can also provide emergency information and provide public education. Greg has created a six-month rollout timeline for this endeavor.

Brett explained that it needs to be understood how this can be set up through the Town, particularly in terms of permissions being granted for the Department's chief officers and social media officer. He and Greg confirmed that there will be consent provided by firefighters before any images are posted, and that their training protocols include learning what may or may not be shown regarding posting of images/names at emergency events. There was some further discussion of the logistics involved in initiating this program and managing it going forward.

MOTION: *Michelle moved to approve the Fire Department's moving ahead with establishing and using social media accounts. The motion was seconded by Ian, and approved unanimously.*

2A. Peace Garden Update

Kris provided an update that was given to him following the public comment portion of the meeting. He reported that the group that is working on reconstruction of the Peace Garden will tentatively begin work on September 8, that the work will be completed in phases, and that there will be no interference with events at the park and no impact to use of the playground.

3. Bench Application Permit Approval - Joanne Doe.

Meridith provided some background on this request for placing a bench on the walkway to the fishing platform at Eagle Park, noting that this placement is not feasible and that Aiden had provided some alternative suggestions for the bench's location. These include placing the bench on the back side of the split rail fence at the top of the walkway or placing a plaque on a rock. It was noted that there are already several plaques in place at the site, with no consistency in their placement/appearance. Meridith noted that the bench style included in the proposal is not a very stable or heavy bench, and likely would not stay in place, due to either wind or people moving it. There was some discussion of potential bench requirements, with it being noted that the Town would not take responsibility for the possibility of the bench's disappearing.

MOTION: *Jessica moved to authorize the placement of a bench at Eagle Park, suggesting that more stable model be used than that proposed, and specifying the location as that depicted in the presentation, near the fence, and not on the concrete areas or platform. The motion was seconded by Joel, and passed with Michelle opposed.*

Meridith noted that she will bring this information to the Conservation Commission.

4. Water Commission: updates on latest Bristol Water Use Ordinance Policy revision and appendix updates.

Ian noted that some further changes are needed to the main text of the Ordinance due to some legislation that is not reflected in the document, but that appendices could still be reviewed and adopted.

The content of *Appendix C: Construction Specifications* was then reviewed. It was confirmed that the use of CTS SDR 9 HDPE was acceptable to Jill, and noted that federal funding has specific requirements that this material be used in certain situations. Jill explained, however, that in order to trace lines, it will be necessary to continue the use of copper line on the Town side of service lines. There was some discussion of the requirement for tracer wire included in the specifications, and if this would suffice for all tracing. Jill provided further clarification, explaining that from the main line to the curb stop is owned by the Town, and should be

specified as copper, with the CTS material only allowed on the service/customer side. It was agreed to make this change to the Appendix specifications.

Jill noted that she had included a condition on the current application for an installation on Basin Street that there needs to be verification that the Town side of the connection is not currently galvanized or lead pipe.

MOTION: *Ian moved to approve Appendix C of the Water Ordinance, with the change agreed upon incorporated. The motion was seconded by Michelle. There was further discussion of the need to require tracer wire on the customer side, with it being agreed to retain that language. The motion passed unanimously.*

Further review of the main Ordinance will take place at future meeting, Ian asked that other Board members review the current draft in advance of that review.

5. Seth Hill Waterworks Updates - Don Gale.

Don provided some background information regarding the trees being cut and water bars created along the USFS road which he uses to access his sap lines, noting that horses and mountain bikers have also been affected by the impassibility of the road since the new, deep water bars were created. He explained that his equipment is not capable of completing the remediation work being requested by the USFS, indicating that he would like the Town to consider using their equipment to complete this work.

Ian provided some further information, explaining that his research indicates that water bars were initially proposed for the smaller roads on the parcel, but when it was determined that those were not necessary, the grant funds were directed to construction of the bars on the larger road, not realizing that those were USFS property. He confirmed that the water bars are as Don described, and reported that he had contacted USFS regarding their completing the remediation work, but that they explained they do not have appropriate equipment to do this work.

There was agreement that the incorrect type of water bars have been constructed, which are not broad dips but rather a type that leads to road closure, and that this discussion will continue. The USFS will be contacted again regarding assistance with remediation.

6. Selectboard Roundtable.

Ian explained that he is continuing to work with Greg on certain projects, updating project ledgers, and assisting with agendas and minutes. Greg suggested a hybrid approach to developing agendas.

7. Town Administrator's Update.

Greg had nothing to add to the information already covered during the meeting.

VI. Other Business.

1. Correspondence/reports received were reviewed.

VII. 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 9:33 pm and returned to open session at 10:14 pm.
No further action was taken by the Board.

X. Adjourn.

The meeting adjourned at 10:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Chamberlin, Recording Secretary

DRAFT