

**Town of Bristol, VT
Selectboard
Minutes of Meeting
Monday, February 9, 2026**

Members Present: Ian Albinson, Peeker Heffernan (Chair), Michelle Perlee (Vice Chair), Jessica Teets
Members Absent: Joel Bouvier
Staff Present: Gregory Faust (Town Administrator), Colby Gile (DPW Assistant Foreman), Bruce Nason (Police Chief), Sharon Lucia (Town Clerk and Town Treasurer), Kris Perlee (Assistant Town Clerk and Assistant Town Treasurer)
Others Present: Sally Burrell, Tasha Ball, Nancy Cornell, Barb Crandall, Alice Leeds, Jill Marsano (VTUMS), Edmond Mayer, NEAT, Steve Palmer (VTM Engineering), Meredith Rossignol, Liz Sayer, Daniel Shepard, Tonya Shepard

Video: <https://youtu.be/kifNa77TmoM>

I. Call to Order. Michelle Perlee called the meeting to order at 6:07 pm.

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

No adjustments were made.

II. Public Forum.

Nobody requested time to address the Board.

III. Annual Police District Meeting Public Information Meeting.

Michelle opened the Public Information Meeting.

Bruce reviewed the Police District budget, noting that the increase generally reflects COLA, with no major increases to note. The overall budget reflects a 1.88% increase.

Bruce then explained that he will be putting increased effort into advocating for the Department and Officers over the coming months, seeking a commitment from the Board that the future of the Department is considered and a forward path determined over the next year. He indicated that he would begin discussing related matters with the Town Administrator.

Bruce provided an overview of the current Police Department staff, which consists of three full-time Officers and the new Community Resource Specialist, whom he indicated has been a great asset, particularly in following up on certain matters, requiring less continued assistance from the Officers. Bruce also noted that there are three part-time Officers, but they have limited hours available, and only cover a minimal number of vacation days. There is an open full-time Officer position, for which there have been candidates, who typically withdraw from the hiring process once they learn what is offered for salary.

Bruce further outlined that one of the Department's Officers is a trainer, who does not get paid for his Academy courses, and one Officer was recognized with an award for his community policing efforts. Bruce explained that community policing practiced by the Department is proactive, and that he and his Officers have a good rapport with citizens, even those who have been arrested. Their ability to facilitate situations in a manner that avoids escalation, and other prevention practices are critical to the Department's mission. Current staff members also put in volunteer time, both for providing coverage as well as taking on work such as painting and repair projects at the Station.

Discussion that followed regarding the matter of District expansion included agreement that public input is needed, that the available data is nuanced, and that the matter is not simply a numbers-driven decision.

No questions were raised regarding the proposed budget.

Peeker closed the Public Meeting.

IV. Department Head Roundtable.

Greg reported for the DPW:

- The Town still has some salt; it is being mixed with sand in order to conserve.
- Different strategies for winter road care will be investigated.

Jill Marsano (VTUMS):

- The bid opening for the Bristol West project is scheduled for February 12.
- Work continues to secure a Step 3 loan, aiming for a full 50% subsidy under the Lead and Copper program.
 - If awarded, this will be locked in at the point of award.
 - The Lead and Copper funds are also available for Bristol East, so an application has been submitted for that project.
- Steve reported that some items have been resolved with the State, so a potential delay has been avoided.
- Snow removal at hydrants was completed today.
- Jill is watching a section of Liberty Street that is sinking; this is not near the water main, and there are no other signs of a leak.
- Pumping is down by 1% this winter.

V. Consent Agenda.

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

- Approve Annual Certificate of Highway Mileage
- Approve of past meeting minutes (01-26-26)
- Authorize warrant in the amount of \$83,343.24
- Approve a First and Third Class Liquor License for Bobcat Café.
- Approve a Second Class Liquor and Tobacco License for Bristol Beverage.

VI. Regular Business

1. MAUSD Community Engagement Committee Presentation

Meredith, Liz, and Mark provided a report on the Engagement Committee's work, including background information, budget challenges, and academic and behavior challenges considered when planning for the School District's future. They reviewed the pros and cons of the three school building configuration options being discussed, and indicated that input is being gathered from staff and administration.

Several questions were answered regarding potential cost savings, enrollment numbers, and Act 73 considerations.

2. Public Hearing – Dog Ordinance Violations: Daniel Shepard.

Greg explained that a report was received on January 29 from a neighbor of the Shepards, indicating that the Shepards' dog was loose and had bitten the neighbor's dog. Dan Shepard described that the dog had pulled his tie-out connector free from the decking to which it was attached, and that he had run after the dog when he noticed it was loose, but the dog had already run off the property. Dan explained that a new, more secure tie-out anchor had been put in place, and that there have been no further incidents of the dog breaking free. Greg noted that somebody from the Town may be out to inspect the new tethering setup.

Ian noted that in 2022 multiple incidents had been reported to the Town, and the Board at that point required either a secure tether be used or a fence be installed to ensure that the dog stays on the Shepard property. This is the first report of the dog's being loose since that condition was imposed by the Board.

It was discussed that, if the Board decides that a fence is required, it will not be able to be installed until the ground thaws. A muzzle and/or a requirement that the dog not be outside the house without a caretaker were discussed as options for the interim. Pecker outlined the likelihood of the Board imposing a requirement that a fence be installed in the Spring, and for now the dog needing to either be with a caretaker or be muzzled when outside. Greg noted that fence dimensions would possibly be determined by the Board.

Dan reported that there is no stop sign where Harvey Road intersects with Route 116, and requested that one be put in place.

3. Approval of Credit Card Usage for Property Taxes.

MOTION: *Michelle moved to approve providing a credit card option for payment of property taxes, with fees to be charged as outlined. The motion was seconded by Jessica, and passed unanimously.*

4. Local Option Tax (LOT) Presentation.

Ian presented the slide show he had created explaining what a LOT is, to what purchases it will apply, the anticipated amount of revenue, and on what the funds would be spent. This presentation and other information will be posted on the Bristol website.

5. Town Meeting Preparations.

Pecker raised the possibility of the Board's proactively addressing the penalty percentage charged on delinquent taxes, as that is an issue commonly raised from the floor. Board members agreed that some level of penalty is needed as an incentive, and also agreed that it needs to be clarified at the Meeting that the penalty is only charged after the last payment due date, and only on the amount owed at that point.

It was planned to explain the reasons behind not including a question regarding expansion of the Police District during the Reports section of the Meeting. There was some discussion of the possibility of engaging a consultant to assist with the community engagement efforts needed to plan for a Police District vote at the 2027 Town Meeting.

It was agreed that, with the ARPA funding explanations included in the Town Report, this issue will be addressed only if questions are raised; Ian will compile some related notes to have available at the Meeting.

6. Selectboard Roundtable.

Michelle asked about the West Street slope repair; Ian noted that planning on this is continuing, and that he will be following up with FEMA.

7. Town Administrator's Update.

Greg had nothing to add to his written report.

VII. Other Business.

1. Correspondence/reports received were reviewed.

VIII. Executive Session.

MOTION: *A motion to enter Executive Session per 1 VSA §313(a)(3) [Personnel], inviting Greg to join, passed unanimously.*

The meeting entered Executive Session at 8:38 pm and returned to open session at 8:45 pm.
No further action was taken by the Board.

IX. Adjourn.

The meeting adjourned at 8:46 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Chamberlin, Recording Secretary