

TOWN OF BRISTOL, VERMONT

Selectboard — Minutes of Meeting

Monday, May 11, 2026 • 7:02 PM

Members Present: Ian Albinson (Chair, via Zoom), Joel Bouvier (in-person), Peeker Heffernan (in-person), Michelle Perlee (in-person), Jessica Teets (via Zoom)

Staff Present: Gregory Faust, Town Administrator; AZ Larsen, Planning & Zoning Administrator; Bruce Nason, Bristol Police Chief (public forum)

Others Present: NEAT (recording)

I. Call to Order.

Chair Ian Albinson called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM. Three members were present in the Holley Hall conference room (Bouvier, Heffernan, Perlee). Jessica Teets joined remotely via Zoom shortly after the meeting opened.

II. Approval of Agenda.

Chair Albinson noted that two executive session items needed to be added to the end of the agenda: one item under 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(3) for personnel, and one item under 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(A) for contracts. He indicated these would be taken up at the end of the meeting, expected around 7:45 PM.

MOTION: *To approve the agenda as amended to add the two executive session items at the end of the meeting. Moved by Michelle Perlee, seconded by Peeker Heffernan. Passed unanimously by voice vote.*

III. Public Forum.

Bristol Police Chief Bruce Nason addressed the Board with two updates.

First, Chief Nason reported that the Bristol Police Department's federal Homeland Security Grant application, which Sergeant Andrew Graham has submitted for "at least the last four or five years in a row," has finally received a positive recommendation. Pending final federal approval, the Department expects to receive approximately \$61,000 to replace the radios in its patrol vehicles. Nason described the current vehicle radios as "severely outdated" and said the funding is needed "to correct some of the issues with the old technology."

Peeker Heffernan asked whether the funding was from the current Homeland Security cycle or from the reallocation of 2023 funds that municipalities can apply for. Chief Nason confirmed this is 2025 grant money. Heffernan noted for the Board's awareness that a separate reallocation pool has recently opened up for municipalities, which would have to be submitted by the Selectboard and could fund fire, police, or rescue equipment.

Joel Bouvier asked whether the Department's portable handheld radios were also being replaced. Chief Nason clarified that the handheld portables were replaced in 2018 or 2019; the current grant funding is specifically for the radios installed in the vehicles and the base station radio.

Second, Chief Nason reported on his April meeting with the Bristol Elder Eagles, which he described as a productive session that generated several useful suggestions. One outcome the Department is acting on involves restructuring how foot patrol statistics are categorized. Nason explained that in the previous year, the Department logged approximately 1,000 foot patrols overall, but those rolled up into a single category obscured the nature of the work being done. Roughly 600 of those patrols were at Bristol Elementary School during student arrival, dismissal, and school events, and approximately 396 were business checks and downtown foot patrols at night. The Department intends to break these categories apart so that future reporting more accurately reflects the actual work being performed. Nason offered to meet with any other community groups interested in continuing the conversation about police services.

Town Administrator Gregory Faust thanked the Chief and noted that this kind of granular outcome capture will strengthen the Department's competitiveness for future grant applications, since "they're all very big numbers, outcomes, statistics," and better actuals make stronger applications. Faust asked the Chief to pass along his thanks to Sergeant Graham as well.

No other members of the public addressed the Board during the forum.

IV. Consent Agenda.

4a. Approval of Past Meeting Minutes (April 27, 2026).

Chair Albinson noted that the April 27, 2026 draft minutes had been updated based on a note from Michelle Perlee and were already posted to the town website.

4b. Approval of Check Warrant and Liquor/Tobacco Licenses.

Heffernan read the warrant total into the record at \$3,072,630.96, noting that "a little over \$2,000,000 of that is the amount of allocation" — referring to the annual education tax remittance to the Mount Abraham Unified School District. Chair Albinson confirmed there were no liquor or tobacco licenses on this warrant. There was also a late addition to the warrant, an \$8,990 payment.

MOTION: *To approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Moved by Michelle Perlee, seconded by Peeker Heffernan. Passed unanimously by voice vote with no further discussion.*

V. Regular Business.

5a. Town Plan MPG Consultant Selection.

Planning & Zoning Administrator AZ Larsen presented the consultant selection for the Bristol Town Plan Update under Municipal Planning Grant #07110-MP-2026-Bristol-62.

Larsen opened with a brief update on a related staffing matter: a UVM student Larsen has been working with to apply for internship funding has received that funding. The MOU with UVM is being finalized this week, with the intern starting May 25, in time to support the planning projects ramping up this summer.

Turning to the consultant selection, Larsen reported that the Town received two proposals in response to the RFP: one from DuBois & King, and one from the Addison County Regional Planning Commission (ACRPC). A selection committee consisting of Larsen, Grant Administrator Freeda Powers, Town Administrator Greg Faust, Assistant Clerk/Treasurer Kris Perlee, Chair Ian Albinson, and Planning Commission Member Rob Rooker met that morning, reviewed both proposals, discussed each, and scored them on a matrix that has been used for prior bid evaluations.

Larsen reported the scoring results: DuBois & King scored 90 out of 100, and ACRPC scored 81 out of 100. Larsen's recommendation, supported by the selection committee, was to award the contract to DuBois & King.

Heffernan observed that one of the goals of using an MPG consultant was to "get away from regional planning and get some outside ideas anyway," and indicated that DuBois & King appeared to be a good fit on that basis. Perlee remarked that she would not have thought of DuBois & King as a planning consultant; Heffernan agreed but noted that they do offer planning services. Town Administrator Faust added that DuBois & King wrote their proposal directly to what Bristol was looking for, including support for the State of Vermont Climate Office's Social Resilience Process Guide pilot program that Bristol was selected to participate in earlier this year. Faust described ACRPC's proposal as solid and noted that they are the standard authors of Vermont town plans, but said DuBois & King "really kind of hit the niche that we were looking for."

Chair Albinson added context about the proposed project manager, noting that DuBois & King's Dan Mallach has worked with Bristol on two prior projects: the Munsell Avenue sidewalk scoping study and the recently completed accessibility study covering all three of Bristol's parks (the substantial document currently on display in the Town Office foyer). Albinson said Mallach has demonstrated strong commitment to Bristol and produced excellent work on both prior engagements.

Bouvier asked whether the grant required a local match. Town Administrator Faust confirmed there is a small match, but that it is already proven to the State and has been fully accounted for, so the choice of consultant does not change the financial picture for the Town.

MOTION: *To accept the recommendation of DuBois & King for the planning grant (Municipal Planning Grant #07110-MP-2026-Bristol-62). Moved by Michelle Perlee, seconded by Ian Albinson. Passed unanimously by voice vote.*

Larsen indicated she was looking forward to keeping the Board updated as the project gets underway.

5b. Selectboard Roundtable.

Chair Albinson invited each member to share updates.

Joel Bouvier

had no items.

Peeker Heffernan

opened by asking whether the Board had heard what was found at the North Street water leak earlier in the day. Town Administrator Faust indicated he would address it in his Town Administrator's report, and Heffernan agreed to wait. Heffernan otherwise had no items.

Michelle Perlee

had no items.

Jessica Teets

had no items.

Ian Albinson

provided an update on his ongoing work organizing Bristol's personnel policies and town ordinances for review and update. Albinson said he and Town Administrator Faust have been

developing a three-meeting workflow for moving policy and ordinance updates through the Board:

- A draft version of an updated proposal would be circulated to the Board at least five days before the first scheduled meeting on it.
- At the first meeting, the Board would discuss the proposal, take public comment, and ask questions of staff.
- The proposal would then return to Faust and Albinson for revisions based on Board and public input.
- At a second meeting, the Board would review the revised draft and ask any final questions.
- At a third meeting, the proposal would ideally be approved and move to whatever public warning period the underlying policy requires before taking effect.

Albinson explained that this work will appear as a recurring agenda item over the coming months as Bristol works through a substantial backlog of policies and ordinances that need updating, and as the Board prioritizes those updates relative to other Town needs.

Town Administrator Faust added that the rolling, one-at-a-time approach gives the Board adequate lead time on each item rather than presenting "all this complicated stuff" at once. Faust also emphasized that prioritization is being driven in part by Bristol's audit cycle: the Town is currently undergoing an audit, and "we'll be in audits in perpetuity from here," so aligning and updating policies directly to the items the Town is being audited on is a necessary and ongoing exercise.

5c. Town Administrator's Report.

Town Administrator Gregory Faust reported on several active operational matters.

North Street water leak. Faust reported that the contractor had picked up the dig on North Street near Walgreens earlier in the day. They excavated, re-ran the line, and identified leakage on the customer side serving Walgreens, with the affected service line running up into the Walgreens parking lot. The Town has been in contact with Pomerleau, who is handling the customer-side portion. Work is expected to resume Wednesday morning. The Town has coordinated closures and dig sites among the Bristol Police Department, the Department of Public Works, and Vermont Utility Management Services (VTUMS).

Heffernan asked whether the line had been routed over or under the storm drain, noting that VTUMS had contacted him about it. Faust said he had spent about thirty minutes on site that day but could not tell from the way the cut had been made; the storm drain was right there but the routing was not clear from the excavation as left.

School Street and North Street follow-on patches. Faust noted that the School Street waterline issue is still outstanding, and the patch from the November leak on North Street could use additional work. He suggested bundling both with the current North Street dig to obtain a better mobilization cost from the contractor, since "it's expensive to get the guys out there" and the Board has already voted to address School Street. Heffernan noted that the section in question is between Spring Street and Pine Street. Perlee asked for clarification that Faust meant doing the actual work, which Faust confirmed. There was also brief discussion of whether part of this area might be picked up by Munson Earth-Moving's scope under the upcoming water project, which Faust said he would verify.

Vermont Bond Bank (Bristol West waterline financing). Faust reported that additional documents will be transmitted to the Vermont Bond Bank by the end of the week, and Bristol is on the Bond Bank's agenda for May 28 to finalize the bond financing for the Bristol West waterline replacement project.

Munson public communications plan for Bristol West waterline replacement. Faust reported that Munson mobilization began this week. The contractor is moving equipment and materials onto the site, and early-week work has focused on cutting back trees and site preparation. Faust met with Darren (last name not stated on the recording) the prior week, and noted that some materials are still on backorder, which is likely to influence the pace of progress for a while.

Faust outlined his approach to public communications during the Bristol West construction season. Weekly construction meetings with Munson Earth-Moving will take place on Thursdays. After each Thursday meeting, Faust will compile the week-ahead schedule and distribute it through:

- Front Porch Forum
- The Town website
- Facebook (possibly)
- Direct outreach to residents on whichever streets are currently active and the streets coming up next

Faust explained that because Munson has a phasing plan organized by street, he plans to pull resident lists by street and send targeted communications to those whose streets are currently under construction and those scheduled the following week — providing both a town-wide public-facing schedule and street-specific direct notice. Operator Jill Marsano (VTUMS) will be on the ground throughout, and Faust will also be on site to help residents directly. Bouvier joked that some residents may want to schedule their summer vacations to coincide with their street's work, prompting brief discussion of the new system being laid in parallel with the existing one so that service interruptions at switchover should be minimal. Faust said Elm Street is the planned starting point; Heffernan noted Elm Street is mostly out of the road right-of-way anyway, which simplifies that phase. Faust said Public Works staff member Chris (Bapp) will handle the operational talking points day-to-day. Teets thanked Faust for thinking carefully through the communications plan.

May 25 meeting cancellation and June 1 special meeting. Faust noted that the regularly scheduled May 25 Selectboard meeting falls on Memorial Day and will not be held. However, because of the volume of active projects, the Board will need to convene a brief meeting on June 1 to sign a check warrant. Discussion followed regarding whether a warrant signing requires a noticed meeting. Chair Albinson confirmed that under Vermont open meeting law, an in-person location must still be provided to allow any member of the public to attend, even if the only agenda item is the warrant. The Board concluded that a short, noticed meeting will be held on June 1, with the next full Selectboard meeting on June 8. Albinson committed to placing the June 1 meeting on the schedule and reminding the Board.

VI. Other Business.

6a. Correspondence, Reports, and Communications Received.

Chair Albinson reported that no correspondence had come to his attention. Town Administrator Faust confirmed that all incoming correspondence is currently routed to him, with nothing requiring Board attention at this meeting.

VII. Executive Session.

MOTION: *To enter executive session under 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(3) (personnel) and 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(A) (contracts). Moved by Ian Albinson, seconded by Michelle Perlee. Passed unanimously by voice vote.*

The Board entered executive session at 7:27 PM and returned to open session at 8:42 PM.

MOTION: *To authorize the Chair to issue a written admonishment to a Selectboard member pursuant to Section 8(B) of the Bristol Conflict of Interest Policy (2012) regarding a conflict of interest matter that arose at the April 27, 2026, meeting. Moved by Ian Albinson, seconded by Michelle Perlee. Passed unanimously by voice vote.*

VIII. Adjourn.

MOTION: *To adjourn the May 11, 2026 Selectboard meeting. Moved by Michelle Perlee, seconded by Peeker Heffernan. Passed unanimously.*

The meeting adjourned at 8:43 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Ian Albinson, Selectboard Chair