

**Town of Bristol, Vermont  
Selectboard Meeting Minutes of  
Monday March 5, 2018**

Selectboard members present: Chair Peeker Heffernan, Joel Bouvier, Michelle Perlee, and Ted Lylis.

Staff present: Town Administrator Valerie Capels, Lt. Bruce Nason, Asst. Treasurer Peter Ryan.

Others present: Craig Allen, Val Hanson, Shawn Kimball (Neat TV), Kevin LaRose, Ron LaRose, Jim Quaglino, Chet Richardson, George Smith, Ken Weston.

**I. Call to Order.** Peeker Heffernan called the meeting to order at 5:30pm.

I.1. Review agenda for addition, removal, or adjustment of any items per 1 V.S.A. §312(d)(3)(A). Valerie Capels asked that a banner application be added under Other Business.

**II. Public Forum.** There were no comments.

**III. Police District informational meeting.**

The Police District annual meeting was called to order at 6:00pm.

George Smith asked why the Clerical expense increased to \$9,000. Bruce Nason explained that Clerical support is expected to be used so that Police officers are doing less of it. Health insurance increased to accommodate officers who choose the more expensive family plan. Michelle Perlee said workers compensation decreased because the three-year claim period had passed and VLCT corrected a mathematical error. Asked why Chief Gibbs and Officer Otey's injuries were not covered by their homeowners' insurance. Peter Coffey explained the officers were on duty at the time and were fully dressed in uniform getting in or out of the cruiser. The Selectboard did review the matter.

Valerie Hanson asked that the timeline be reviewed for hiring a new Chief. Peeker Heffernan said the deadline for applications is April 6. The Review Committee is expected to review applications between April 9 and April 13 and conduct interview through April. May 14 would be a public interview of the two finalists, after which a candidate may be selected and an offer made. Ms. Hanson noted that the Personnel Policy includes a provision that the Town will hire from within whenever possible, we have an employee who has the ability and willingness in the department, and asked why is the process taking so long. Peeker Heffernan explained it was partly budgetary and agreed the process has been long. Asked why we had money for Kevin, but not enough to hire a new Chief, the Selectboard explained the Chief retired so the Town had to pay vacation and sick time that had not been budgeted.

Ron LaRose asked about the compensation provided in the budget. He noted that \$160k divided by 3 is approximately \$50k a year. A fourth person was not budgeted. If the Chief hired is not already on staff, we would need to go overbudget or let someone go. Selectboard members said no one will lose their job; the new Chief will need to work within budget whether cutting part-timers or hours. They did not feel the Town could support a fourth person at this time.

Peter Ryan felt the budget was cut too close to the line. This should have been calculated when the former Chief retired to start process for new Chief. The process should not have included a public committee. It is the Town's employee and it is the Town is responsible to monitor the employees.

Joel Bouvier noted that if you add all the full and part-time salaries, shift differentials, and overtime and divide by four it comes to an average of \$55,000. If more money is needed, we will need to cut somewhere else.

Craig Allen asked if the budget is adequate to protect its residents. Bruce Nason said the department has adequate resources to cover calls and if more resources are needed, they would reach out to other law enforcement agencies. Selectboard members noted they asked for budgets for a fourth person and status quo. A four person police department would require an 8% increase in taxes. They felt they could not ask for more taxes after last year's big increase.

Ken Weston asked if a call came in outside police district would they go. Bruce Nason said no; they would go if asked by the State Police to go or assist. They would go, however, if it was a life-threatening situation and the Bristol Police are nearby.

Chet Richardson asked about response times and schedules. Bruce Nason noted that the Sheriff's Dept is currently short-staffed. Bristol Police response times in the district after hours, response time could be 5 minutes or 15 depending on where the officer on duty lives.

George Smith and others asked about the proposal to go town-wide. Selectboard members said the proposal is not dead but is not being pursued at this time. It would require a town-wide vote. People outside police district do not want an increase in taxes. They want to get the new Chief in place before continuing to explore going town wide.

#### **IV. Regular Business.**

1 Review Police Chief job description, announcement, review committee, and proposed timeline. There following adjustments were agreed:

- Under minimum qualifications, move additional experience in lieu of degree from #4 to #1 and that experience can be substituted for a degree;
- Eliminate minimum qualification #5;
- Add "at the discretion of the Selectboard" to minimum qualification #8;
- Add ICS training up to level 300 to minimum qualifications; and
- Under additional desired qualifications #13, change 60 days to 180 days for the new hire to reside within 10 air miles of the department.

Michelle Perlee moved to accept the job description, ad, and timeline, as discussed.

2. Resolution for Downtown Transportation Fund grant application. Peter Coffey moved to approve the resolution in support of the Downtown Transportation Fund grant application. Ted Lylis seconded. So voted.

3. Approval of the February 19, 2018 minutes. Peter Coffey moved to approve the February 19, 2018 minutes, with Michelle Perlee's corrections. Joel Bouvier seconded. So voted.
4. Accounts payable and liquor licenses. Were approved.
5. Selectboard concerns. None.
6. Town Administrator's report. No additions to written report.

**V. Other Business.**

1. Joel Bouvier moved to approve the Bristol Ecumenical Group's request for a banner over West Street from March 26 to April 2, 2018. Ted Lylis seconded. So voted.

**VI. Executive Session.**

Upon finding that premature public knowledge would clearly place the public body or a person involved at a substantial disadvantage, Michelle Perlee made a motion to go into Executive Session to discuss a personnel matter and contract negotiations. Ted Lylis seconded. So voted.

The Selectboard and in its capacity as the Water Commission met in executive session from 10:10pm to 11:55pm. Upon returning to open session, Peter Coffey moved to approve Tom Sayer Development's request for stabilization of the water rate at Woodland Apartments for ten (10) years based on the rate at the time of connection. Michelle Perlee seconded. So voted.

**VII. Adjourn.**

Joel Bouvier moved to adjourn. Peter Coffey seconded. The meeting adjourned at 11:58pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Valerie Capels, Town Administrator