

Town of Vershire Selectboard Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, October 26, 2021 at the Town Center Building & via Zoom

Attendance: Vernal Stone-chair, Ken Bushey, Nicole White-Fogarty, Alan Lyford-highway foreman, Gene Craft-clerk/treasurer, Gretchen Harvey-secretary. Guests: Sheriff William Bohnyak: Captain Scott Clouatre, Mark Fogarty, Debra Kingsbury, Mike Gunn, Michelle Massa, Kevin Stockman, Alex Nuti-de Biasi, Diann Ward, Reva Seybolt, Earl Robinson, and David Hooke.

Call to Order: 7:10pm

Agenda Review & Modifications: G.Craft asked to insert a correction from the last meeting: the date of the next Delinquent Property Tax Sale is Nov. 30th and asked to add the signing of the annual salt bid from Cargill to the agenda.

Public & Staff Comments: none at this time.

Highway-Road Report: A. Lyford reports that the crew has been getting ready for winter. The tires, sander, and everything else is ready to go. He is meeting with Rita Seto of the Two Rivers Ottauquechee Regional Planning Commission (TRORC) on 10/27 to take photos of the culvert work on South Vershire road. The rip rap is now being put down by Thrasher Construction and he contacted Lafayette to arrange putting the guard rails back in place once the project is complete. Grants and aid will cover most of the costs of this work. He has received the grant for the leaf blower that mounts to the back of the mower tractor. This will be very helpful for keeping leaves out of the ditches and protecting water quality. The cost is \$5,500. The grant will cover approximately \$4,400, so the balance will need to come out of the Highway Fund, grant expense line. Cargill reports that they have a good supply of salt as of now. He has received the new snow plow and they are ready for snowfall. V. Stone moved to approve the salt contract with Cargill at \$73.94 per 200 tons of road salt/de-icer. N. White-Fogarty seconded. The motion passed unanimously. V. Stone moved to approve paying the balance due of the purchase price of the leaf blower. K. Bushey seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Highway Garage Updates: This topic will be covered at a special meeting scheduled for Wed. Oct 27 at 6pm in the TCB and via Zoom. The SB and the architect James Coe will take up the questions submitted by the energy committee about efficiency standards for the new town garage. There will be an open house at the current town garage on November 6, from 9:00-12:00 to present the most recent design plans and answer questions from Vershire residents.

Approval of Last Meeting Draft Minutes: Amendments were suggested by N. White-Fogarty and G. Craft. V. Stone moved to approve the Minutes of 10/12/21 as amended. K. Bushey seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Current Period Warrants Approval: K. Bushey had some questions about terminology used covering truck supplies. K. Bushey moved to approve the current period warrants as presented. V. Stone seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Q & A with Sheriff Bill Bohnyak and Captain Scott Cloutre of the Orange County Sheriff's Department (OCSD):

Q: What services could the OCSD provide to Vershire? In particular, would the department respond to complaints as well as conduct patrols? How many hours per week might this be and what are the circumstances (a break-in, for example) whereby someone should call either OCSD or the VT State Police to respond?

Sheriff B: If a resident has an emergency they should call 911 and the direct response would come from the VTSP. If they need an agency assist, they will call OCSD to join the response. This would occur regardless of a contract with Vershire. If a resident called OCSD and it was not an emergency, they would respond as soon as possible.

Q: What is the hourly rate for OCSD and if a contract were for \$10,000./annual, does that guarantee a number of hours provided. The current hourly rate for OCSD contracts is \$52/hour.

Sheriff B: If a call came into the station, there may not be anyone available that night or at that time. We do try to maximize your contract. There are times when we run over the allotted hours and times when we do not use them all. It is very hard to be precise about needed hours because of unforeseen circumstances. But the OCSD is flexible and hopes to have a good relationship with the town. If an email message comes in, they work to make sure any complaint is handled appropriately.

Q: Are you willing to serve warnings for noise violations or other issues. And could these warnings be a first step in the legal process possibly leading to a ticket?

Sheriff B: Yes, a deputy can issue a warning and then a ticket for municipal issues. Any of their deputies can issue municipal tickets that follow town ordinances or noting fine structures. The OCSD does not receive any percentage of these fines. Vershire would need to make sure they had the ordinances in place that they would want them enforced. A noise ordinance violation, however, would need to be issued as it was happening. This means that at least one and possibly two deputies would be called out to issue such a warning.

Q: Is it possible to have some regular patrolling provided for the town? And are there enough deputies to provide this help with your other contracts/duties elsewhere? How many deputies are on your staff?

Sheriff B: Yes, we do have enough staff at 22 deputies and Vershire has a resident, Erica Thurston, your *Animal Control Officer*, who is also in the mix and has provisional status as of right now. We expect her to become certified in the near future and become available on a part-time basis. .

Q: Is the town charged for travel time to reach Vershire?

Sheriff B: No, the charge begins once the officer(s) have arrived in town.

Q: A resident expressed concern that the calls to and visits by OCSD officers will cost the town money but not truly address issues of crime. Might the contract with OCSD impact regular people who are missing a tail light or other minor infraction, while the more serious law breakers go unpunished?

Q: Some recent crimes reported include stolen property. Would a contract deter such crimes from happening? How much presence in the town would help deter these and crime overall?

Sheriff B: Agrees that crimes will still occur regardless of a contract, however, he believes that having more of a presence in the community will help, as will listening to residents and targeting areas where there are concerns. As for how much presence is needed is hard to answer. Both Sheriff B and Capt. Scott Clouatre believes that their emphasis on good communication is worth a lot when it comes to solving conflicts. They are also willing to participate in certain community events to build rapport with town residents.

V. Stone closed this part of the meeting by indicating that the SB would gather more statistics and consider the town budget implications in order to focus another discussion about contracting with OCSD with residents at a later date. The SB thanked Sheriff B and Capt. Scott for attending and answering questions.

Planning Commission - Vershire Development Ordinance: G. Craft spoke with the town's legal counsel, Michael Tarrant and Paul Gillies, about existing ordinances and how best to implement them. The response was that noise ordinances are difficult to enforce because decibel levels need to be monitored and recorded. The development administrator, however, could be effective at dealing with issues of light pollution or trash accumulation by issuing a NOV (notice of violation). The development ordinance does need updating. D. Kingsbury, secretary of the Planning Commission, has learned from TRORC that a free-standing ordinance can be enforced by someone in law enforcement. Further discussion on the Planning Commission's authority and the town's ordinances will occur at a future meeting.

Transfer Station Coordinator Position: A number of people have made inquiries about the open position. M. Gunn, transfer station coordinator, was present to answer questions about the nature of the work. He volunteered to answer emails or phone calls from candidates interested in the job. The SB agreed to post the position on the listserv and recruit applications for consideration.

Old/Unfinished Business

Recycling - MOU: M. Gunn, transfer station coordinator, has been speaking with Bonnie Methune of Northeast Resource Recovery Association (NRRRA). He has had some questions answered about the advantages of separating out valuable recyclables, but needs to follow up on some remaining questions. The SB agreed to delay signing the MOU until the next meeting when more information is available.

Bread Oven Pavilion Addition: David Hooke summarized the current status of the bread oven and pavilion expansion project. He believes that the previous select board had agreed to move forward on the original plan to create an expansion of the bread oven pavilion for the purpose of solving a storage problem and to provide some staging area for those cooking/baking during town events. On the basis of work already done and volunteer hours already committed, D. Hooke recommends moving forward with the original plan. He recognizes that the original plan will not meet all the needs of a growing interest in expanding the use of the TCB and its grounds. With the original plan and in the event of rain, a tent can always be erected to extend cover over the staging area. Storage space is a high priority because the old shed won't last much longer. D. Hooke is willing to spearhead the effort to gather the resources and volunteers needed to complete this project. The goal would be to get it done by Vershire Day 2022. He notes that it is also possible to take on a second project (a pavilion for the field) and find grant funding for it at a later time. Grants from the Land and Water Conservation fund will be posting their next round of grants to become available in 2022-23. D. Hooke will present an action plan to the board for completing this project at the next SB meeting on Nov. 9th.

TC Building & Recreation Committee Reports: R. Seybolt reported that the TCB committee has found someone to do some trim repair work in the upstairs bathroom and some painting in the downstairs bathroom to cover water stains. The committee is also working on a budget for next year. The rental agreement revisions are still in process. G. Craft noted that he sent his revision suggestions over email. The committee will review them and bring their suggestions back to the SB at a later meeting. V. Stone moved to authorize the TCB committee to have the touchup painting and trim repair on the TCB bathrooms taken care of. N. White-Fogarty seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

K. Bushey reported for the Rec committee on the final food truck event for the season. He also summarized the progress made on the skating rink project. He presented the SB with two different estimates based on supplies costs from different sources. There is a difference of approximately \$80 between the estimates. One cost not included in the estimates is for delivery at approximately \$100. K. Bushey is continuing to seek donations for the lumber to trim the costs. He would like to move ahead and order the brackets/hardware for the rink itself. N. White-Fogarty moved to authorize the purchase of the ice rink hardware for approximately \$800.00. K. Bushey seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Action Items/Assignment

Petition Requirements for Local Organizations: G. Craft asked the Board for approval to allow local organizations petitioning for town funding at Town Meeting do so without getting signatures this year, like last, due to the constraints around Covid-19 and necessary face-to-face petitioning that it requires. They board ok'd this process so long as the organization does not change the dollar amount it is requesting. If an organization that did not ask for money donations last year, but is requesting donations this year, they will need to get signatures before being placed on the ballot.

Schedule Visit to Allen's Affordables: The SB will notify A. LaFlamme that it would like a representative of the board to visit and review progress being made on meeting the requirements of the town and Allen's Affordables COAL (Certificate of Approved Location) agreement. V. Stone and G. Craft will plan to visit at 3pm on Thursday, Oct 28, 2021.

Delinquent Tax Sale Representative: V. Stone moved to approve G. Craft as town representative for the Delinquent Property Tax Sale on November 30, 2021. N. White-Fogarty seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Executive Session: None at this time.

Adjourn: V. Stone moved to adjourn this meeting at 9:43pm to a date certain on October 27, 2021 at 6pm in the TCB and via Zoom. The purpose of the meeting is to address the Energy Committee's questions about the new town garage's energy efficiency plan.

**Town of Vershire Selectboard Meeting Minutes resumed: Tuesday, October 27, 2021
The Town Center Building & via Zoom**

Attendance: Vernal Stone-chair, Ken Bushey, Nicole White-Fogarty, Gene Craft-clerk/treasurer, Gretchen Harvey- secretary, Alan Lyford-highway foreman; Guests: James Coe, Andy Wasserman, David Hooke, Pat Barnes, and Mark Fogarty.

Call to Order: V. Stone called the meeting to order at 6:00pm and K. Bushey made introductions.

Numerous energy efficiency questions were presented to J. Coe (architect for town garage) ahead of this meeting. He began by saying he will not be able to answer every one of them tonight but that this meeting is a good start for a discussion on energy efficiency at the new town garage. He wanted to start by noting that one of the fundamental principles of energy efficiency is to seal up buildings as tightly as possible. There is a contradiction between this principle and the purpose of a town garage that needs to have its doors opened and closed regularly. The presence of cold trucks covered in wet slush and loaded with cold sand will add to the challenge of heat recovery and retention. This means that the payback will not be very good for extra insulation (beyond commercial code levels) or other types of high-end green technologies and upgrades to increase efficiency. What the garage does have in its favor is that it only requires a low maintenance temperature of 55 degrees. This will be its biggest conservation measure. A different strategy the town could pursue would be to aim for zero greenhouse gas emissions for the town garage building. This would require a radiant slab combined with newer heat pump technology and an air-exchange system to address humidity.

Many questions followed this overview including: heat recovery after doors are opened and closed, controlling moisture and humidity, the capacities of the newer heat pump technology, the backup energy system needed in case of power outage, the commercial codes for insulation already built into the design, and the possibility of using solar power to supply the garage's electric power needs. Robust discussions were held about each topic. Next steps are to look

into modeling the building's energy needs. This will be critical for determining which technologies or systems are adopted. The biggest energy draw from the building overall will be for heat/humidity control. J. Coe agreed to contact Efficiency Vermont about the availability of energy consultants who could do some modeling for the garage proposal. He will track this work as part of the scope of what he is already doing for Vershire.

The SB shifted the discussion from energy efficiency to building design and wanted to ask questions and make suggestions about the existing plan. These included requesting adjustments to the layout by adding a break room and shrinking the office and the tool rooms. Other requests involved insulating for sound from the compressor, installing a shower by eliminating a closet, creating a storage system for oil drum barrels, adjusting the placement of electrical outlets and exhaust fans, roof overhangs, and the drainage in garage bays, etc.

K. Bushey will take the lead on getting a professional estimator to provide updated cost estimates for the new town garage plan. J. Coe noted that the energy portion of the estimate is approximately 5% of the total cost and that these figures can be amended once the energy efficiency decisions are finalized. K. Bushey moved to hire Steven Pitken on a cost basis not to exceed \$1,400.00, to provide an updated cost estimate for the proposed new town garage. V. Stone seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Adjourn: V. Stone moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:30pm. K. Bushey seconded. The motion passed unanimously.