

Town of Vershire Selectboard Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, December 7, 2021 at 7:00pm, the Town Center Building & via Zoom

Attendance: Vernal Stone-chair, Ken Bushey, Nicole White-Fogarty, Gene Craft-clerk/treasurer, Alan Lyford-highway foreman, Gretchen Harvey-secretary, Mark Fogarty and Reva Seybolt.

Call to Order: 7:03pm.

Agenda Review & Modifications: New garage update and scheduling interviews for town recycling position.

Public & Staff Comments: none.

Highway-road report: A Lyford reported that all the guardrails are back in place on South Vershire road. The new pavement is working well on Goose Green road. It is easier to clean and requires less salt than prior. Some of the new tire chains are back ordered and they are continuing to repair older ones until they arrive. He concluded that the alternating weather pattern of rain and snow presents challenges for road maintenance.

Approval of Last Meeting Draft Minutes: V. Stone moved to accept the minutes of November 23, 2021. N. White-Fogarty seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Current Period Warrants Approval: V Stone moved to approve the current period warrants except for one bill that requires clarification. N. White-Fogarty seconded. The motion passed unanimously. V. Stone moved to approve K. Bushey's reimbursement request for the ice rink supplies needed to finish the project. N. White-Fogarty seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

New Garage update: K. Bushey reported that he received an updated drawing set from the architect and that all the changes requested have been made to the plans. J. Coe did raise a question about whether or not the radiant slab will be adequate to the size of the building and the need to open and close the doors regularly and recommended that Vershire seek some expert opinions about right-sizing the heating system to the proposed building. J. Coe recommended a mechanical engineer to do this work and V. Stone has two other businesses in mind who could provide similar services. N. White-Fogarty moved to authorize J. Coe to request a cost estimate from a mechanical engineer in Keene, NH for the purposes of sizing the proposed radiant heating system to the new garage building; further this motion V. Stone to seek similar proposals from two additional businesses. K. Bushey seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Highway Department OT: V. Stone questioned the amount of overtime the highway department has logged since July '21 and asked for a comparison to the previous year. The Selectboard concluded that OT logged by the highway department to date is not an issue of concern.

Masking policy in Vershire: Determining mask policies is now the responsibility of municipalities in VT. The SB decided that the correct approach for Vershire is to keep the existing policy in place for the time being, which is that masks are required inside town buildings and to encourage social distancing during outside events.

School bus routes: V. Stone asked A. Lyford which routes the school buses are using in Vershire. A. Lyford reported that it all depends on how many children are on the bus on any given day and that this determines the route the bus takes. This route uncertainty makes it very hard for the highway crew to make sure the roads are cleared and sanded ahead of the bus during bad weather. A. Lyford will continue to try to find out if a set route can be maintained during bad weather for safety reasons. V. Stone also wants to make clear that knowing the bus route is necessary to allow the road crew to do its job of helping the school bus navigate Vershire's roads in the wintertime.

Recycling Schedule over the Christmas/New Year holidays: These two major holidays fall on Saturdays this year. M. Gunn is willing to staff the recycling station on two Sundays, 12/26/21 and 1/2/22. N. White-Fogarty encouraged the SB to make sure these alternatives to the regular schedule are well publicized. It will be posted on the Listserv and in the Town newsletter that is due to be sent out soon.

Orange County/Law Enforcement: The Selectboard received an email response from the OC Sheriff answering some of the questions posed about contracting for a police presence in the town. The SB decided to draft a list of what an actual police presence would do: at what times during the day would patrols occur, where would the patrolling take place, and is it possible for an officer to provide some occasional outreach as indicated at the public meeting in October. Outreach opportunities would give residents a chance to ask questions and share their thoughts about public safety in Vershire. The SB agreed to send some specific questions about OCSD services to the Sheriff's Department. G. Craft also recommended the town host another public meeting to which OCSD representatives are invited for the purpose of gathering more input from residents on what forms public safety measures should take in Vershire.

Old/Unfinished Business: Committee Reports

Town Center Committee: R. Seybolt reports that the committee will not meet in December but does want the SB to know that the lockbox for accessing the building is hard to access when it freezes up in bad weather. A fix of some sort is needed, something along the lines of the solution built for the lockbox at the fire department. The committee will focus on the rental agreement revisions in the new year and plan to have it finished in February.

Recreation Committee: K. Bushey noted that the committee will meet next week and that it has received a few donations of skates and milk crates. They also have the brackets needed to finish the ice rink and the lights have been purchased. They will need to be put up. He will look at the forecast but it appears as if Saturday or Sunday, 12/18-19 might be good options for finishing up the project. More details remain to be worked out regarding the actual opening and usage of the ice rink.

Energy Committee: G. Craft summarized a meeting he and a number of energy committee members had with Jennifer Severidt from *Efficiency Vermont* who conducted a walk through of the Town Office and the Vershire Town Center Building and Historical Wing. Overall, she was impressed with the efficiency of such an old building (TCB) and recommended some automatic lights for walkways or other areas where turning switches on and off all the time makes less sense. She will be sending out a list of recommendations for the TCB and the town office buildings.

Action Items/Assignments: The SB will arrange a schedule for holding interviews of candidates for the recycling position. G. Craft will check on protocol for the public aspect of these interviews and set the start time for the next SB meeting accordingly.

Executive Session: none at this time.

Adjourn: 8:56 pm V. Stone moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:56pm. N. White-Fogarty seconded. The motion passed unanimously.