

Town of Vershire Selectboard Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, February 15, 2022 at 7:00pm; Remote only via Zoom, by phone, and recorded.

Attendance: Vernal Stone-chair, Ken Bushey, Nicole White-Fogarty, Gene Craft-clerk/treasurer, Alan Lyford-highway foreman, Gretchen Harvey-secretary, Maximilian Horster, Debra Kingsbury, Tonya Gunn, David Hooke, Margaret Darrow-cemetery trustee, and Reva Seybolt.

Call to Order: 7:01pm V. Stone called the meeting to order.

Agenda Review & Modifications: G. Craft asked the SB to include the topic of adjusting the mid-march SB meeting date.

Public & Staff Comments: none

Highway: Road Report: A. Lyford requested permission to post the roads earlier this year because of rain and warmer temperatures. Normally the roads are posted on March 1 but he recommends posting them on February 22nd this year. Chelsea is expected to post their roads early this year as well. **Truck Update:** The highway crew is still trying to solve the computer glitches in truck #3. It works well sometimes and other times it does not. They will continue to look for solutions in order to keep this truck running, especially because there is no guaranteed delivery date for the new computer on order.

Approval of Last Meeting Draft Minutes: N. White-Fogarty moved to approve the minutes of February 1, 2022 as amended. V. Stone seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Current Period Warrants Approval: V. Stone moved to approve the current period warrants. K. Bushey seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

March 15th Selectboard meeting: Due to the RISD vote to be held on March 15, 2022, G. Craft will be needed to help staff the polling station from 5-7pm and assist with counting the votes after the polls close. He asks the SB to move the March 15th meeting to an alternate day.

Action: V. Stone moved to change the March SB meeting from Tuesday, March 15th to Monday, March 14th at 7pm. N. White-Fogarty seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Town Garage Update: K. Bushey shared copies of the latest drawings and cost estimates with A. Lyford and SB members and requested their feedback and comments. He has inquired about cost savings and will follow up to see if any more can be identified. He also spoke to G. Craft about a rural communities grant that could provide additional funding for the garage. V. Stone heard back from F. W Webb about an estimate he requested for right-sizing the heating system in the garage. He needs to follow up and get a more accurate estimate because they did not include his request for specific system features. D. Hooke asked if J. Coe spoke to C. Hebb (Dynamic Integrations LLC) about an all-electric option. He also mentioned "air curtains" that are used for heat retention when doors are opened and closed often. K. Bushey will follow up and ask J. Coe to discuss these options with C. Hebb and then report back to the SB.

Catholic Cemetery: M. Darrow presented on the cemetery trustees' request to have the town pay repair costs on some of the monuments in the Catholic cemetery. This cemetery is located at the junction of Mero and South Vershire roads. Its origins likely date to the Ely copper mine era and was once the property of the Catholic diocese. It was sold by the church in 1906. It is currently on privately-owned land. A majority of the gravestones indicate those buried there

were Irish immigrants who died in the 1880s. Because of its unique history, this cemetery falls into its own category: it is not a town cemetery, but neither is it a family cemetery for which the trustees have no responsibility. The trustees wanted to share these findings with the SB so that it could consider funding the repairs. V. Stone thanked M. Darrow for her presentation.

Recycling Coverage for 02/19/22: Two members of the highway crew are willing to help transport the recycling on 2/19/22. Only one volunteer/driver is needed that day and they can decide between them who it will be. S. French-Stockwell has agreed to fill in at the site.

Social Media Policy – Status: N. White-Fogarty and G. Craft have both done some research on social media policy best practices for towns and they agreed to meet soon to begin work on a Vershire social media policy. Regardless of whether or not the town decides to manage a FB page, adopting a social media policy is advisable because it would cover all virtual communications, including the town website.

Old/Unfinished Business

Committee Reports:

Town Center Committee: R. Seybolt reported that the committee will not meet again until next week, but that they wanted to address the issue with the kitchen sink drain and would like to have someone come and assess the problem of it backing up. She will call the contractor who did the renovation work as well as a plumber to try to get an estimate for snaking and cleaning the drain. They will try to present an estimate to the SB before their next budget meeting.

Recreation Committee: This committee is working with the organizers of the Snowshoe-athon to plan concluding activities at the TC. K. Bushey reported that they groomed the ice, but that it might not last given weather predictions.

Energy Committee: D. Hooke reported that the committee is starting to work on a regular communications schedule to share with residents via the listserv or by other means. He noted that the committee members are ready to follow up with research and securing estimates for efficiency upgrades if the SB wants to go ahead and fund an energy audit of the town offices building. He also reiterated that having a detailed audit would allow the town to be prepared to apply for ARPA funds when they become available. It would also allow the town to leverage the cost of an audit into funding town office building improvements. In addition to concerns about ventilation in that building, there is a need to test for radon. The consensus of the SB was to have the radon test done first and then continue the discussion about next steps and whether or not to fund a full energy audit at a future meeting.

Action Items/Assignments:

Executive Session 8:31-9:03pm: V. Stone moved to enter executive session at 8:31pm to discuss an offer pertaining to the sale of town property on Durgin Hill Road pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(2). N. White-Fogarty seconded. The motion passed unanimously. The selectboard exited the executive session at 9:03pm. **Action:** V. Stone moved that the Vershire continue to negotiate on the price of the sale of the Durgin Hill property with an interested party. N. White-Fogarty seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Adjourn 9:04pm: N. White-Fogarty moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:04pm. K. Bushey seconded. The motion passed unanimously.