

**Town of Vershire Selectboard Meeting Minutes**  
**Tuesday, August 30, 2022 at 7:00pm at Vershire Town Center building.**  
**There will be a remote option for this meeting via Zoom or by phone.**

**Attendance:** Vernal Stone-chair, Nicole White-Fogarty, Ken Bushey, Gene Craft-clerk/treasurer, Gretchen Harvey-secretary, Alan Lyford-highway foreman, Mark Fogarty, Reva Seybolt, Gregory Wilson-Planning Commission, Representative Samantha LeFebvre, and David Hooke.

**Call to Order:** V. Stone called the meeting to order at 7:04pm.

**Agenda Review & Modifications:** Add agenda process.

**Public & Staff Comments:** None at this time.

**Highway: Road Report:** A. Lyford reported that Vershire is unable to schedule its own paving projects while the paving crew is in the area working on VT113. It is the policy of the paving company to not combine work for the state with work projects for individual towns. The majority of the bus routes have been graded with one exception because one area first needs ditching. The roads have held up pretty well and once we are past this dry spell, grading will be more effective. The crew put some gravel in the spots that were especially bad during last mud season. The crew also coordinated with Strafford to get the culvert work completed on Miller Pond Road.

**Approval of Last Meeting Minutes:** V. Stone moved to approve the minutes of August 16, 2022 as written. N. White-Fogarty 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.

**Garage Update:** K. Bushey reported that J. Coe recommends extending the open bidding phase until 9/30/22 to take advantage of two and possibly three interested parties who need more time to get their paperwork submitted. **Action:** V. Stone moved to extend the bidding phase deadline for the town garage from September 9th until September 30th. N. White-Fogarty seconded. The motion passed unanimously. The SB also discussed the need to begin the process of applying for the garage building permit. **Action:** N. White-Fogarty moved to submit the building permit application for the new town garage. V. Stone seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**Backhoe-proposal to buy new:** The selectboard discussed estimates for a new backhoe with essential attachments. The Caterpillar estimate is not only over \$600 less expensive than the John Deere option, but it is available now versus the JD machine, which would be available in Feb. '23 at the earliest. Additionally, the Caterpillar comes with a 5-year warranty and is offering the best trade-in value. Discussions about purchasing vs. leasing options followed, as well as about tapping grant funding to defray costs. It is clear that prices are continuing to rise and supply chain backlogs are not disappearing quickly. Getting a new backhoe now would also eliminate additional repair costs on the existing 13-year old machine. **Action:** V. Stone moved that the town sign a 5-year lease-purchase contract with Caterpillar for a backhoe. N. White-Fogarty seconded. The motion passed unanimously. K. Bushey requests that this information be included in the next newsletter.

**Legislative Roundtable Hosting:** D. Hooke noted that the VT League of Cities and Towns is encouraging towns to invite candidates standing for election in November to a forum hosted by the town. These forums are designed to help voters learn about the candidates' positions and make informed decisions in November. This is especially important at a time when many of the candidates are new to public service. D. Hooke is willing to work on arranging a forum for Vershire. The SB agreed a forum is a good idea and urged him to include Orange Cty sheriff candidates if possible. Potential dates/times were discussed and D. Hooke agreed to report back when he has gathered more information.

**911 Signs:** In the past, grant funding paid for 911 signs for every household that wanted one. Currently, the town is picking up the costs of new signs and a discussion followed about incorporating a minimal increase in a new driveway permit to help defray these costs. **Action:** N. moved to add \$10 to a driveway permit to cover the cost of a 911 sign. V. Stone seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

### **Committee Reports:**

Town Center Building Committee: R. Seybolt reported that R. Amore (representing Better Places and ACCD) believes Vershire is submitting a strong application for Village District status. When achieved, the committee can begin working on a grant proposal to help finance a pavilion for the town center. She requested that some information about these plans go into the next newsletter. G. Craft will need all submissions for the newsletter by 9/13/22. Picnic tables have been sanded and they will get sealed next week. She is waiting to hear back from Vershire on their plans for the fall, as the TCB committee wants to schedule another potluck gathering.

Recreation Committee: K. Bushey reported that the committee is hosting a BBQ on Sept. 6th. There is not food truck available so they are gathering donations in order to provide food. At their next meeting, they will consider planing a fall event. Once they know where the septic lines are, the members can decide the best location for the ice rink this coming season. There is also some interest in relocating the shed away from the playground area.

Energy Committee: D. Hooke reported that TRORC believes that ARPA funds are a good use for window inserts. Cost estimates and measurements have already been gathered to provide inserts for all the windows in the Town Center Building. The labor to make them still needs to be recruited and would be donated during a workshop to be held in Chelsea this fall. The costs (approximately \$900) are for supplies only. Another consideration is storage space—they need to be stored flat once they are removed from (the insides) of the windows. The TCB committee notes they will plan storage space once a decision is made to build them. **Action:** V. Stone moved to purchase window insert supplies for the Town Center Building so as to cut down on heating costs. K. Bushey seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

D. Hooke invited the SB to consider an invitation to visit the new Emergency facility in Woodstock, which has a new heat pump system in place. The SB is open to such a visit. Tri Valley transit is also putting together a survey to gauge interest in bus travel along VT113. D. Hooke wondered if putting the link in the next newsletter would be effective. Other committee

members will be leading a weatherization 101 workshop on 9/17 to advise residents about high 7uimpact changes they might make to save energy this winter. Lastly, the EC would like to post more links on the Town's webpage but they need to arrange for a committee member to organize the submission and then work with G. Craft to have them posted.

### **Old/Unfinished Business**

Social Media Policy (postponed)

### **Action Items/Assignments:**

**Follow-up Letter to NOV Recipient on Taylor Valley Road.** The selectboard will need to sign this letter. The discussion of this grievance will take place in executive session.

**Executive Session:** N. White-Fogarty moved to enter executive session to discuss a Notice of Violation with a finding that premature general public knowledge would place the public body or a person involved at a substantial disadvantage. 1 V.S.A. §§ 313(a)(1). Further, she invited G. Craft and G. Harvey to remain present. V. Stone seconded. The motion passed unanimously. N.White-Fogarty moved to exit the executive session. V. Stone seconded. The motion passed unanimously. The Selectboard finding is contained in the following **Action:** V. Stone moved to proceed with signing a follow-up letter to the Notice of Violation as recommended by the town's attorney. Further, the SB will proceed with a filing in environmental court to address the unresolved violation of a town ordinance on Taylor Valley Road. N. White-Fogarty seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**Solid Waste Punch Card Design Approval:** The \$20 punch card design (one punch per kitchen-sized bag, 3 punches for large bags) will include a glow spot around the logo to prevent reproduction. **Action:** V. Stone moved to adopt the solid waste punch card design at \$20 each. K. Bushey seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**Selectboard Agendas:** G. Craft asks SB members to send agenda items to G. Harvey by the Friday before the Tuesday meetings. She will send an email reminder out one week in advance reminding everyone of the deadline. This will help with our compliance with VT open meeting law. Additionally, committee members and others who request a place on the SB agenda, will need to meet this deadline also.

**Adjourn:** N. White-Fogarty moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:52pm. V. Stone seconded. The motion passed unanimously.