

**Town of Vershire Selectboard Meeting Minutes**  
**Tuesday, October 11, 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, Alan Lyford-highway foreman, Gretchen Harvey-secretary, Reva Seybolt. David Hooke, Eleanor Zue, Mark Fogarty, Gregory Wilson, Rita French, Margaret Darrow, and Caro Bick.

**Call to Order:** V. Stone called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm.

**Agenda Review & Modifications:** Add Valley Floors quote and remove ACO report.

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

**Highway: Road Report:** A. Lyford reported that the crew is working to get all the roads graded and ready for winter. The new backhoe is working out very well. The work on Eastman Cross road is complete and Pat Ross observed that all Vershire's roads are in good shape as far as the state is concerned. Meeting state standards is important because compliance allows for grant funding and support in times of weather-related emergencies.

**Approval of Last Meeting Minutes:** V. Stone moved to approve the minutes of September 27, 2022 as amended. 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 Progress Update:** K. Bushey reported that the town has received some new information on possible cost savings related to the bid that was submitted by E. F. Wall of \$2,012,742.00 for a new town garage. Even with these adjustments and cost savings, there is still a gap between what the town has budgeted of 1.524M for the project and the bid. The Selectboard is discussing phasing the site layout and stormwater design for the driveway and for the proposed sand and salt shed. If allowed, the contractor's estimate of savings is approximately \$125,000. Discussion of the project's budget and cost savings will continue.

**Cemetery Trustees/New Bylaws Review:** On behalf of the Trustees, M. Darrow summarized the rationale for updating the bylaws governing Vershire's cemeteries. In general, problems arising in other towns, as well as some issues at Vershire cemeteries, spurred this effort to update the bylaws. For example, there is concern about multiple plots being purchased for family members who do not live in Vershire and the likelihood that they will go unused. Also, there is a need to update the policy regarding cremation burials, which are much more common now. Finally, there are no rules about what kinds of plantings are allowed even though planting trees can lead to maintenance problems. R. Seybolt asked about green burial in Vershire. As of this time, green burial is not an option in Vershire's cemeteries because they leave a depression and there is not enough room in these cemeteries to allow for an un-mown field, which is the typical setting for green burials. The goal of the Trustees when updating these bylaws is to create a concise document that can be handed out to persons interested in purchasing a lot in one of Vershire's cemeteries. **Action:** K. Bushey moved to approve the updated Vershire Cemeteries bylaws. N. White-Fogarty seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

V. Stone asked the Trustees for a progress report on their special projects: conserving the historic headstones in the Catholic cemetery and installing some fencing in the Mountain Ash cemetery. Green Valley Memorials will do some restoration of the stones in the Catholic cemetery in the spring of '23. And some of the posts are up for a section of wooden fencing at Mt. Ash cemetery, with completion of the project expected very soon. There is no plan to fence in the entire area and the Trustees expect that snow-machine operators will remain respectful and observe the cemetery's boundaries.

The Trustees reported a problem with overhanging and dead trees on the edges of the Vershire Center and Vershire Village cemeteries. They are trying to work with landowners but some are quite resistant to any trimming or removal of dead trees. The Trustees are concerned about damage falling trees can cause to headstones. This is especially true with respect to Ash trees and the expected infestation of the Emerald Ash Borer. Mark Fogarty-tree warden, will do some research to see if he can propose solutions to this problem.

**Laflamme Salvage Yard COAL Conditions/letter:** This letter serves as notification to the salvage yard that the conditions in the Certificate of Approved Location agreement made with the town are not being met in regard to how many vehicles may be parked on VT113 at any one time. The letter includes an offer to meet with town officials to discuss this safety issue within the window of correction time. **Action:** V. Stone moved that the Selectboard sends a letter notifying LaFlamme's Salvage yard that it is out of compliance with its arrangement with the town and to include an offer to meet to discuss a resolution to this safety issue. K. Bushey seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**Time limits for committee reports:** The SB agreed that if an extended discussion is warranted relating to a committee decision/project, that it is important for committee chairs to request additional time on the agenda by noon on Friday prior to regular SB meetings. For regular summary reporting, each committee chair is asked to keep their comments to approximately 7 minutes each or 20 minutes total for all committee reports. The advisory committees are a relatively new addition to Vershire's town government and the SB wants to establish workable norms and best practices for fairness, transparency and communications between the committees and the selectboard.

#### **Committee Reports:**

Planning Commission: Gregory Wilson requested the Selectboard include in tonight's minutes a statement of its support for the Planning Commission's application for a Municipal Planning grant as identified by Two Rivers Ottauquechee Regional Commission (TRORC) for the purpose of revising the Town Plan. **Action:** K. Bushey moved to support the Planning Commission's resolution to apply for a municipal planning grant from the Department of Housing and Community Development with the assistance of TRORC and for the purpose of revising the town plan. V. Stone seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Town Center Building Committee: N. White-Fogarty reported that the estimate Valley Floors Inc., provided in January 2022 to refinish the floors in the upstairs of the TCB will be honored. She

noted also that there are sales and incentives on carpeting currently if the town is interested in replacing existing carpeting in the TCB. R. Seybolt said that the committee does not feel the carpeting needs replacing at this time. **Action:** V. Stone moved to contract with Valley Flooring, Inc. to refinish the wide-board flooring on the main level of the Town Center Building. N. White-Fogarty seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

R. Seybolt reported that there are 4 companies interested in submitting bids for a pavilion at the town center. The Selectboard suggested giving each company 30 days to provide bids for consideration. Contractors may want some initial guidelines on location up front. The committee will provide them with a provisional location subject to Selectboard approval. **Action:** N. White-Fogarty moved that the Town Center Building committee solicit bids for a pavilion at the town center. The SB will consider its approval of the site plan (location) and the basic concept/size of the structure at a later date. V. Stone seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Recreation Committee: K. Bushey noted that the committee will meet tomorrow night and will set the dates for putting up the skate rink. The committee intends to help with Vershare's harvest festival this coming weekend.

Energy Committee: D. Hooke reported that the committee has received 19 responses so far to its transportation survey. In re: the town garage project, the committee suggests the SB consider the cost savings of eliminating one of the heat pumps from the design, as well as potential savings from rebates that might become available for sustainable energy infrastructure. The committee is also in touch with several companies about installing a car charger at the Town Center. Committee members are exploring whether they can be trained in as energy auditors because the homeowner rebates from Efficiency Vermont require audits before a rebate is issued for upgrades. The window dresser workshop in Chelsea in November is still looking for volunteers. The committee continues to follow the progress of Act No. 172 (H.518) in Vermont, which could provide grants and loans to promote municipal energy resiliency (town garage).

#### **Old/Unfinished Business:**

Social Media Policy (postponed)

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

Possible change in start time of future SB meetings No change will be made at this time.

Cargill Deicer Contract: Service has been good and prices relatively stable. **Action:** V. Stone moved to sign the annual contract with Cargill for de-icer/salt. N. White-Fogarty seconded. The motion passed unanimously. .

**Adjourn:** V. Stone moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:35pm. N. White-Fogarty seconded. The motion passed unanimously.