

**Town of Vershire Special Selectboard Meeting Minutes**  
**Thursday, October 20, 2022 at 4:30pm 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, James Coe, Mark Fogarty, and David Hooke.

**Call to Order:** V. Stone called the meeting to order a 4:36pm.

**Purpose of the Special Meeting:** Continuing the discussion of cost savings (value engineering) options for the Town Garage with its architect, James Coe.

**Cost savings:** J. Coe received a list of potential cost reductions from the E.F. Wall and proceeded to go through them one by one with the Selectboard. The contractor responded to every request for a breakout estimate for the town to consider. These items include “general conditions” such as using the house as a construction hub, the garage as storage space, having the town provide water and power; and for civil engineering considerations: having the town provide gravel, construct culverts, and breakdowns of mechanical values. It is important to remember this is a cost-plus contract with a 5% contingency built into it. The estimate of the “not-to- exceed” costs will be revised with cost savings choices made by the town. Cost savings choices could bring the cost from \$2.02M to approximately \$1.83M. The rest of this discussion considered the details of all conceivable cost-cutting proposals presented, including spreading out some of the work over 5 years as allowed by the permits.

**Additional funding options:** D. Hooke reported on what he has learned about progress of Act No. 172 (H.518) in Vermont. The potential exists for each town to become eligible for \$500,000 in grants and loans to promote municipal energy resiliency. The process for making the funding available is still being worked out but includes an expectation of assessments being completed by 2024 and projects beginning in 2026. Fast-tracking projects ready to go could be an option but there is no guarantee of fast action or full funding. Having a recent energy audit of the old town garage would be needed to forward quickly. D. Hooke will continue to keep tabs on this potential source of funding.

Another option for moving forward would be to bundle the funding approved by the town (bond vote) together with the garage fund and the ARPA funds in order to make a commitment now with E. F. Wall but with the hope/expectation that additional funding from grants will allow the town to pay itself back. Grant funding could come from federal/state/TRORC, and other and for the purpose of increasing the town’s energy resiliency. J. Coe assured the selectboard that the pricing from E. F. Wall is fair and competitive. He will follow up with E. F. Wall and ask if the subcontractors are also on a cost-plus basis. The selectboard wants to know if savings will be passed onto the town if the prices of goods and services were to drop. J. Coe assured the selectboard that cost-plus contracts are transparent and the town is able see all invoices and costs upon request. If a commitment is made soon, J. Coe will also make sure there is a provision in the contract to allow the town to withdraw before construction begins if necessary.

**Action:** V. Stone moved to set a special meeting for 10/27/22 at 7pm to make a decision on whether or not the town should commit to working with E.F. Wall on the town garage project. N. White-Fogarty seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**Adjourn:** N. White-Fogarty moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:50pm. V. Stone seconded. The motion passed unanimously.