

**Town of Vershire Selectboard Meeting Minutes**  
**Tuesday, December 6, 2022 at 7:00pm at the Vershire Town Center.**  
**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, Debra Kingsbury, John Beebe, Mark Fogarty, David Hooke, Jamie Blondin, Reva Seybolt, Tim Ward, and Caro Bick.

**Call to Order:** V. Stone called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

**Agenda Review & Modifications:** None at this time.

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

**Highway: Road Report:** A. Lyford is concerned about the softening roads due to the unusually warm weather right now. He reported that the brakes on one of the trucks have been fixed but that all other equipment is holding up well. He learned that the state is now imposing a diesel surcharge for emissions from new trucks and noted that this cost will need to be taken into account when considering purchase price. The highway crew has been taking care of trees that came down due to strong winds recently.

**Approval of Last Meeting Minutes:** V. Stone moved to approve the special meeting minutes of 11/3/22 and the regular meeting minutes of 11/22/22 as amended . K. Bushey seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**Current Period Warrants Approval:** K. Bushey moved to approve the current period warrants. N. White-Fogarty seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**Town Garage Update:** K. Bushey has contacted J. Coe to verify that everything is in order with respect to finalizing contract negotiations with E.F. Wall. He also spoke with Greg Lord (E.F. Wall & Assoc) and A. Lyford about the civil work that the highway crew might do as they are able. Some of these tasks include:stockpiling materials on site, making a curb cut, building a temporary driveway, putting in a culvert, cleaning out downed or other trees that will need to be removed to protect the garage. K. Bushey will make certain that any work done by the town will mean a lower charge from the subcontractor doing the site work.

D. Kingsbury read a handout she assembled summarizing some of her concerns about the bid from E.F. Wall. Her questions include: what explains the difference in estimates between that of the professional estimator S. Pitkin and the bid submitted by E.F. Wall; why not put the project out to bid again and accept a project delay for the purpose of trying to solicit multiple bids that could save the town money; and, does it make sense to accept a 23% markup for subcontractor work when local contractors might be more competitive. She is also concerned about redirecting ARPA funds to this project when two other town projects (expanding vault space and building a sand & salt shed) are needed. K. Bushey went into some detail to answer D. Kingsbury's questions. The SB reminded those present that the special meeting on Monday, 12/12/22 at 6pm is designed to answer these kinds of questions.

D. Hooke requested permission to notify the person who conducted an energy audit on the existing town garage that he should send his invoice to the town. D. Hooke explained that the purpose of the energy audit is to allow Vershire to qualify for grant funding from Act 172. These funds are designed to help enhance energy efficiency in projects like the new town garage. Fast track applications will be accepted after the 1st of the year, but this grant source can be tapped through 2026.

T. Ward noted the interest rate increases since the bond vote for the new garage took place. He is concerned about the implications for local tax rates. He asked if and when the SB would be willing to go back to the town for a new vote on a town garage. Discussion followed summarizing the latest garage project budget numbers and the bond bank's fixed interest rate and payback schedule. V. Stone invited everyone in attendance to come back to Monday night's meeting at 6pm, which has been scheduled for the sole purpose of answering garage project questions.

**Planning Commission Request:** G. Wilson, chair of the Planning Commission, asked the selectboard to establish a sub-committee for the purpose of assessing and researching community health in Vershire. The PC is interested in including a health section in the revised town plan and research about the town's future health concerns need to inform the writing of this section. G. Craft recommended that the PC, with assistance from the Health Officer, put their rationale and goals for such a subcommittee in writing for the SB consideration.

**Town Center Boiler:** G. Craft reported that Vermont Mechanical came to assess why the boiler was not working properly and it appears as if it might be the master control. VM will contact the manufacturer and try to find a replacement part, however, this model is no longer being made. Even though the boiler is only about 20 years old, the speed at which technology is changing renders replacement parts challenging to find. He will find out tomorrow if the boiler can be fixed or if the recommendation is to replace it.

#### **Committee Reports:**

Town Center Building Committee: D. Hooke wanted to discuss the Snoeshoe-a-thon event that is tentatively scheduled for 2/18/23. The organizers would like to move some things back indoors including registration and making a place to warm up available. He confirmed that the Mountain School will be helping with the event.

Recreation Committee: K. Bushey reported that work on the shed/warming hut has begun and should be wrapped up by this Saturday. The committee has organized another work session on Saturday to put up the skating rink lights; the extra lights needed for the larger rink were donated anonymously. Also on Saturday there will be an event for families with young children featuring a visit from Santa, crafts, and treats from 2-4pm. The committee is tentatively planning a teen event in the coming months.

Energy Committee: D. Hooke reported that the roofing metal for the recycling center kiosk will cost \$150 and requested the SB authorize this purchase. After it is built of rot resistant white oak and with a metal roof, the kiosk will be stored outside until it can be installed at the recycling center. He is hoping that the highway crew will help with installation. There is a budget line in the general fund for the recycling station. **Action:** V. Stone moved to authorize G. Craft to allocate \$150 to purchase metal roofing for the recycle station kiosk. K. Bushey seconded. The motion passed unanimously. .

**Executive Session:** To consider competitive bids for Town Center pavilion

**Action:** To maintain confidentiality and fairness in the bidding process and due to a finding that premature general public knowledge would place the public body or a person involved at a

substantial disadvantage as per 1 V.S.A. 313(a)(1), V. Stone moved to enter an executive session to discuss the bids for this project. Further, he invited R. Seybolt, C. Bick, G. Craft, and G. Harvey to join the executive session. K. Bushey seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**Action:** V. Stone moved to exit the executive session. K. Bushey seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**Action:** K. Bushey moved to accept the Timber Homes bid for a TC pavilion and to enter into a contract with Timber Homes not to exceed \$59,729.00 with the stipulation that if the fundraising goal of \$59,729.00 is not met by the TCB committee, the contract becomes null and void. V. Stone seconded. N. White-Fogarty abstained. The motion passed.

**Action:** V. Stone moved to authorize R. Seybolt to utilize funds already raised for the pavilion to proceed with an application for a permit from the state fire marshal. K. Bushey seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**Old/Unfinished Business:** None at this time.

**Action Items/Assignments:**

Set Budget Meeting Date: G. Craft will put together and share some preliminary budget numbers with the selectboard. A budget meeting schedule will be determined at a later time.

**Adjourn:** N. White-Fogarty moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:45pm. V. Stone seconded. The motion passed unanimously.