

**Town of Vershire Selectboard Meeting Minutes**  
**Tuesday, October 10, 2023 at 7:00pm, Vershire Town Center.**  
**There will be a remote option for this meeting via Zoom or by phone.**

**Attendance:** Ken Bushey-chair, Nicole White-Fogarty, Vern Stone, Gretchen Harvey-secretary, Mike Gunn, Pat Barnes, Neil Hochstedler, Mark Fogarty, Ryck Morales, Bob Harnish, Al Wakefield, and Meghan Asbury.

**Call to Order:** K. Bushey called the meeting to order at 7:04pm.

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

**Public and Staff comments:** None at this time.

**Highway: Road Report:** D. Stone reported on the work the crew has been doing including ditching on Chamberlain road, installing a culvert on Parker Road, and grading Miller Pond, South Vershire, Ayers, and Chamberlain roads. A sample of ledge dust has been brought to the new garage site to facilitate installation of the propane tank on Monday/Tuesday next week. The crew has been overseeing repairs and getting the trucks ready for winter. V. Stone asked if someone would remove an old culvert from Reed Road.

**Action:** V. Stone moved to allow the Highway Superintendent to permit his road crew to haul gravel to a staging location for repair work on Tenney Hill Road if time allows. The costs of labor and gravel for repairs will be paid for by VASA grant funds secured by the Upper Valley Snowmobile Club. N. White-Fogarty seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**Recycle Report:** M. Gunn reported that the dumpster will be picked up this week and that whoever is going to cover for him this coming weekend will need to be familiar with the process. The metal dumpster has arrived on site. Everything else is running smoothly and he offered to help clear the area for the installation of the propane tank.

**Approval of Last Meeting Minutes:** N. White-Fogarty moved to approve the meeting minutes of 9/27/23. V. Stone seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

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

**VT Diversity & Inclusion Initiative** - Bob Harnish and Al Wakefield presented on their organization's state-wide effort to urge town governments to adopt a Statement of Inclusion: "*Vermont's Declaration of Inclusion is a grassroots effort working with community leaders to reinforce the message that Vermont is a welcoming and safe place for all.*" As of October 10th, 126 towns and cities have endorsed the statement, including the neighboring towns of W. Fairlee, Corinth, and Strafford. Additionally,

other state-wide organizations and school boards have become supporters of this initiative. The effort began in 2020 in order to boost population in a state with a stagnant and aging population. The overall point of this initiative is that it is designed to send a welcoming message with the potential of attracting new residents and employees to the town/area. For more information: <https://vtdeclarationofinclusion.org/> The Selectboard will discuss, decide, and follow up at a later date.

**MTAP-** Meghan Asbury (TRORC) was invited to present on the Municipal Technical Assistance Program, specifically for the purpose of sharing information about what other similar sized towns are doing. The SB reiterated that the current town office is tight on space and in particular running out of vault storage. It seems like there is a possibility that a Town Office renovations might qualify under the workforce development category. M. Asbury will begin the paperwork and will follow up with the SB for next steps.

**Public Affairs Specialist: Small Business Association-** Ryck Morales presented on the SBA's program of disaster assistance for homeowners. The SBA program can supplement the assistance offered by FEMA. Applying for aid from both programs is allowed. It is best if residents apply to FEMA and insurance providers first, and then the SBA assistance program, which can provide supplemental help. There is literature on the program in the Town Office with more information on how to apply.

**Town Garage Update:** V. Stone reported that most of the sheetrock is up in the main garage. The installation of the propane tank is scheduled for October 24th. The septic tank has been installed and the culvert has been covered. It is important to note that the septic line was installed over the culvert between the town garage and garage associated with the Sargent house. It has been covered with blueboard but the line has not been installed below frost level and will need to be monitored. No work on the sediment ponds has begun. The breaker box will arrive in November. There will not be a garage meeting this week. Blocks have been installed to allow for the originally requested side-mounted garage door openers. N. White-Fogarty reported on the estimates she has received for a garage security systems: One from *Vermont Security* and one from *AlarmCo*. After a discussion of both estimates, the Selectboard decided the following: **Action:** V. Stone moved to contract with *Vermont Security* to purchase a security system for the new town garage. N. White-Fogarty seconded. The motion passed unanimously. **Action:** K. Bushey moved to authorize N. White-Fogarty to sign the contract agreement with *Vermont Security*. V. Stone seconded. The motion passed unanimously. K. Bushey reported that the Assessments application process (that allows for MERP grant funding) is

going forward. H. Falconer (TRORC) will be following up with the town and will put in the application for three town buildings: Town Garage, Town Office, and the Town Center Building.

### **Committee Reports:**

Recreation Committee: K. Bushey reported on plans for a fall festival this weekend, Sunday 12-3pm. There will be a band, a bounce house, food and activities. The dirt moved to the site will be moved into place by G. Thrasher who will level it for the placement of the hockey rink. Matt Severson, chef at the Mountain School, recently met with the recreation committee to discuss trail conservation in the area of Eagle Hollow ledge. K. Bushey will follow up with him.

Energy Committee: P. Barnes and Neil Hochstedler returned to discuss whether or not the Selectboard would allow the EC to apply for park and ride grant funding. They noted that the found out MERP funds already in hand can be used to cover the town's 20% match and so applying for this grant would not cost the town anything. Further, the funds would be used to purchase signs for VT RTE 113 and also in the lot itself. Additionally, the EC noted that accepting this funding is a commitment to a state designated park and ride parking lot and commits the town to its maintenance as such. The SB and the EC members reviewed the park and ride discussion from the SB meeting on 9/26, as well as new information brought forward tonight and agreed on the following: **Action:** K. Bushey moved to allow the Energy Committee to solicit estimates for high-quality signage that will designate a section of the Town Center Parking area as a Vershire Park and Ride lot. The cost of the signage shall not exceed \$500 and is to be divided equally between the Town and the Energy Committee. This agreement is contingent upon its approval by the Energy Committee and on the final approval of signage text by the Selectboard. Further, the location and installation of the signage should be coordinated with the Highway Superintendent. N. White-Fogarty seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

VTC Committee: N. White-Fogarty reported that an offer to loan a piano to the TCB has been turned down.

### **Action Items/Assignments**

- Admin. Asst. Report-G. Harvey noted that the lower level back door has been replaced and the paperwork is being filed for reimbursement from Green Mountain Mowing.

**Adjourn:** N. White-Fogarty moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:50pm. K. Bushey seconded. The motion passed unanimously.