

Town of Vershire Selectboard Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, December 19, 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, Reva Seybolt, Andrea Herrington, and Eileen Murphy.

Call to Order: K. Bushey called the meeting to order at 7:05pm.

Agenda Review & Modifications: Move VERT report up to 7:30pm.

Public and Staff comments: None at this time.

Highway: Road Report: A. Lyford reported how the rain and high temperatures have damaged the roads. The crew started grading roads but need them to firm up more before they can spread gravel in trouble spots. It would be better if vehicles were traveling on these roads only when absolutely necessary. Because these conditions are so unusual, it is worth contacting state officials to find out if damage repair assistance will be available. A. Lyford also reported on the research he has done with respect to replacing the small truck. This led to a discussion about the age of various town trucks and equipment, as well as potential sources of funding to replace them as needed, such as tapping rural development grants or the VT revolving low-interest loan fund. Some towns are beginning to adopt a 7-year rotation plan, whereby they trade in their equipment on the eve of its warranty expiration and thereby avoid the very high repair costs associated with newer computerized systems on this equipment.

Animal Control Report: N. White-Fogarty reported on three animal control incidents. One involved a horse, which does not fall under our local ordinance. Another involved a claim of potential animal neglect. In order for the ACO to be effective in solving this kind of problem, evidence must be collected. If anyone has information about incidents of animal cruelty or neglect, documenting when, what, where, and/or providing first-hand accounts delivered via the ACO's pager are needed. Certain circumstances will bring in a state game warden. A final complaint involved a free-roaming dog that does not stay on its owner's property. A notice will be sent to the owner who needs to bring the dog into compliance with Vershire's Dog and Pet Ordinance. A draft contract with the Bradford Vet Clinic was circulated for potential adoption. It will be put on the agenda for 1/2/24. BVC can also assist with the scheduling of a rabies clinic in March 2024.

Vershire Emergency Response Team (VERT): Andrea Herrington shared a flier that encourages residents to sign up for alerts that will be triggered during an emergency. She hopes to make them widely available in the coming months. She also reported on an initial meeting of 12/12/24 to

reorganize our local emergency response team. The meeting considered two items: a revised name of VEMT–Vershire Emergency Management Team, and a commitment to review and develop an effective command structure that will include members of the team and select volunteers. The active members in this group will meet again in January and report back to the Selectboard at its 1/16/24 meeting.

Approval of Last Meeting Minutes: N. White-Fogarty moved to approve the meeting minutes of 12/5/23. V. Stone seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

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

Town Garage Update: K. Bushey reported that in the last two weeks, the garage used about 51.5 g of propane, representing a significantly lower heating cost compared to the existing/old garage. Energy use will be monitored going forward to track long-term savings. The Garage Opening event reported a good turnout. Building occupancy has not changed hands yet as there are still some mechanicals that need attention. There also needs to be a conduit trench for ECFiber so that the internet can be set up and a security system can be put into place as scheduled later in January.

Farmers Market: Lucas Daniels not here.

Town Newsletter: Reva Seybolt proposed that the Town reactivate its quarterly newsletter. The first issue could be under the purview of the Town Clerk as it always involves crucial information about Town Meeting. Subsequent issues could follow in spring, summer, and fall. G. Harvey was asked to discuss this possibility G. Craft and how she can assist with making this production schedule viable.

Committee Reports:

Recreation Committee: K. Bushey hopes the ice rink liner can be laid down on Saturday. The lack of snow right now makes it easier to install and fill. The visit from Santa was a nice event, the layout was effective, but attendance could have been stronger. One suggestion is to host the 3 December TCB events on the same day in 2024: the local craft market, Santa’s visit, and the tree lighting ceremony.

Energy Committee: D. Hooke–no report.

VTC Committee: R. Seybolt shared an initial draft for a custodial position description for the Town Center Building. N. White-Fogarty will work on this employment position and collaborate with G. Harvey to post the announcement on various sites.

Action Items/Assignments:

Mero Bridge RFP: G. Harvey reported on some minor edits that have been suggested to the document and asked the SB to select dates for posting.

Procurement/Purchasing Policy: G. Harvey asked the Selectboard to take action on approving this document during the Road Report of its 1/2/24 meeting.

Admin. Asst. Report: G. Harvey reported that the requested changes on the new garage insurance coverage have been made and that all will be in place for the Town to take possession.

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