

Town of Vershire Selectboard Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, April 11, 2023 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, David Hooke, Reva Seybolt, Kelly Bushey, Eleanor Zue, Mike Gunn, Tonya Gunn. Michelle Massa, and Mark Fogarty.

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

Agenda Review & Modifications: None at this time.

Public and Staff comments: None at this time.

Highway: Road Report - Action: V. Stone moved to sign the *Certificate of Mileage Report*. K. Bushey seconded. The motion passed unanimously. A. Lyford reported on the estimate he received for paving work on Eagle Hollow Rd., which he needed to apply for grant funding. Mud season has not been too bad so far this year with the result that the town has been saving some money on gravel. Minor repair work on the loader is needed and has been scheduled. He provided a summary of the road grading progress to date.

Approval of Last Meeting Minutes: K. Bushey moved to approve the meeting minutes of 3/17/23 and 3/28/23 minutes as amended. V. Stone 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.

Town Garage Update: K. Bushey reported that he asked James Coe for recommendations for next steps. All the contractors have been notified of the intention of the Selectboard to work with Lajeunesse Construction, Inc. K. Bushey compiled an immediate "to do" list with tasks that he will dole out this evening.

D. Kingbury asked for an update on the federal grant conversation that occurred with a representative of the USDA RD program. The summary outcome of that conversation is that although the town could potentially qualify for up to \$250,000 in federal grant funding, the process would require some work already accomplished to be redone, it would delay the project for at least one year, possibly two, it would require new bids with prices aligning with federal requirements to buy American made and manufactured, and there is no guarantee that Vershire would be awarded the funding in the end. Additionally, the costs of redoing some of the work and the delays would reduce and possibly cancel out the funding that might be awarded. D. Kingbury asked some other cost related questions having to do with the contract negotiations that are upcoming. In particular, she has concerns about some of the HVAC features. She is especially skeptical about any investment that might be made in heat pump technology and wanted to make her opinion clear.

D. Hooke wanted to discuss a state grant funding program: Municipal Energy Resilience Program (MERP) and the information needed to apply for this funding. This led to a wide-ranging discussion about heat consumption, propane vs. heat pump technology, the way in

which solar would influence the long-term calculation and payback for the investment. M. Fogarty recounted his own experience installing a heat pump recently and how unsatisfied he is with its performance and lack of cost savings. Some follow up also is needed to find out the status of a promise made to fast-track Vershire's interest in applying for this grant.

Recycle Center Report: M. Gunn reported that things are going well at recycling. He inquired about the metal dumpster delivery and noted Green Up day's approach on May 6th. A few things have been posted on the kiosk so far and he asked about any rules for posting. A member of the Energy Committee has volunteered to take responsibility for coming up with a process about posting notices on the kiosk. M. Gunn has a plan for reconfiguring the drive through loop once the snow and gravel are gone so that residents can stop and visit and see the kiosk if they wish without disrupting the regular drive through traffic flow. There was some discussion about purchasing a rolloff (some towns do this) but you still need to budget for the costs of trucking and transport. Another possible cost savings worth exploring might be a compactor for the cardboard.

Green Up Day: Kelly Bushey reported on her and Eleanor Zue's efforts to coordinate the Green Up Day effort, scheduled for May 6th. A tire dumpster would be good to acquire again this year. They already have the bags needed. They will check with the ATV club about helping pick up bags as they did last year. The road crew also picks up any bags left on the roads the following Monday. They asked if the recycle center closing time would be extended again this year until 1pm. She also mentioned the reporting they will need to submit after the event, and the event promotion they will oversee.

Vershire Day: The event will be on Saturday, July 1st this year. There is a band already booked. Sam Moffat is interested in providing music again this year. E Thames will coordinate the Recreation Committee's involvement and the Energy Committee wants to be involved again too. Contacting last year's coordinators to gauge their interest about 2023 is the place to start. The kitchen/food coordinators are also looking for a new team to take over that job after 2023.

Committee Reports:

Recreation Committee: V. Stone asked about the plan to dismantle the skating rink. M. Fogarty offered an event suggestion that could be turned into a fundraiser. Another question involved moving the warming hut/shed and how best to move it for the summer. The committee plans to coordinate food truck nights again this summer and coordinate them with the newly adopted monthly game nights. The committee is also planning an end-of-the school party in May.

Town Center Building Committee: R. Seybolt asked about tree cutting estimates. There is one estimate so far but at least one more is needed. She learned that the trees they want cut are located on Vershire's land, not town land. She is in the process of coordinating a date with G. Thrasher to assess the landscaping work that will be done to prepare for the pavilion construction. N. White-Fogarty asked that the SB be copied on this email when this meeting is arranged. She also reported that the new shelving in the back room has led to better organization and that N. Bennet will return in a couple of weeks to finish with shelving on the back wall. R. Seybolt also proposes some rolling storage for the storage room that holds

emergency supplies so that access in that space can be improved and better utilized. Her last request is to create a more robust public calendar on the Vershire homepage.

Energy Committee: D. Hooke reported that the Energy Committee/town of Vershire is expecting to receive one of the smaller mini grants of \$4000 from MERP near the end of April. The funds are to be used for energy efficiency education and outreach. There was a discussion about how best to set up the budget to track the spending and the grant reporting. The first priority of the EC is to install plexiglass covers and a brochure box on the kiosk. The committee will come back to the SB with a proposed budget for the balance of the grant funds at a later date and once the grant has been awarded. There was some discussion of how some funds already allocated by the town have been spent on the roofing for the kiosk and for the warming hut/shed.

The committee will also come back to the SB with a more developed plan for a proposed small-scale park and ride lot in the outer section of the town center parking lot. The grant application for paving would be due in August. K. Bushey also asked for a report on the survey that the EC conducted gauging interest in carpooling from Vershire to 2 main locations in the WRJ/Lebanon area. About 35 responded, 15 expressed interest in the two locations (and with the incentives provided by the program) but no one yet has made a commitment to the Rideshare program run by Tri-Valley Transit.

Executive Session: Action: N. White-Fogarty moved to enter executive session for an employee discussion as per 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(3). G. Harvey and G. Craft were invited to enter the session. V. Stone seconded. The motion passed unanimously. **Action:** N. White-Fogarty moved to exit the executive session with a finding that the Selectboard has accepted Gene Caft's resignation as administrative assistant to the selectboard and that the selectboard will advertise to fill this position. K. Bushey seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Action Items/Assignments: The final budget meeting is set for Tuesday, April 18th at 6:30pm.

Adjourn: N. White-Fogarty moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:23pm. V. Stone seconded. The motion passed unanimously.