

Town of Vershire Selectboard Meeting Minutes

**Tuesday, August 15, 2023 at 7:00pm at the 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, Alan Lyford-superintendent, Gretchen Harvey-secretary, Amy Record, Reva Seybolt, Doug Stone, Joey Waxman, and Earl Robinson.

Call to Order: K. Bushey called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

Agenda Review & Modifications: Request to move the executive session to follow the highway report.

Public and Staff comments: None at this time.

Highway: Road Report A. Lyford reported they are waiting for feedback from AOT-District 4 on updates to damages caused by multiple storms; it is important to clarify which agency (federal or state) assistance will come from. They are also waiting for the results of a hydraulic study to determine the best solution for Mero road. They hope to receive different options for fixes. The entry of town data into the FEMA website should begin soon. The town has grant funds to spend for stone-lined ditching work and culverts, but progress has been slow because of the flooding. He expects the deadline for completing this work will be extended as other towns also are experiencing delays in their grant-funded work due to recent flooding.

Executive Session: Employee Review

Action: N. White-Fogarty moved to enter executive session for the purpose of discussing an employee evaluation as per 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(3). V. Stone seconded. The motion passed unanimously. **Action:** K. Bushey moved to exit the executive session with the finding that the *Highway Department Employee Handbook* requires review before any action can be taken. N. White-Fogarty seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Pema Osel - Eastman Cross Road: Joey Waxman, representing the Buddhist Center in Vershire, began by thanking the road crew for all the work they have done to keep Eastman Cross road accessible to residents and guests of the Center. He also wanted to let the town know the Center is hosting two upcoming events: one at the end of August, and a larger one in early September that may bring up to 75 vehicles to the Center's parking lot. They are doing everything they can to let attendees know about ECR's limited access (one entrance), but they anticipate many will still rely on GPS and get confused. A discussion of signage followed and it was decided that the least confusing signs to use in this case would be those that include name of the Center with them with arrows pointing cars in the right

direction to the open end of ECR. For the longer term, representatives from the Center would like to attend any discussions the town holds on decisions made about the future of ECR. Currently, the Selectboard is waiting for FEMA to advise it on repairing the road. If any significant changes are proposed, there would be a warned hearing on the matter. The Selectboard also assured J. Waxman that the initial repairs made to the road after the flooding included making access for all emergency vehicles possible.

Animal Control - Amy Record noted that she recently lost 22 chickens in three different dog attacks. The most recent losses included 10 of her meat birds. There were two dogs involved in this most recent attack. She wanted to ask the town to reimburse her for damages. N. White-Fogarty reported that state law has changed in the last 5 years and relinquishes towns from liability for livestock damages caused by dog attacks. Redress for owners now rests in small claims court. In terms of what the town can do: it can make every effort to keep its dog registration list current, and it can fine dog owners who do not comply with Vermont licensing law. The town does have kennel space, however, it is currently unavailable due to its location at the new garage construction site. A. Record suggested that perhaps Vershire could work with other towns who need animal control support to create a full-time ACO who served multiple towns. This might have a wider appeal for job seekers.

Approval of Last Meeting Minutes: N. White-Fogarty moved to approve the meeting minutes of 8/1/23 as amended. 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 - The energy committee has submitted two proposals with applications. One is to apply for eligibility for Efficiency VT. rebates for certain equipment for the new garage, the second is a request to move ahead with a Level-1 Assessments process in order to qualify for MERP (Municipal Energy Resilience Program) grants, also for the garage. Selectboard members had some questions about each program and processes and asked G. Harvey to do some follow-up with both agencies/organizations.

Committee Reports:

Recreation Committee: K. Bushey reported that the committee has organized a back-to-school event for August 25. It will be advertised on the

Listserv and on Facebook. He will make sure the ice rink location is staked out in time for the arrival of topsoil that will be used to level the location. R. Seybolt asked who would do the seeding. V. Stone will check with A Lyford about utilizing the hydro seeder in this location the TCB fund pays for the seed.

Energy Committee: D. Hooke –no report

TCB Committee: R. Seybolt reported that the pavilion is up and that Tilden Electric work is ongoing. The standing seam room likely will be put on in the next two weeks. The base/floor will be hardpack and a dedication is tentatively set for Friday, September 22. There will be a band and pizza at this event, along with invited guests that includes Better Places, a VT grant program that helps with fundraising for these types of projects. On Saturday, August 26 there will be a work/clean up event at the TC to prepare the area for the celebration in September. Several motions to approve payments and purchases followed:

Action: K. Bushey moved to authorize the transfer of \$11.47 from the TCB fund to the Recreation Committee fund for its purchase of pizza flour (supplies). N. White-Fogarty seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Action: K. Bushey moved to authorize the payment of \$247.10 from TCB funds for the purchase of pizza tools/equipment. N. White-Fogarty seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Action: N. White-Fogarty moved to authorize payment of \$520 of TCB funds to pay for the calligraphy and reframing cost related to the town quilt. K. Bushey seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Action: N. White-Fogarty moved to authorize payment of \$480 from the Pavilion funds to pay for a frame and calligraphy to create a list for display of those who donated to the pavilion. K. Bushey seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

R. Seybolt asked the Selectboard for their preferences on the new electrical wiring and outlet locations. V. Stone will contact Tilden and explain these preferences. There are bulletin boards at the Post Office that need to be picked up and stored for the time being. A final request for an updated professional, wall-mounted first-aid kit for the town center was made.

Action: N. White-Fogarty moved to authorize the use of TCB funds for purchase of a new first aid kit for the TCB. V. Stone seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

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