

Town of Vershire Selectboard Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, August 29, 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, Allen LaFlamme, Alex Nuti-de Biasi, and Mark Fogarty.

Call to Order: K. Bushey called the meeting to order at 7:01pm.

Agenda Review & Modifications: N. White-Fogarty asked to include a brief discussion of Taylor Valley Road to follow A. LaFlamme.

Public and Staff comments: None at this time.

Highway: Road Report A. Lyford discussed FEMA paperwork and updates so far. He is documenting all the damages and working to find out which damages are eligible for State assistance vs. Federal (FEMA) assistance. Chris Bump AoT-District 4 is willing to help advise on the reporting process to FEMA. There are challenges reconciling paperwork timetables with getting road work done before winter. We should have all the photos of damages that are necessary and will be meeting with FEMA representatives on Tuesday, Sept 5th at 11am. There has been some culvert work done on Vershire Center Road and towns with grant-funded work designed to be completed this year have been given an extension due to the flooding/disaster declaration. The crew also is working on mowing, hauling sand, and doing minor equipment repairs.

Approval of Last Meeting Minutes: N. White-Fogarty moved to approve the meeting minutes of 8/15/23. V. Stone 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.

A. LaFlamme Salvage Yard: Allen LaFlamme reported that some cars have been removed from the lot and more have been crushed. The outgoing loads take 14 cars each. There have been a lot of breakdowns that have slowed progress, but the more cars that are removed, the easier it will be to maneuver in the back lot and take more cars away. The truck backs into the lot (off of VT 113) near the crusher for loading. He would like to get 25 loads out before winter. That would be over 300 cars removed. The SB cautioned that given the rate of removal so far (30 cars/2 months) this goal might be too ambitious. However, they are pleased that progress is being made to thin out the cars on the lot and appreciate getting the photos of car crushing and

removal. The state of Vermont has asked A. LaFlame for his permit, the renewal of which is coming due in September. The Selectboard would like to do another site visit prior to discussing permit renewal at its regular meeting on Sept. 12th. Deciding on a realistic quota for removal by the end of the year would also be desirable.

Taylor Valley Road: The Selectboard requests G. Harvey to ask the Development Administrator to make a drive by assessment of Taylor Valley Road and to check on prior noise/light/signage violations and make sure these have been addressed.

Town Garage Update: K. Bushey reported that Consolidated Communications will be coming to the site between 8am-7pm on Sept 5th. He noted also that finding out if removal of the old culvert will be an added charge or not. If it is, the town can take care of it. V. Stone will follow up and arrange the timing of its removal. Overall, good progress on the garage is being made. N. White-Fogarty has followed up with AlarmCo about getting an estimate. She will also contact Tasco in Woodstock for a second estimate on a garage alarm system. It would be easiest to install the system now, while the walls are still open. A discussion followed about the benefits (safety and otherwise) of having a base radio installed at the new garage, one that has an external speaker out in the bays. V. Stone will get an estimate. The cost of portable/handheld radios for certain town officials/employees could also be explored.

Committee Reports:

Recreation Committee: K. Bushey reported that the recent Back-to-School event went well, but it was unfortunate that due to a breaker being thrown, all the food (approximately \$200 value) in the freezers needed to be replaced. It is not clear how or when the breaker tripped. It was discovered on Friday morning 8/25 by Food Shelf volunteers. V. Stone will find out about when the dirt will be delivered to level the ice rink area.

Energy Committee:. No report.

TCB Committee: N. White-Fogarty reported that volunteers removed and installed new fencing along the TC/Pearson boundary line on 8/26. Other volunteers cleaned up the area around the TC and spread wood chips where they were needed. They also moved some large rocks in a circle to be used for a sandbox, and intend to dispose of some old tires that no longer serve any positive function.

Action Items/Assignments:

Review of *Highway Department Employee Handbook (2020)*

Action: K. Bushey moved to adopt the following policy changes to the *Highway Department Employee Handbook (2020)* as recommended by the Highway Superintendent and to take effect on Wednesday, August 30, 2023. Further, these changes are being made with the understanding that the entire Handbook is under review and a newly revised version will be approved by the Selectboard at a future date. The immediate changes to be adopted are:

- Holiday pay for holidays that fall between May 1st through the 2nd Monday of October will be for 10 hours. All other holidays will include holiday pay for 8 hours.
- Highway employees are expected to work a standard 40 hour work week. They may add in a half-hour lunch break and two 15 minute breaks to their work day (unpaid) but are not required to do so.
- The accrual of vacation days as structured in the current handbook will be continued up through the 15th year of employment, at which point an employee may claim 4 weeks of vacation time.

N. White-Fogarty seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

The Selectboard asked G. Harvey to share the proposed draft of a *Committee Rules of Procedure* document with committee chairs in order to gather their feedback.

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