

**Town of Vershire Selectboard Meeting Minutes**  
**Tuesday, February 27, 2024 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, Alan Lyford, Gretchen Harvey-secretary, Mark Fogarty, Reva Seybolt, Eileen Murphy, Kyle Smith, John Smith, Mark Fogarty, George Osgood, Lucas Daniels, Gene Craft, Doug Stone, Justin Willeau, Shenia Lyford, Debra Kingsbury, and Kelly Lyford.

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

**Agenda Review & Modifications:** N. White-Fogarty asked to include a discussion on the recent school bus accident to follow approval of the warrants.

**Public and Staff comments:** E. Murphy summarized the effort being made to update the Vershire Emergency Management Team (VEMT) organization and protocols. The group has met several times and has updated forms with the goal of having them ready to submit for approval in May. She will be in touch with the Selectboard who will be asked to participate in incident command training. Another next step will be to encourage all residents to sign up for VTAlert. <https://vem.vermont.gov/vtalert> She plans to announce this at Town Meeting.

**Highway: Road Report:** A. Lyford reported that the roads will be bad the next few days with both rain and freezing temperatures in the forecast. They do have some gravel stock piled and this should carry them over until the gravel pits are open again. They will be posting the roads for the usual dates of March 1 to May 15.

**Mero Bridge RFP dates:** G. Harvey reported that Chris Bump–AOT District 4 recommends adjusting due dates on the RFP to address the scheduling needs of engineering firms. The new dates are: proposals due by 5pm on March 22, a selection announced on March 27th by noon, and the full engineering design plans due on November 29th. This will allow time for a review by FEMA before the project goes out to bid. G. Harvey will post an updated version of the RFP on the VT bid board and send copies out to qualified engineering firms asap.

**Retirement:** A. Lyford notified the Selectboard by letter on February 26th that he intends to retire as Highway Superintendent. The Board understands and honors his decision to make this change to have more time for family and other interests. Everyone present acknowledged their appreciation of

him, his years of service, and the efforts he has made to save the town money, which he was able to do at the same time that he improved road quality in Vershire. Gene Craft wanted to acknowledge that it has been his pleasure to work with Allie over the years and again reiterated how his management of the road budget saved the town a lot of money even as he succeeded in improving Vershire's roads. Vershire's high road quality is widely recognized by neighboring towns. Doug Stone said that the town is losing a heck of a foreman and wishes him the best. A. Lyford will continue to discuss his transition, the summer work schedule, and grant planning with his crew. His last day at work will be Friday, March 8th.

Garage Report: V. Stone reported that a *Lajeunesse* representative will be returning to the garage to check on the dampers and the ductwork and the hope is that the condensation problem will be solved. N. White-Fogarty reported that she will meet *Vermont Security* at 10:00am tomorrow to get the security system for the new garage set up and the paperwork finalized.

**Approval of Last Meeting Minutes:** N. White-Fogarty moved to approve the regular meeting minutes of 2/13/24. V. Stone seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

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

**School bus accident:** N. White-Fogarty wanted to discuss the recent accident on Parker Road involving a school bus and a resident's car. No one was hurt but protocols appear to have broken down at multiple points: the bus company, the dispatcher, the messaging from the school, and the Vermont State police. Vershire Fire and Rescue was never alerted as they should have been to come and direct traffic; students sat on the damaged bus for approximately two hours waiting to be driven to school; the bus called to bring them to school also had students on it and had to sit for 1 hour; there was no formal medical check of students or follow through with them once they arrived at school. The Selectboard wants this breakdown of protocol across multiple entities to be recorded in the minutes and would like to encourage parents to discuss this event with their school board with the expectation that any lapses in procedure will be addressed.

**Animal Control:** N. White-Fogarty reported that an unsprayed, brown female pit bull with tags is still missing after almost a week. The rabies clinic is coming up at the Town Center on March 10th from 10:00 am until noon. Residents may also use the drop box at the Town Office to pay pet registration fees, after which tags will be sent out to owners. G. Harvey

reported that 26 reminder letters have been sent to owners of unregistered dogs.

### **Committee Reports:**

Recreation Committee: K. Bushey reported on the PG-13 movie screening scheduled for Saturday March 2nd. People are invited to bring comfortable folding chairs if they wish. The skating season might be over depending on the weather. For now, the lights should be turned off to discourage skating on soft ice. Mark Fogarty asked when the duck race would be scheduled. The Recreation Committee would like to thank Vershare for the \$250 donation that will support recreation activities at the Town Center.

Energy Committee: No report.

VTC Committee: R. Seybolt is meeting with Gene Craft tomorrow to go over the revised TC rental agreement. The Selectboard is currently interviewing prospective cleaning service providers. The "Play Every Town" piano event is scheduled for March 10th at 4:00pm. Set up will begin at 3:30pm. There will be a slide-show created to accompany the music. A piano tuner is coming tomorrow.

### **Action Items/Assignments:**

Vershire Artisan Farmers Market: Lucas Daniels provided some updates on market planning. The market dates will be 5/19 through 9/15. The hours are 12:30 to 3:30pm on Sundays. He will entertain proposals if there is enough interest in keeping it going beyond 9/15. M. Fogarty asked about plans for trash disposal. Lucas intends to purchase punch cards for the transfer station and work with vendors to make sure trash left behind is not an issue. He has invited members of the Selectboard to attend his next meeting when volunteers will be available to answer questions. The contact email for the market will be [vershiremarket@gmail.com](mailto:vershiremarket@gmail.com). The cost sharing of a Porta Potty still needs to be finalized and it was agreed to delay formal Selectboard approval of the market until insurance and other details are finalized.

**Action.** N. White-Fogarty moved to approve the General Fund Budget. V. Stone seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**Action** V. Stone moved to approve the Highway Department Budget. N. White-Fogarty seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

There was a discussion with G. Craft about messaging to include in the next Newsletter, which will also contain the Warning for Town Meeting on April 7,

2024 at 1:00pm. And there was a brief discussion about estimating cleaning costs for each building and the need to require reference checks.

**Action.** V. Stone moved to approve the Certificate of Highway Mileage report. K. Bushey seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**Action:** V. Stone moved to authorize Nicole White-Fogarty to sign the paperwork from *Vermont Security* for service at the Town Garage. K. Bushey seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**Action:** K. Bushey moved to accept Alan Lyford's resignation on February 26, 2024. V. Stone seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Admin. Asst. Report: G. Harvey updated the Selectboard on a few details concerning arrangements at Town Meeting, scheduling interviews of cleaning service providers, a request by the Planning Commission and the Vershire Historical Society to screen a new documentary at the TCB that focuses on civic engagement, and a request that the SB sign two town audit agreements for 2022 and 2023. **Action:** V. Stone moved to sign the two auditing agreements with Sillan and Powers for 2022 and 2023. K. Bushey seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**Adjourn:** At 8:47pm, N. White-Fogarty moved to adjourn the meeting to a date and time certain on Monday, March 4, 2024 at 6pm for the purpose of approving the Warning for Town Meeting 2024. K. Bushey seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**Monday, March 4, 2024, at 6pm, Vershire Town Center**

**There will not be a remote option for the remainder of this meeting.**

**Called back into order:** K. Bushey called the meeting back into order at 6:08pm.

**Attendance:** Ken Bushey-chair, Nicole White-Fogarty, Vern Stone, Gretchen Harvey-secretary, Gene Craft Clerk-Treasurer, and Reva Seybolt.

The Selectboard agreed to discuss the Emerald Ash Borer fund during the informational meeting on April 6, 2024 at 1:00 pm.

**Action:** K. Bushey moved to accept the Warning for Town Meeting to be held on April 7, 2024 at 1:00pm. V. Stone seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

G. Harvey was asked to set up an interview with an interested cleaning service provider on March 12th at 6:15pm in the TCB.

It was noted for the minutes that A. Lyford's last day of work as Highway Superintendent is Friday March 8, 2024. Thereafter and for an interim transition period, Vern Stone-Road Commissioner will monitor roads and highway crew operations until a new Highway Superintendent is chosen.

**Adjourn:** N. White-Fogarty moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:00pm. V. Stone seconded. The motion passed unanimously.