

Town of Vershire Selectboard Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, October 8, 2024 at 7:00pm, Vershire Town Center.

There will be a remote option for this meeting via Zoom or by phone.

Video <https://youtu.be/yPS8JAWNGHc>

Attendance: Nicole White-Fogarty-chair, Vern Stone, Amy Record, Gretchen Harvey-Admin. Asst., Mark Fogarty, Reva Seybolt, Taylor Parker, Steve Ward, Gene Craft, Earl Robinson, Cynthia Shelton, Allen Rowell, and Ken Bushey.

Call to Order: N. White-Fogarty called the meeting to order at 7:00pm

Agenda Review & Modifications: Request by A. Rowell moved from Road Report and will follow VF&R.

Public and Staff Comments: None at this time.

Highway: Road Report: D. Stone reported on getting work done on all 3 trucks and with the sand pile in order to prepare for winter. Some roads have been identified for grading soon. The grant work on Beaver Meadow Rd went well and he plans to do some hydro seeding there to wrap up that project. He also reported on his conversations with EPA workers on SVR to discuss parking and snow removal there this winter. There was some discussion of material that could be placed in various locations. Garage Report: the Town is waiting to hear back from James Coe and/or Jeremiah Trombly. Someone will also need to contact VT Security.

Snowpackers: Taylor Parker, representing the Upper Valley Snowpackers, requested permission to utilize two different areas for trail system crossings. He is working with the Mountain School for permission to cross their property with a planned exit near Mud Lane and Vershire Center Rd. The club is also working with various landowners to re-open the trail to Corinth that was closed last year. As a temporary measure and until these plans are finalized, he requested permission for the trail to cross to Durgin Hill and then proceed to the Class 4 section of Rowell Rd. The hope is to identify a better route as soon as possible. The SB agreed but asked him to make sure proper signage is in place at both locations. **Action:** N. White-Fogarty moved to authorize the Upper Valley Snowpackers to utilize these two locations for trail crossings noted above, with the expectation that the trail crossing to Durgin Hill/Rowell Rd is temporary and will be adjusted once a better route can be established. V. Stone seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

VF&R: Steve Ward is present to request that the Town co-sign with VF&R for a loan from Mascoma Bank to purchase a Wet Rescue vehicle. **Action:** N. White-Fogarty moved to authorize V. Stone to co-sign with Vershire Fire & Rescue on loan application with Mascoma Bank to purchase a Wet Rescue Truck. A. Record seconded. V. Stone abstained. The motion passed.

Mero Road: Allen Rowell requested permission to do some work to upgrade a section of Mero Road (approximately 725 ft) in order to extend the class 3 section to the telephone pole. There are no issues with the culverts in this location, but he would put more material on the surface and do some ditching to make them more uniform. The SB asked how this would impact the current operation of the Road Crew in that location. D. Stone reported that because he plows up that far already, road improvement work would make it easier for the trucks to turn around. Some work might be able to take place this fall, but most of it would occur in 2025 after mud season.

Action: V. Stone moved to allow Allen Rowell to improve the section of Mero Rd as identified above with the understanding that any formal status change would need to go through the proper channels later on. A. Record seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Last Meeting Minutes: V. Stone moved to approve the regular meeting minutes of 9/24/24 and the special meeting minutes of 9/30/24. N. White-Fogarty 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.

Committee Reports:

Recreation Committee: K. Bushey requested permission for a member of the Rec Committee to submit a grant application to AARP for \$4,000 to help fund the costs of hosting events that appeal to a wider age range of residents (to include empty nesters, retirees, etc.). Some event suggestions include: a contra dance, a card game night, a snow-shoe hike up Flag Pole Hill, a Valentine's Day event, etc. The grant application requires a letter of approval from the Selectboard. The application can include a percentage of the funds targeted to grant administration costs. **Action:** N. White-Fogarty moved to authorize the Recreation Committee to submit a grant proposal to *AARP Vermont's Livable Community Program Winter Placemaking Grants 2024*. Further, the Selectboard requests that a percentage of the funds be earmarked for administrative costs. V. Stone seconded. The motion passed unanimously. The Fall Festival event is set for October 19th from Noon-3:00 pm and includes a chili and apple pie contest, a Vershare book sale, and a 5K fun run in the morning (9:00 am). The pumpkins will be donated, the bread oven might be utilized, and Mt. School students will participate again this year. The SB requested that the Fun Run organizers coordinate with V&R for road signage.

Energy Committee: No report.

VTC Committee: R. Seybolt reported that the kiosk roof is almost finished being painted, as are the posts on each side. She noticed that some paint on the TCB is peeling and will gather more information to consider painting work into next year's budget. She asked the SB if there are any high priority items at the TC that also should be included in this year's budget request. The VTCC is very happy with the cleaning service to date.

Cynthia Shelton from Thetford attended tonight and is interested in finding out more about the Admin. Asst. position that is being advertised.

Gene Craft was asked about follow-up regarding a new computer/device for the Road Supt. There was some discussion about the merits of Dell vs. Chromebook. N. White-Fogarty will borrow a Chromebook so that D. Stone can try out its features before a final decision is made. She will speak to Gene Craft tomorrow by phone about this purchase. Further, he reported on his work to satisfy the documentation needed by USDA-RD in order for the CDS funding to be released to Vershire and noted also that the first payment on the garage loan from Mascoma Bank is due in November. M. Fogarty asked if this payment was unexpected. It is not.

Executive Session-Personnel Matter: Action: N. White-Fogarty moved to enter an executive session to discuss personnel matters as per 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(3) and invited Gene Craft and Gretchen Harvey into the session. A. Record seconded. The motion passed unanimously. **Action:** N. White-Fogarty moved to exit the Executive Session with no finding. V. Stone seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Gene Craft also wanted to mention the survey being prepared by the Planning Commission for the purpose of gathering feedback for the Town Plan. Someone will attend the PC meeting on Wednesday night to share some concerns in particular about a question that relates to the Selectboard. As budget season is coming, it should be noted that the Lebanon Transfer station's rates are increasing.

Action Items/Assignments:

Administrative Assistant: Correspondence & Report: G. Harvey reported on some recent correspondence with Allen's Salvage Yard, that Northwoods sent back a signed agreement with work on Eastman Cross Road set to begin on 10/14, that EC Fiber is planning a site visit to the Garage, and that her work with FEMA will resume this Wed. when the Town's FEMA manager returns to the office.

Adjourn: N. White-Fogarty moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:17pm. A. Record seconded. The motion passed unanimously.