

## **Town of Vershire Selectboard Meeting Minutes**

**Tuesday, November 19, 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/ocoxR55rj-w>

**Attendance:** Nicole White-Fogarty-chair, Vern Stone, Amy Record, Doug Stone-Road Supt., Gretchen Harvey-Admin. Asst., Lucas Daniels, Gene Craft, Ken Bushy, Jackie Higgins, Mark Fogarty, Reva Seybolt, Pat Barnes, Neil Hochstedler, Dexter Lefavour, and Earl Robinson.

**Call to Order:** N. White-Fogarty called the meeting to order at 7:04pm

**Agenda Review & Modifications:**

**Public and Staff Comments:** None at this time.

**Highway: Road Report:** D. Stone finished installing winter tires and plow frames. The plows will be moved to the new garage. Chelsea will come and pick up the hydroseeder and store it for the winter. He installed a new heater blower motor and switch in the Packer truck. He found it was packed with pine needles and recommended parking it away from the trees when not in use. He reminded Transfer Station workers several times to cover the cardboard bins. Kellie Merritt started today and hauled gravel with Truck 2. After a ride along, she drove loads by herself and did well. He is concerned that there is not an adequate turnaround area for plow trucks at the end of Ravenwood Rd. The town will send a reminder notice to the landowners. He will continue with leaf blowing and ditch clearing. Some road signs have been disappearing. These signs and their installation costs the town a lot of money and is not a harmless prank. Jeff Corbett, who purchased land on Riding School Rd, was planning to attend the meeting tonight to discuss gravel deliveries near his property. He was not present. There have been some 20 loads of gravel delivered to this location and other road disturbances made by the contractor without the knowledge of the Town. It's not yet clear if the Corbett property is in Vershire or Chelsea. He was given a development permit from Vershire and told to speak to the Road Supt.

**Mero Bridge** - NECE (New England Consulting Engineers)-Dexter Lefavour attended to answer questions about the status of Mero Road bridge project and the timing of putting it out to bid. He was asked to revise the cost estimate to include temporary road access to residents on Mero Road and to include the cost to restore to pre-disaster condition once the construction project is completed. The Town will need to procure an easement from a landowner for this temporary bypass. NECE will make it part of the bid and also send us the documents we need to put easement authorization in place. Diverting the stream is standard and part of the construction contract. There will be no additional costs associated. He would like to advertise this week to

have sealed bids returned to the Town Clerk and suggested a bid opening scheduled. NECE will meet at the Town Office, accept and open the bids, do the evaluation, and then make a recommendation to the Selectboard. At this point, the Selectboard has 3 months from December 19th to make a final decision. NECE will also arrange for a pre-bid site visit for interested contractors. The Road Supt and Selectboard will be invited to both meetings although their presence is not required. M. Fogarty asked about the difference between FEMA cost estimates and NECE cost estimates for this project, as well as if the bridge will accommodate plow trucks. G. Harvey shared the estimates 'to date' and noted the town will wait for the revised cost estimate from NECE before going any further with FEMA on this project. The bridge will be wide enough for plows.

Garage Report: N. White-Fogarty reported that the Town received an award notice for a MERP grant with funds to be used to install solar panels on the garage roof. The plan includes receiving authorization for net metering that will allow this solar installation to serve other non-contiguous town buildings as well.

**ACO:** N. White-Fogarty reported that she was notified about a couple of loose dogs who have since been returned to the owner. Another dog is currently being monitored.

**Allen's Salvage COAL:** V. Stone and N. White-Fogarty visited Allen's Salvage Yard on Friday, November 8th and was told that he is shutting down for the winter. The terms agreed upon were: all vehicles will be moved behind the gates, the gates need to remain closed, no new vehicle are to be brought into the Yard, the small outhouse on the roadside also needs to be moved behind the gate, and a new one-year COAL will not be issued until these conditions are met and the owner has submitted his application for a permit. G. Harvey will send a follow-up communication to Allen LaFlamme and Frank Erickson with the VT Salvage Yard Program Coordinator putting these terms in writing.

**Approval of Last Meeting Minutes:** N. White-Fogarty moved to approve the regular meeting minutes of 11/4/24. A. Record seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

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

**Committee Reports:**

Recreation Committee: K. Bushey suggested possible dates for filling the ice rink. He noted the Holiday event being planned for December 7th and that they are planning how to use the AARP funds received for events this winter. He presented several ideas and options and will share more information once plans become finalized. He reiterated the work that K. Hooke is doing to find funding for improving the TC snowshoe trail (see minutes from 11-4-24 for details). The Committee is working on their budget for the coming year.

Energy Committee: P. Barned reported on the details of the MERP [Municipal Energy Resilience Program] grant recently awarded to the Town. The amount of \$47,520.00 has been awarded to invest in a solar array that will support the Town Garage and also is intended to supply net metered electricity to other town buildings. In addition to accepting the award, the Selectboard will be considering the contract for the work to be performed by Catamount Solar. The SB would like to invite Kevin McCollister to the December 3rd meeting at 7:30pm to discuss the details of this contract and answer questions. Some questions were asked and answered this evening. The signing of the grant agreement is also scheduled to occur on December 3rd if all remaining questions are answered adequately.

VTC Committee: R. Seybolt reported that planning with the Rec Committee continues to host game nights on Wed. evenings and that the VTC Committee is also working on its budget.

**Budget Meetings:** G. Craft was asked if he is available to schedule budget meetings with the Selectboard. The first meeting typically focuses on the Highway budget. D. Stone noted that he would need to see a budget update first but will then plan to be ready for a budget meeting to be held on Tuesday, December 10th at 6pm.

**Executive Session-** Evaluation of a Public Officer **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 Lucas Daniels and Gretchen Harvey into the session. The motion passed unanimously. **Action:** N. White-Fogarty moved to exit the executive session with no finding. A. Record seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

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

**Administrative Assistant:** Correspondence & Report: G. Harvey reported on the following: final invoice has been received from Northwoods for the work on Eastman Cross Rd and will be inserted in the warrants for Dec. 3rd; she requested that edits to the Development Permit be approved, that leaf recycling is now a requirement for fast trash sites, and that the Planning

Commission will attend the Dec 3rd meeting to present on their findings in re: enforcement questions related to a noise/nuisance ordinance proposal.

**Action:** N. White-Fogarty moved to approve the suggested edits to the Town's Development Permit. A. Record seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**Adjourn:** N. White-Fogarty moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:25pm. A. Record seconded. The motion passed unanimously.