

Town of Vershire Selectboard Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, December 17, 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/cdayaki5inI>

Attendance: Nicole White-Fogarty-chair, Vern Stone, Amy Record, Doug Stone-Road Supt., Gretchen Harvey-Admin. Asst., Andrea Cunha, Mark Fogarty, Joey Waxman, Kathy Hooke, David Hooke, Reva Seybolt, Gene Craft and Ken Bushey.

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

Agenda Review & Modifications: None at this time.

Public and Staff Comments: None at this time.

Highway: Road Report: D. Stone reported that things are running smoothly. There still are some problem locations where residents are plowing across their roads. On Friday he will be looking at the equipment that will be going on the new truck and will request adequate storage conditions until February. He will also be looking at the freightliner packer truck that is for sale this Friday. K. Merritt is available to work every day during the school holiday break. M. Wells will continue to fill in as needed. D. Stone discussed with the SB the important ways the old garage site is utilized: for protected storage space for town equipment and as the sand and salt shed location.

Animal Control: N. White-Fogarty reported that batteries have been replaced in the pager and that there was one report of a roaming dog in Strafford with Vershire tags. It was discovered that the dog's owners moved to Strafford. Currently, all 3 Selectboard members are able to respond to animal control calls. A next step is to post a reminder to register dogs in 2025 and to set up a rabies/vaccination clinic in March.

Eastman Cross Road: J. Waxman reported on behalf of himself and others about some safety concerns regarding a section of the newly-opened lower part of Eastman Cross Road. Their concern is that there is a steep drop off to the brook but there no longer are the natural barriers of trees and boulders that existed before the flood. He wondered if guard rails and/or additional signage, along with lowering the speed limit would be options. The current speed limit is 15MPH but problems occur when drivers do not respect this limit. Further, the rip rap and ledge in that one area may make installation of guardrails or additional signs unworkable. The Selectboard thanked J. Waxman for sharing these concerns and explained that the Board will monitor conditions this first season and consider his suggestions. Residents also need to get used to the fact that the road in this location has changed and drive this section cautiously.

Approval of Last Meeting Minutes: N. White-Fogarty moved to approve the regular meeting minutes of 12/3/24. V. Stone seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Current Period Warrants Approval: V. Stone moved to approve the current period warrants A. Record seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Committee Reports:

Recreation Committee: K. Hooke summarized the latest on the AARP winter place-making grant award. She is working with G. Craft to ensure that the funds are deposited and made available for sponsoring workshops and events, and the purchase of yoga mats. Regarding the proposed kiosk for Flag Pole Hill trail, Kathy and David Hooke met with the landowner and agreed that a fixed kiosk would be best and noted its placement would be well off the road and installed near the entrance to this section the Cross Rivendell Trail. She did identify two other sources/cost estimates for a small kiosk and determined that the 3rd estimate from Timber Homes was well below cost of the other two. She intends for volunteers to install the kiosk this week before a hard freeze. She also summarized the planning for proposed Town Center trail enhancements—these would include improvements to the snowshoe trail, as well as an expansion lower down with less elevation gain for a fully accessible trail. The pre-application for project funding has been approved and a proposal will be submitted by January 31st. In the interim, the hope is that some design work will be funded by the Byrne Foundation. The SB requested that K. Hooke procure authorization for the kiosk installation in writing from the landowner and to have this filed in the Town Office. **Action:** N. White-Fogarty moved to authorize the Recreation Committee to schedule the Town Center Building for workshops and events funded by the AARP grant. A. Record seconded. The motion passed unanimously. **Action:** N. White-Fogarty moved to authorize the use of AARP grant funds to purchase a mini kiosk from Timber Homes for \$1,100.00 to be installed as discussed above. A. Record seconded. The motion passed unanimously. K. Bushey concluded this report with a request that residents not use the ice rink until the Rec Committee announces that it is open.

Energy Committee: D. Hooke reported that WEC has sent their response and the request for a Certificate of Public Good for net metering has now been submitted to the PUC. This will start a required 30-day comment period before approval from the PUC. The SB wishes to wait until the public comment period has ended before issuing a Notice to Proceed to Catamount Solar (Kevin McCollister). N. White-Fogarty requested also that the list of town accounts added to the net metering request should include the old

garage. D. Hooke also reported that the Log Cabin and the Town Center building are undergoing blower door tests and that the assessments will be written up and presented to the SB. The next steps will include drafting a RFP that can be sent to interested contractors. This will be shared with the SB. Some five companies are interested in proposing new/upgrades to existing heating and ventilation systems. The SB noted it will be important to replace a back-up system at the Log Cabin. It is also important to check with G. Craft about insurance requirements in re: having a back-up system. The hope is to have written information to share in the newsletter that will go out to warn Town Meeting.

VTC Committee: R. Seybolt asked about snow removal to maintain access to Town Center Building doorways and access to the kiosk. K. Bushey is willing to do necessary snow removal to maintain access to the ice rink area. In the past, R. Seybolt made sure that the sand and salt buckets were kept filled. It has also been the practice that the volunteers who showed up first after a storm did the shoveling. It was agreed that a more dependable system of snow removal be established. The topic will be explored further by the SB and will be taken up again at the next regular meeting.

Action Items/Assignments:

Administrative Assistant: Correspondence & Report: G. Harvey requested the following motion to move the next regular meeting date. **Action:** N. White-Fogarty moved to change the regularly scheduled Selectboard meeting date from Tuesday, December 31st to Monday December 30th at 7:00pm. V. Stone seconded. The motion passed unanimously. G. Harvey also updated the Selectboard on correspondence regarding Allen's Salvage Yard, Employee Handbook revisions, and some miscellaneous office operations. One question has arisen pertaining to call-out pay during storms and emergencies and M. Fogarty suggested asking what the state pays for call-out: regular or 1.5 rate.

Executive Session: Action: N. White-Fogarty moved to enter an executive session for the purpose of discussing a personnel decision as allowed by 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(3). V. Stone seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Action: N. White-Fogarty moved to exit the executive session with the finding that the Town of Vershire offers the Administrative Assistant job to Andrea Cunha with a start date of January 2, 2025. V. Stone seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Adjourn: N. White-Fogarty moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:10pm. A. Record seconded. The motion passed unanimously