

Town of Vershire Selectboard Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, January 14, 2025 at 7:00pm, Vershire Town Center.

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

Video: <https://youtu.be/Eax-fg-iRXU>

Attendance: Nicole White-Fogarty-chair, Vern Stone, Amy Record, Doug Stone-Road Supt., Gretchen Harvey, Andrea Cunha-Admin Asst., Mark Fogarty, Earl Robinson, Gene Craft-Clerk/Treasurer, David Hooke, Kathy Hooke, Ken Bushey, Gregory Wilson, Helen Wilson, Eleanor Zue, and Reva Seybolt.

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

Agenda Review & Modifications: Add an executive session to discuss personnel.

Public & Staff Comments: None at this time.

Highway: Road Report: D. Stone reported that regular snowfall has meant regular road sanding. He has made some minor repairs to Truck 1 and will do a check of the Packer truck soon. A. Lyford filled in last week for J. Beebe and K. Merritt has been working between bus routes. The new fuel tank is working well but he is still waiting to hear back from EC Fiber. G. Harvey summarized the latest work with FEMA in re: Mero Road repairs and requested the Selectboard accept the engineer's recommendation to choose the lowest bid for this project. **Action:** N. White-Fogarty moved to select the bid for the Mero Road repair project from CCS Constructors Inc., pending a possible cost adjustment to be negotiated by NECE. A. Record seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Animal Control: N. White-Fogarty reported that a foundling cat was recently taken to Central VT Humane Society where it will be checked over and re-homed. A rabies and vaccination clinic has been set for Sunday, March 16th from 10-12:00 in the Town Center building. Dog owners are reminded that April 1st is the deadline to register their dogs and that they can either stop in the Town Office or call ahead to make an appointment to register their dogs. Also, with more cold temperatures anticipated, it is important to remind owners to provide water and shelter for pets. **Action:** N. White-Fogarty moved to sign the annual agreement with Bradford Vet clinic for its services if they are needed for animal control. V. Stone seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Tree Warden on EAB: In select prior years, the warning for Town Meeting included funds set aside to address costs associated with an infestation of

Emerald Ash Borers. And infestation could be especially expensive in the rights-of-way along town roads. M. Fogarty-Tree Warden recommended that preparing for this future expense is in the best interest of the town. He recommends resuming contributions to this fund in 2025.

Planning Commission: H. Wilson-PC secretary reported that the PC has voted to submit the latest draft to the SB either for adoption now or later. The only thing missing from the plan is some required energy data being compiled by TRORC. Submitting the plan now gives the Selectboard and the public time to read through it ahead of the adoption stages, which tentatively are set for later this spring. The latest version will be posted on the website. **Action:** V. Stone moved to accept the recommendation by TRORC planners to delay the public hearing and adoption process of the Town Plan until the updated Energy data approved by the state can be incorporated. A. Record seconded. The motion passed unanimously. The PC also submitted a written letter to the SB recommending it schedule a meeting to gauge concerns about public safety and law enforcement options for Vershire.

Approval of Last Meeting Minutes: N. White moved to approve the regular meeting minutes of 12/30/24. V. Stone seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Current Period Warrants Approval: N. White-Fogarty moved to approve the current period warrants with a request to include compensation for Yury Picado's service at the Recycling Center on Saturday 1/11/25. V. Stone seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Committee Reports:

Recreation Committee: K. Bushey reported that a bonfire and skating rink party is planned for 1/25/25. He noted that the weather has allowed for a lot of good use and enjoyment of the ice rink so far this season. A member of the Rec committee has applied for a small grant to purchase additional ice rink equipment such as hockey nets and sticks. More info to follow. K. Hooke reported that the AARP funded programming: yoga, zumba, and snow shoeing, is now under way and quite popular. The small kiosk has been installed at the Taylor Valley Rd trail head for Flagpole Hill. She has not yet heard from the Byrne foundation about the Town Center trail development proposal. She also is looking into another grant option with AARP that might be utilized for physical enhancements such as trail development. She hopes to gather additional public input for this application. K. Bushey was asked if the ice rink liner is holding up well this year. He noted that whenever they shovel the rink, they work to protect the edges with additional snowpack.

Energy Committee: D. Hooke presented a detailed written report requesting next steps on the grant from BGS and also reporting on completed energy assessments of other town buildings. **Action:** N. White-Fogarty moved to sign the Notice-to-Proceed with Catamount Solar for a BGS grant funded rooftop solar installation at the Town garage. A. Record seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

The Selectboard provided feedback for the EC's draft of an RFP for a heating system at the Log Cabin. Once finalized, he will send out to between 5-7 contractors and hopes to schedule contractor walk -throughs of the Log Cabin on 1/20. He will request that the bids be returned by Thursday 1/23 by 5pm and will share them with the SB via the admin@vershirevt.org address as soon as possible thereafter. A decision will be made after the Town Meeting on March 4th.

VTC Committee: R. Seybolt shared the VTCC budget request documents with the SB. There was some discussion about the projects of painting and ditching at the Town Center, to be continued at the VTCC meeting on Monday night 1/20.

Action Items/Assignments:

Administrative Assistant: Correspondence & Report: A. Cunha presented her research on health insurance options for town employees. She will put together a spread sheet comparing all options she has gathered for the Selectboard to consider at a later meeting.

Executive Session: Action: N. White-Fogarty moved to enter an executive session for the purpose of discussing a hiring decision as allowed by 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(3) and invited A. Cunha, G. Harvey, and Doug Stone into the session. A. Record seconded. The motion passed unanimously. **Action:** N. White-Fogarty moved to exit the executive session with the finding that the Town make an offer to hire Yury Picado to work at the Recycling Center and to continue with the Road Crew interview to include a negative drug test and a ride-along driving test before a hiring decision is made. A. Record seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Adjourn: N. White-Fogarty moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:15pm. A. Record seconded. The motion passed unanimously