

Town of Vershire Selectboard Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, December 30, 2025 at 7:00pm, Vershire Town Center

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

Video link: https://youtu.be/_hsF0ZdsRMg

Attendance: Nicole White-Fogarty-chair, Vern Stone, Amy Record, Doug Stone-Road Supt., Gretchen Harvey-Admin/Sec, Gene Craft-Clerk/Treasurer, Chelsea Parker-Asst.Clerk, Debra Kingsbury, Michelle Massa, Holly Shore, Sheriff Ryan Palmer-WCSD, Greg Pulaski, Eileen Murphy, Jeff Whipple, Russ Kelley, and Mark Fogarty.

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

Agenda Review & Modifications: None at this time.

Public & Staff Comments: None at this time.

Certificate of Adoption-Local Hazard Mitigation Plan: Action: A. Record moved to sign the Certificate of Adoption for the LHMP-the final step prior to State of VT approval. V. Stone seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Windsor County Sheriff Ryan Palmer: Sheriff Palmer asked for input about what Vershire is looking for with respect to policing. N. White-Fogarty explained that the Selectboard has taken seriously the community concerns expressed by residents who are looking for some level of policing to address issues such as: keeping children safe from drug paraphernalia left on roadsides, illegal drug use and abuse, theft, vandalism, and burglary. The town of Vershire has not had a policing contract for a few years.

Sheriff Palmer noted that a lot has changed in Vermont in the past 5-10 years and this is not the Vermont many of us grew up in. He also explained that there are huge gaps in policing across rural Vermont. He has a staff of between 20-25 officers working in various capacities. He personally has participated in additional leadership training in order to help him build a professional law-enforcement agency. He also thinks it's important to work with what he has right now by being present in communities and doing what's possible with the staff he has currently. N. White-Fogarty agreed that developing relationships between police and communities is important. She asked what responding to calls from Vershire would look like in practice. Sheriff Ryan acknowledged that WCSD cannot be Vershire's full-time law enforcement team. The cost of that would be beyond a small town's budget capacity. But depending on what the responses are from Vermont State Police to any given situation, his staff could provide better follow-up. His officers could also focus on hot spots and problems. They also have the ability to scale-up on a temporary basis if a particular situation requires

more attention. His office is in Woodstock and some of his staff work from home, which means they would not necessarily be driving up from Windsor to respond to calls. The VSP would be the initial default for many calls, and he would recommend an agreement to provide approximately 12 hours/week at approximately \$84/hour, with an annual budget of approximately \$53,000. The meter would start when the officer crossed the line into Vershire. Currently WCSD provides Chelsea and Strafford with 14 hours/week each. They are also in Tunbridge. N. White-Fogarty explained that having more of a police presence in town, especially on the back roads, is important. Sheriff Ryan agreed that hotspot policing helps focus attention on specific problems and that night-time patrols are important too. He urged the Selectboard to look at WCSD social media pages to get a feel for their responses to community needs. As for notifying them of certain problems, the official intake method is via the dispatch #, but he would also require a Point-of-Contact for the town. Sheriff Palmer doesn't think that less than 12 hours/week would be worthwhile as he considers it a minimum to have some impact.

Greg Pulaski asked if a contract with Thetford Police had been considered. It has, but they cannot take on any additional work at this time. The OCSD also provided a proposal for a 6-hour/week contract at \$75/hour at the last Selectboard meeting. Ken Bushey asked if it would be possible to partner with Chelsea in a policing contract. Sheriff Palmer noted that this would only be cost-effective if a FT officer was funded this way. A FT officer, even if shared, is typically beyond the budgetary reach of small towns. Michelle Massa wanted to acknowledge the Selectboard's willingness to get this conversation started and thanked Sheriff Palmer for his modern approach to leadership and training and a consideration of regional policing in the future.

Highway: Road Report: D. Stone reported all is going well since the recent ice-storm. He still needs a 3rd road crew member to manage the work load overall. There is still some ice on the pavement and they are treating it as needed. It is important for residents to know that they are welcome to pick up a bucket of sand for use at home, but should NOT take any salt from the salt supply. The latter is of a limited quantity for the Town and it needs to be reserved for use by the road crew to place on the roadways. He has fixed the hydraulic hose that went on the old Packer truck last week and it should be good now and until the sticker arrives for the Jimmy Packer.

Approval of Last Meeting Minutes: V. Stone moved to approve the regular meeting minutes of 12/16/25. A. Record 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. Bushey reported that the ice rink is open. He noted that there are funds in the Rec Committee budget to pay for occasional shoveling needed to keep the ice in good shape. It takes approximately 1.5 hours to clear the ice after a snowstorm. He will be overseeing who does the shoveling when it is needed. He plans to attend the next budget meeting to discuss plans for FY2026-27.

Energy Committee: No report.

VTC Committee: K. Bushey will be requesting information about contractors who would be willing to submit quotes for the cupola repair work needed on the TCB.

Action Items/Assignments:

Administrative Asst. Report: G. Harvey presented the annual agreement between Vershire and Bradford Veterinary Clinic for approval. N. White-Fogarty noted that BVC is a good resource for Animal Control and that she will be reaching out to arrange the annual vaccination/rabies clinic in March. **Action:** N. White-Fogarty moved to sign the 2026 agreement with Bradford Veterinary Clinic. V. Stone seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

V. Stone asked VSP Sergeant and Game Warden Jeff Whipple if he had anything to add to the policing discussion. He noted that the work being done by WCSD in Chelsea, Tunbridge, Brookfield, etc. is good work. When law enforcement cases intersect with Fish & Wildlife (many connect due to stolen vehicles, other goods, and drugs), they work well together. WCSD also does back roads patrols and are willing to look into situations that Fish & Wildlife cannot investigate. He also noted that if Vershire has any complaints involving ATV violations, illegal snowmobiles, off-road trucks in the wrong places, etc., he is able and willing to respond. Game Wardens patrol all the trails and he is also willing to help out as liaison to the VSP.

Adjourn: N. White-Fogarty moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:30pm. A. Record seconded. The motion passed unanimously.