

Grand Isle Select Board
Minutes of the Meeting for Monday, April 4th, 2022
at Grand Isle Town Office and via Zoom

I. CALL TO ORDER

Board Members Present: Adam White – Chair; Josie Leavitt – Vice-Chair; Jeff Parizo; Couper Shaw; Eric Godin

Community Members Present: Ken Mirvis; Roth Perry; Tim Olver; Denise Abbott-Douglas; Jean Prouty; Lucille Campbell; Ron Bushway; Colleen Bushway; Glenda Leake; Scott Brown; Melissa Boutin; Esther Blow; Emily Clark; Joe Longo; Bill Stone; Mitchel Richardson; Mary Parizo; Bianca Adams; Susan Lawrence; Bill Hall; Tonya Poutry; Sue Moquin; Shannon Bundy; Ellen Paradee; Kristina Botala; John Lafayette; Elaine Perry; Charles Hollan; Martin Malloy, Patty Billard; Martin Maloney

Board Members to Amend Agenda for Matters Not Listed:

Adam – Personell Policy – Old Business

Sloop Road discussion and Annex Lease are moved out of executive session and will be addressed in Old Business.

Ron Bushway – Health Issue at the Round Barn

II. GUEST OPEN COMMENT

Grand Isle Volunteer Fire Department: (Adam White recuses from the discussion, being a member of GIVFD) Tim Olver from GIVFD says the fire department has three requests for the Select Board. Firstly, the Fire Department would like to burn the field behind the fire station, as they have done in the past. The date is April 13th, weather dependent. ***Jeff Parizo moves to allow the fire department to burn the field behind the fire station. Eric Godin seconds. No further discussion. Josie calls the vote, which passes with 4 ayes, with Adam White abstaining.***

Tim says that GIVFD would also like permission to hold their annual coin drop on Saturday, July 10th, from 9am to 2pm in front of St Josephs Church. Tim says that there is a letter that needs to be approved by the Select Board. ***Jeff Parizo moves to allow the Grand Isle Fire Department to hold a coin drop on Saturday, July 9th, 2022, from 9am to 2pm. Eric Godin seconds. No further discussion. Josie calls the vote, which passes with 4 ayes, with Adam White abstaining.***

Tim goes on to say the third request is that the Fire Department would like a key to the trash compactor at the transfer station so they can dispose of items from their old burn trailer. Tim says that they would be putting and other metals in the appropriate bins. Ron Bushway says he wants to know what kind of trash would be going into the compactor. Ron says that he thinks the fire department should use the bins provided and the transfer station will put a dumpster near their trailer to help the process. Tim asks what should be done with items that would go in the trash compactor. Ron says that if they put other items to the side, he and Brad will go through it and dispose of it.

No key will be given to GIVFD.

Islands Community Pavilion Association: Roth Perry says that they had issued a survey to the community to gauge support for their recreation project, including an ice rink and pickleball/basketball/tennis courts. Roth summarizes their survey, showing 50% of respondents supported and would use a hockey rink. Roth says there is also interest in a summer concert series, with 70% responding favorably to the idea. Roth says that they had almost 300 responses, with 75 people volunteering their email addresses to get involved in the project. Roth says that there has also been interest expressed from the Island Stage group and the Grand Isle Farmer's Market regarding use of that space. Roth says that the application is 70-75% complete, and there are a few questions that need to be answered by the town for the grant application. Roth says that they need access to the proposed site(s) before they can complete the process. Adam White suggests reaching out to ZAO Scott Brown to help with the application process. ***Adam White moves for the application and planning and feasibility purposes for the grant for the Islands Community Pavilion Association to be able to have access to the site located on Hyde Road and at Donaldson Park. Josie Leavitt seconds. No further discussion. Adam calls the vote, which passes unanimously.***

There is discussion about the two locations proposed and safety concerns. Jean Prouty voices her concerns about town property being used for this project, as opposed to privately purchased land considering the amount of space that will be needed for the proposed projects. There are further questions about ownership of the facility and maintenance. It is determined that it is too early to answer these questions and that they will be brought up again at the special meeting on Thursday, April 7th.

Appoint Assistant Emergency Management Director: Adam White says that Emergency Management Director Bill Baron has submitted Chuck Masters as the person to be his assistant. Adam says that Chuck has been on the Grand Isle Volunteer Fire Department for about 5 months, and works for Wake Robin. Adam goes on to say that Chuck is ICS and civic command systems certified, and is responsible for the emergency management plan for Wake Robin. ***Jeff White moves to appoint Chuck Masters as the Assistant Emergency Management Director for 1 year for Grand Isle. Couper Shaw seconds. No further discussion. Jeff calls the vote, which passes with 4 ayes, with Adam White recusing himself.***

III. REVIEW AND APPROVE MINUTES

Only Eric and Jeff were present for the February 14th meeting, so it is determined they must go in as draft, because there isn't a quorum from that meeting present.

Jeff Parizo moves to approve the February 21st minutes. Adam White seconds. No discussion. Adam calls the vote which passes with 3 ayes, with Josie and Couper abstaining, as they were not present at the meeting.

Adam White moves to approve the minutes of the February 24th 2022 Select Board meeting. Jeff Parizo seconds. Adam calls the vote, which passes with 3 ayes, with Josie and Couper abstaining as they were not present.

Jeff Parizo moves to approve the minutes from Monday March 2nd, 2022. Josie Leavitt seconds. No further discussion. Adam calls the vote, which passes unanimously. Jeff Parizo moves to approve the March 21st, 2022 meeting minutes. Couper Shaw seconds. Adam calls the vote, which passes with 4 ayes, with Eric Godin abstaining as he was not present.

IV. HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT / BUILDINGS FACILITIES MANAGER UPDATE

Ron Bushway says that all the fire panels have been inspected, and all the fire extinguishers have been serviced for the year. Ron says that the range hood at the Fire station was inspected as well and that the insurance company had written the town up over the issue of access to the fire extinguisher in the past. Jeff asks Ron if he will be informing PACIF that the violation were corrected. Ron states that there are a few other things that are being worked on, but he will let PACIF know when they next come to the town.

Ron says that the guys are still working on the equipment, sharpening edges and repainting the plows. Ron goes on to say that there are some ash trees on east shore north that fell during the wind storms that we have had over the last couple of weeks. Ron says that Brad Sheridan has taken some pictures of the trees, and says that there are some others that he feels need to come down. Ron says that the old town garage needs to be torn down, but there is asbestos inside the building that will need to be replaced. Ron suggests contacting Tyler Billingsly, as he is familiar with the removal process. Josie Leavitt asks if this project would have to go out to bid, which it is determined it would. Ron points out that asbestos removal was not budgeted for. Ron then suggests that it may be time to increase the fee for the curb cut permits, saying it has been at least 10 years since the fees were looked at. Ron points out that two people have to visit the site and do an inspection and fill out paperwork, and feels that the fee needs to be increased from it's current \$20 rate. Adam White asks Ron to come to the next meeting with an estimate of what he feels the rate should be.

V. NEW BUSINESS

Scribe Letters of Interest: Adam White says one letter of interest was received from Jessica Mesic. Adam reads the letter, which indicates Ms. Mesic has worked at the hospital for many years and has a wealth of experience in using software and organizational skills. Jeff Parizo suggests inviting her to our next regular meeting. Adam agrees and says that he will invite her to the next meeting to have her take minutes at that meeting as a trial run.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

Annex Lease: Adam White indicates that the proposed lease for the Annex has been reviewed by lawyers from both sides. Jeff Parizo says that the only issue was with the out clause, which says that each year in December, Turn to Joy would have the opportunity to not renew the lease. Carol Egan indicated that would only be used in case of catastrophic illness. Josie Leavitt says she would like to make sure that Carol Egan pays the \$1,000 security deposit prior to receiving a key to the building. Adam

summarizes the terms of the lease agreement, stating that Carol Egan will pay \$25,000 towards improvements to the building, and would not pay rent for the first two years. The Board agrees to have the fuel tank at the Annex filled completely before Ms. Egan takes over the building, that way there is no question of what the level should be when the lease is over. ***Jeff Parizo moves to accept the lease drafted by the attorneys for the town of Grand Isle and Turn to Joy Daycare. Eric Godin seconds. Adam White calls the vote which passes unanimously.***

Town Meeting Ratification Vote: Adam White says that due to the errors leading up to town meeting this year, the town attorney said to wait 30 days after the vote to allow for objections. The town attorney has drafted a warning for a ratification vote to occur to rectify the issues. Adam states that the informational meeting will take place on May 16th, 2022 at 6:00pm. Adam says that the vote itself will occur on May 17th, 2022 beginning at 7am until 7pm. The single article to vote on shall read "Shall the action taken at the meeting of this town held on March 1st, 2022, in spite of the fact that the original warning for article 11 contained an error in the sum to be approved for the expenses of the highway department budget, in spite of the fact the warning lacked reference to a public information hearing, and in spite of the fact that the notice of availability of the town's annual report and auditor's report therein may not have been given in a timely manner and any act or actions of the municipal officers or agents pursuant thereto be ratified adopted and confirmed." Adam says that this just is saying 'Do you agree with the results of the previous vote. Glenda Leake asks if the ratification does not pass, what are the repercussions. Adam says that the town attorney didn't have an answer to this question when asked. Adam says that the town will likely have to contact the Secretary of State's office. Josie says that she has spoken with someone in the SoS office and was told that this is a fairly common occurrence. Josie points out that none of the errors would have resulted in a different vote count. ***Jeff Parizo moves to approve the official warning for the town meeting on May 17th. Josie Leavitt seconds. Adam calls the vote which passes unanimously.***

Sloop Road Agreement: Jeff Parizo says that the property owner on the Sloop Road has accepted a settlement offer to avoid the issue going to trial. Jeff states that the property owner has initiated his own actions against his tenants, and has acknowledged that the property must be cleaned up to the satisfaction of the zoning administrator. Adam White says he drove by the property the previous day and says he feels that it has been about 80% cleaned up. Jeff notes that if the landowner defaults on the settlement agreement he will be subject to fines and penalties again. ***Jeff Parizo moves to accept the settlement for 6 Sloop Road for Michael Gordon. Eric Godin seconds. Adam calls the vote which passes unanimously.***

Audit Update: Adam White notes that the draft version of the 2021 audit is now available. Adam says that there will be discussion of the audit at the next regular meeting, and hopes that auditor Ron Smith would be willing to join that meeting. Adam notes that the Batchelder audit is going slow. Adam notes that there is not an executed

contract on file, and that needs to be rectified. Adam asks what needs to be done to keep the audit moving. Adam says that Couper Shaw has volunteered to work with Bonnie Batchelder and Town Treasurer Melissa Boutin to facilitate the flow of information. Jeff Parizo says that he feels there is a lot of information that still needs to be filled out and sent in. Josie Leavitt asks if Ms. Batchelder could come up to the town office for a day or two to collect the information more quickly. Josie asks if there is an existing agreement with Ms. Batchelder. Eric Godin and Jeff Parizo both say that the Select Board had motioned to approve using Ms. Batchelder at her advised rate moving forward with the audit. There is discussion about where the delays are coming from and how to address them, as well as some of the other documents that need to be filled out, including an IT questionnaire. It is suggested that the Town Office close for two days and have the auditor come up to focus on getting all the relevant information. It is agreed that this would be a good idea. Adam notes that this audit issue will be on the agenda for every meeting moving forward. ***Adam White moves to allow Eric Godin to fill out the IT Systems Questionnaire as part of the Batchelder and associates audit. Josie Leavitt seconds. Adam calls the vote, which passes unanimously.*** Jeff mentions that the Board needs to take up an RFP for next years annual audit. It is agreed to add this item to the next regular Board meeting. There is discussion about the various questionnaires that need to be filled out and who will be filling those out. Jeff notes that several of the documents are not even applicable to the town, but they all need to be filled out to allow Bonnie Batchelder to know the town. Adam White asks town treasurer Melissa Boutin if they could have the master memo and planning meeting. Melissa says they are in the process of retyping the form, and agrees to have it submitted by the end of the week. There is general off topic discussion about how the general fund works. Adam White notes that in the past, auditor's have recommended that the town keep some funds in reserve, which is a practice the town has not done. Jeff suggests the town treasurer prepare a report showing where our deficiencies are in the budget so the Board can address the issues. Jean Prouty suggests having the assistant town clerk work extra hours to help get the audit information. The Select Board agrees.

IT Discussion: Adam White says that he has updated the website and removed several very old items. Adam goes on to say that he has created a how-to document for individual boards to be able to post their own agenda's and minutes. Jeff says that he is concerned about the security of the town website, and the IT infrastructure, and is interested to see if our IT infrastructure should be updated. Adam mentions that there is a company in South Hero that could be considered that works with municipalities. Adam says he thinks the town needs to have cybersecurity infrastructure. Eric Godin says he feels that the town would have to put out an RFP for any contracted IT services. Couper Shaw will reach out to the company in South Hero to gather more information.

Personnel Policy: Adam White says that there had been a meeting to update the status on the town's personnel policy, which has been in the works for 3 years. Jeff Parizo says that it is finally about ready. Jeff says that VLCT needs to re-format the policy, and then

it should be sent for review within a few days. Jeff notes that the social media section was re-added to the policy, per the Select Boards decision.

Health Issue – Ron Bushway: Ron Bushway says that he was contacted by Lake Champlain Housing Trust about 3 apartments at the Round Barn. Ron says that one of residents is a hoarder with cardboard boxes all over the place, and that the resident is cooking her meals in the middle of the floor. Ron goes on to say that the resident has refused to allow anyone into the apartment, and LCHT has to get their attorney’s involved. Ron indicates that the manager of LCHT went to the apartment and the resident attacked her. Ron says he doesn’t feel comfortable requesting further access to the apartment and is waiting for the lawyer for LCHT to weigh in. Ron indicates that all 4 apartments had large collections of empty cardboard boxes. Ron goes on to say that one of the tenants in the mentioned apartments has been evicted. Ron says that the previous complaints at the round barn were fixed. There is discussion about options working with the fire department to perform inspections or to gain access to some of the apartments. Adam White asks Ron Bushway to reach out to the chief of the Fire Department to discuss options. Ron agrees. There is off-topic discussion about Air B’n’B use in the town, and whether or not it is a zoning issue or not.

VII. REVIEW AND SIGN WARRANTS

Jeff Parizo moves to have the Select Board chair sign the warrants. Josie Leavitt seconds. No discussion. Adam calls the vote, which passes unanimously.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Eric Godin moves to adjourn the meeting at 7:59pm. Jeff Parizo seconds. No further discussion. Adam calls the vote, which passes unanimously

Select Board Scribe: _____
Eric Godin

Select Board Chair: _____
Adam White