

Grand Isle Select Board
Grand Isle Town Office 9 Hyde Rd, Grand Isle VT
Minutes of the Meeting for Monday June 19, 2023

CALL TO ORDER: Selectboard Chair, Couper Shaw, calls the meeting to order at 6:00pm

Board Members Present: Josie Leavitt, Jeff Parizo, Couper Shaw, Ellen Howrigan

Community Members Present: Ron Bushway, Jean Prouty, Lucille Campbell, Colleen Bushway, Emily Clark, Jen Morway, Rachael Griggs, David Leake, Glenda Leake, Esther Blow, Sue Lawrence, Howard Demars, Wendy Rosica, Karen Allen, Alice Dunn, Marsha Benoit, Linda Thompson, Mike Donoghue, Gail Moore, Gal H, Denise Abbott-Douglass, Kate O'Neill, Jim Jones, Mary Parizo

Add to Agenda: Howard Demars speaking on behalf of the library (Guests), Ron Bushway adds Bike Events under Old Business

Review and Approve Minutes: *Jeff Parizo makes a motion to approve the minutes of June 5, 2023. Josie Leavitt seconds. No further discussion. Couper Shaw calls the vote which passes unanimously.*

Jeff Parizo makes a motion to approve the minutes of May 31, 2023. Ellen Howrigan seconds. Jeff Parizo notes that this was a special meeting that took place on a Wednesday. No further discussion. Couper Shaw calls the vote which passes unanimously.

Guests:

Planning Commission- Town Plan Revision & ARPA Fund Discussion: Emily Clark explains that she is there representing the Planning Commission along with Jennifer Morway, Howard Demars, and Wendy Rosica. Emily Clark says that they will go over an update on the Municipal Planning Grant, the ARPA funds, and about emails they sent the selectboard regarding Town Ordinances. Emily Clark says in regards to an update for the Municipal Planning Grant, they were delayed by one meeting due to Greta from Northwest Regional Planning having a scheduling conflict. Emily Clark says that the kick-off for that will be at the Planning Commission tomorrow night and they will give an update once that takes place. Emily Clark encourages members of the community to get involved and attend the Planning Commission meetings that take place on the first and third Tuesdays of the month at 6pm at the Town Office or by Zoom. Emily Clark says that during a joint meeting of the Planning Commission and Selectboard on October 18th 2022, the Planning Commission shared thoughts and recommendations for the ARPA funds. Emily Clark notes that the directive from the Federal Government was that the ARPA funds represent a unique opportunity for local and state governments to make strategic investments in long-lived assets. Emily Clark notes that they are to avoid spending on small non-budgeted items or to return money to the tax payers, citing that was listed as prohibited use of those funds. Emily Clark says that the Planning Commission surveyed townsfolk and 60% of the townsfolk endorsed, as a high priority, new municipal buildings including the town offices and the library. Emily Clark says that VLCT and regional planning commissions advised to use the ARPA funds to leverage other funds, explaining that grants often need matches and the ARPA funds can be used for those matches in order to be granted a more substantial amount of funds. Emily Clark reminds the Selectboard of the recommendation made for the ARPA funds- that Town's ARPA money be earmarked for building a Town Municipal Center to include

the library, town office, and potentially community space, meeting space, and a recreation center. Emily Clark notes that we have outgrown our town office and our library and that they have the opportunity to have a well-laid plan to build something that benefits the residents of Grand Isle in a lasting and enduring way. Emily Clark reiterates that their recommendation was to earmark the ARPA funds for this endeavor as well as to pursue the Municipal Planning Grant, which the Planning Commission did and was awarded. Emily Clark asks the Selectboard to earmark the ARPA funds for these projects. Emily Clark notes that they cannot begin to apply for grants unless that is done. Josie Leavitt asks Emily Clark where the town stands on getting a village designation. Emily Clark says there is some more paperwork to submit for that, that they thought was completed but there was a discrepancy that they need to clarify and it will be about 6-8 weeks before that is completed. Jen Morway says that the grant matches are often 80/20, giving the example that if \$600,000 was matched by 80%, that would result in a \$3,000,000 grant. Jeff Parizo notes that the civil engineering part for a new building has been completed, that waste water, storm water, and wetlands have all been completed and that he would have to verify the storm water piece has been completed but he believes it has been. Jeff Parizo explains that the plans for the new building were moving forward until COVID. Jen Morway says that ARPA funds and grant money, the town has the opportunity to save a lot of money on this project now. Couper Shaw says that he has a problem with the survey that was sent out for this project, that he feels that the options people selected were then lumped into "municipal town center" to equal 60%. Emily Clark clarifies that municipal town center was its own option, that a municipal town center included a town office and library, and that library was its own separate option as well. Couper Shaw asks if the municipal town center option received 60% of the votes, Emily Clark says that it did. Couper Shaw asks Emily Clark if the Planning Commission will conduct a new survey. Emily Clark says yes, that they have been planning to do that. Emily Clark explains that the Planning Commission is working with Northwest Regional on a new survey and they have drafts for a new and improved survey. Jeff Parizo asks what will be on the second survey. Jen Morway explains that the second survey will be specifically for the Municipal Town Plan. Jeff Parizo asks if the Planning Commission will work with the Library Trustees for library specific grants, Emily Clark says yes and it is a high priority. Couper Shaw asks Emily Clark if it would make more sense to wait until the Planning Commission gets their community group together to find out what the town needs before trying to build a building. Emily Clark explains that they would not be able to move forward on a building before municipal plans are made, but that in the process of doing so they would be able to apply for grants for the design and development stage. Couper Shaw asks why they cannot use the plans they had done prior to COVID. Emily Clark explains that those plans are missing components such as a gathering space outdoors and a thoughtful parking plan. Emily Clark explains that those plans put the building in the middle of open space without thought given to where future buildings might be needed. Emily Clark says that another thing that was not considered is that if the town decides to hire more employees, the old design does not have enough offices to accommodate them. Emily Clark says that the library may need more space for growth than accounted for in the old plan. Couper Shaw asks Emily Clark if she remembers how much the old plans cost. Emily Clark says they cost around \$20,000. Howard Demars comments that the library paid for those plans to be created. Couper Shaw says he feels as though the Planning Commission should get feedback from their community group before new plans are requested, that he does not want to spend more money on plans until then. Couper Shaw says that he does not think adding an outdoor community space is not a good idea given the Recreation Park is rarely used. Emily Clark says she respects his opinion on that, but feels it is an unfair comparison due to the Recreation Park's location on the edge of town whereas a green space within the town center will be

easily accessible. Couper Shaw says that he does not feel as though the town should spend any money on new plans until the Planning Commission gets more information. Jen Morway notes that the town did not pay for the old plans, that the library paid for those plans, that they are not planning on throwing the old plans out, that they would modify the old plans. Jen Morway explains that the old plans were done before COVID and that during COVID new needs for meeting space and facilities for the town were discovered. Jen Morway notes that providing a village green is an easy and inexpensive way to provide community space and uses the success of the Farmer's Market at St. Joseph's church as an example of people utilizing available green space. Jen Morway says that she believes spending money on modifying the plans to maximize available space is not money spent in vain. Josie Leavitt says that they have one shot at utilizing the ARPA Funds and leveraging it to obtain grants to fund this project. Josie Leavitt says they should not refuse to have new plans just because old plans exist, that the old plans no longer serve the needs of the town. Josie Leavitt says the old plans do not include a meeting space that is large enough and there is not enough office space for the future growth of the town employees. Josie Leavitt says she would like to see a village green and a community garden that could provide fresh produce for the food shelf. Josie Leavitt explains that the library has been put on hold many times and has been waiting on the town to address their issues for a long time, that the current library space is extremely small and that the town deserves a larger library. Ellen Howrigan thanks the Planning Commission and the Library for their hard work, that she feels the plans need modifications to fit the current and future needs of the town, that having a community green space would be welcoming and easy to access. Colleen Bushway says that they Library was asked to pay an architect \$14,800 in 2020 and that they ended up spending \$14,905.69. Colleen Bushway says that they were asked to pay half of \$25,000 for East Engineering and ending up spending \$7,500 for that. Colleen Bushway says, in total, the library has paid \$22,405.69 and was supposed to be paid back when the library goes to bond. Colleen Bushway says that they do not want to wait years for a new library to be built before they can be paid back. Jeff Parizo explains that in the past, Karen Allen asked the Selectboard about building a new library and she was told that they had to build a new town garage first. Jeff Parizo says the library patiently waiting for the new garage to be built. Jeff Parizo says they had the library pay for plans for a building that would be for the library and town office and that those plans were designed to be easy to modify. Jeff Parizo explains that the architect, David Roy, said that the only thing that would need to change is the roof line in order to add more space, that there is green outdoor space in the old design within the nook of the "L" shape of the building. Jeff Parizo explains that he is not sure what the town will need in the future, but he knows what they need now and that with some modifications the old design is what they need now, that the library has been extremely patient while waiting for this to be addressed. Jeff Parizo says he feels they should stick with David Roy and have make modifications to what the town needs are right now. Jen Morway agrees that they should stick with David Roy and have him make modifications. Emily Clark agrees that the library is the highest priority, that they need to make sure they have a plan that encompasses the library, the town offices, community space, and the future. Emily Clark says that the modifications could include moving the nook that has the green space to the front, or to move walls around to provide more office space, and that sticking with the same architect whom already knows the site and the priorities of the town makes sense. Jeff Parizo notes that one modification that could be made is to make the design is to make it a "T" instead of an "L" to provide more space. Emily Clark agrees. Denise Abbott-Douglass notes that the town once had a community garden at St. Joseph's church that was very successful and it was a well-loved community space. Wendy Rosica reiterates that they are revisiting plans that were made pre-COVID and that

revisions are always necessary after a plan is put on hold. Couper Shaw notes that post-COVID building costs have gone up and he believes the cost of building will be double what was quoted pre-COVID. Wendy Rosica agrees that building materials did go up for short time post-COVID, but that those costs are getting better now. Glenda Leake asks how long the new survey will take and if they will have to wait on the results of the survey before moving forward. Jen Morway explains that the survey is for the town plan, that they want as much community input as possible, but that obtaining that input will not keep them from applying for grants in the meantime. Glenda Leake asks why the library is still on the back-burner, says that she is no longer patient, and that she would like to see a new library in her lifetime. Glenda Leake asks why applying for grants has not been done yet. Howard Demars explains that the Selectboard has to designate funds to this project before applying for grants. Ron Bushway says that there has been a lot of discussion and that the Planning Commission came to the meeting hoping to get a decision from the Selectboard on the ARPA funds for this project and that they may want to move forward on that.

Jeff Parizo makes a motion to earmark the ARPA Funds we now have in the town, which is roughly \$600,000 plus change, for a town municipal center, including the library, community room, and expansion of the town office so that we may leverage the ARPA money for grants for future building of these buildings. Ellen Howrigan seconds. Couper Shaw says they might want to put a time limit on earmarking these funds. Jen Morway says that since they will be working in phases, putting a time limit might make the phases more difficult. Couper Shaw notes that the State of Vermont wants Selectboards to decide on how to use the ARPA funds, and that they currently only have 80% of the Selectboard, and feels they should not make this decision without a full selectboard. Karen Allen comments that it would be troubling if the Selectboard could not make a decision because of a missing selectboard member, that a board should not table decisions because a member is absent. Emily Clark comments that by not earmarking the funds, it puts the funds in danger of being spent elsewhere once this project is underway. Josie Leavitt reminds everyone that there is a motion on the table, that they cannot have business come to a halt because they are missing a member and would like to have the vote. ***No further discussion. Couper Shaw calls a roll call vote: Jeff Parizo- aye, Ellen Howrigan- aye, Josie Leavitt- aye, Couper Shaw- nay. The vote passes.***

Jen Morway says that they are re-doing bylaws, and in doing so they are having trouble finding the Town Ordinances. Jen Morway asks if there is a way to have the Town Ordinances put on the website and if the Planning Commission can get copies of all the town ordinances. Jen Morway also asks the Selectboard to look at the information sent to them about mobile vendors and let the Planning Commission know if they would like to move forward with that. Couper Shaw asks Angie Low if she can put them on the town website, Angie Low says that she is unable to add new pages to the town website. Couper Shaw says he will put Angie Low in contact with Rural Solutions. Couper Shaw asks how everyone feels about more food trucks, Jeff Parizo says he is all for more food trucks. Couper Shaw says they will put Food Truck Ordinance on the agenda for the next regular meeting. Howard Demars makes a statement on behalf of the library, going over what their mission is, the success of events they have been holding, and highlights the importance of having a library in our community.

Highway Department Update: Ron Bushway says they have been doing roadside mowing, but that it has been put on holding except for Pearl Street because they have preparing for the paving project. Ron Bushway explains that this is a big paving project. Ron Bushway says that Xfinity came out to install

internet, but discovered that they did not have a grounding rod to do so. Ron Bushway says they are working on install a grounding rod now.

Buildings Facilities Manager Update: Ron Bushway says that the mason cannot get to the annex chimneys for repointing until July. Ron Bushway wants to make sure that if it gets done after the end of FY23, that the funds are approved for FY24 for the mason.

New Business:

Approve New Recreation Committee Members, Kasey Child & Erin Leduc: *Jeff Parizo makes a motion to approve Kasey Child and Erin Leduc for the Recreation Committee. Josie Leavitt seconds. No further discussion. Couper Shaw calls the vote which passes unanimously.*

July 3rd Selectboard Meeting: *Jeff Parizo makes a motion to cancel the July 3rd meeting. Josie Leavitt seconds. No further discussion. Couper Shaw calls the vote, which passes unanimously.* Emily Clark asks if the Selectboard will meet on the 5th Monday in July? Couper Shaw says he is not sure and will discuss that at the July 17th meeting.

Longo Islander Tribute Fee: *Josie Leavitt makes a motion to pay the \$64 fee for the tribute advertisement to Joe Longo in The Islander. Couper Shaw seconds.* Ellen Howrigan asks what has been done in the past. Couper Shaw says he is not sure. Jeff Parizo says that when Janice Arnold retired after 30 years nothing was done for her and that the town has never done anything like this in the past. ***No further discussion. Couper Shaw calls a roll call vote: Jeff Parizo- nay, Ellen Howrigan- nay, Josie Leavitt- aye, Couper Shaw- aye. The vote does not pass.***

Longo's Lister Position Discussion: Sue Lawrence asks if Joe Longo can work remotely as an assistant to the listers. Sue Lawrence explains that it takes 3-5 years to fully train a lister and Joe Longo's assistance would be helpful. Jeff Parizo asks where the money would come from to have another lister once they hire a new lister to keep Joe Longo on as an assistant. Sue Lawrence explains the new lister would be at a lower pay rate, that Joe Longo would have less hours and it would remain within their budget. The Selectboard agrees to keeping Joe Longo on as an Assistant to the Lister's Office. ***Jeff Parizo makes a motion to have Joe Longo continue as an assistant to the Lister's Office until such time that the Lister's no longer need him. Josie Leavitt seconds. No further discussion. Couper Shaw calls the vote, which passes unanimously.***

Transfer Station Accident Update: Ron Bushway says that he and Melissa Boutin are still waiting for a police report from the State Police.

Old Business:

Special Election Discussion: Couper Shaw explains that the town attorney got the candidate petition deadline wrong, and that instead of petitions being due on June 19th, they are due on June 26th by 5pm. Couper Shaw says in order to have the warning printed in the June 28th edition of The Islander, they will have to have a special meeting on June 26th at 6pm to approve the warning. ***Jeff Parizo makes a motion to hold a special meeting on June 26th with the time to be determined. Josie Leavitt seconds. No further discussion. Couper Shaw calls the vote, which passes unanimously.***

Personnel Policy: Jeff Parizo explains that the attorney sent a second version and will see if she can attend the July 17th meeting to answer questions and encourages the selectboard members to read it over and have questions prepared.

Town Report Discussion: Josie Leavitt offers the idea of putting this on the August 1st special election ballot. The Selectboard agrees. Jeff Parizo says that they will need to speak to the town attorney about what is needed for that. Couper Shaw asks the Selectboard how they feel about mailing the town reports out again. Jeff Parizo says he feels they should go back to mailing them out. Ellen Howrigan says she feels that for accessibility it is a good idea to have them mailed out again. Jeff Parizo says they have enough money in Unassigned Funds to mail them out. Josie Leavitt says that she feels its important to speak to the town attorney about doing this properly. Couper Shaw says he feels they should let the townsfolk decide and should see about having this put on the ballot. Couper Shaw says he will email the town attorney tonight. Josie Leavitt asks that this be put on the agenda for the June 26th special meeting agenda. Denise Abbott-Douglass notes that the town report was voted on 13 years ago and has not been revisited since. Ellen Howrigan says that they should investigate printing the town reports off-site. Jeff Parizo agrees and says that South Hero has theirs done off-site. Couper Shaw says they will have to look at the difference in costs to do that. Ellen Howrigan asks Couper Shaw to CC the rest of the board on the correspondence with the town attorney so that they can all be informed before the meeting on June 26th, Couper Shaw says he will.

Fraud Policy Discussion: Josie Leavitt says that the David Rugh asked if this was something that had an immediate deadline because he is on vacation, Josie Leavitt told him it was not something that needed to be dealt with immediately. Jeff Parizo says that he has not seen that correspondence, Josie Leavitt apologizes, saying she thought she only had to CC Couper Shaw on that correspondence. Josie Leavitt says she will see about having that ready for the July 17th meeting. Jeff Parizo asks if the rest of the selectboard can be kept in the loop of correspondence for that, Josie Leavitt says yes.

Opioid Settlement Discussion: Ron Bushway says that he asked Melissa to order three new sharps containers. Denise Abbott-Douglass says that she found needles near East Shore South in front of the State Park. Denise Abbott-Douglass says that the sheriff went out and cleaned those up. Denise Abbott-Douglass suggests that they put sharps containers in the areas where they are finding large amounts of needles. Jen Morway says she did some research about where the settlement money could be used and found that it is often used on transportation to medical care, mental health, and education. Jen Morway suggests that the money go to Island Rescue for transportation and perhaps have them conduct training for anyone who would like to learn to administer NARCAN.

Donaldson Dump Site Discussion Update: Josie Leavitt says she wrote to Danielle Fitzko of Vermont Forest and Parks, that she thanked Josie Leavitt for letting her know this was happening and would investigate it. Josie Leavitt told her that she would follow up with her in a week and that this should be put on the July 17th agenda for the update.

Bike Events: Ron Bushway says that the bike event last weekend had put up event signs and some were fastened to town signs and blocked the sight of drivers, that someone went to Ray Allen to complain they could not see on-coming traffic. Couper Shaw says they will get in touch with the bike group to let them not to do that in the future. Linda Thompson comments that there are signs posted on her road almost every week for various events that also block driver's view of the road.

Review and Sign Warrants: *Jeff Parizo makes a motion that the Chair sign the warrants. Josie Leavitt seconds. Ellen Howrigan asks Couper Shaw if he had a chance to look these over, he says he has. Ellen Howrigan asks to see the stamps. **No further discussion. Couper Shaw calls the vote, which passes unanimously.***

Adjournment: *Jeff Parizo makes a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:10pm. Josie Leavitt seconds. No further discussion. Couper Shaw calls the vote, which passes unanimously.*

DRAFT