

**Grand Isle Select Board**  
**Grand Isle Town Office 9 Hyde Rd, Grand Isle VT**  
**Minutes of the Meeting for Monday August 21, 2023**

**CALL TO ORDER:** Selectboard chair, Jeff Parizo, calls the meeting to order at 5:31pm.

**Board Members Present:** Jeff Parizo, Josie Leavitt, Jen Morway, Ellen Howrigan

**Community Members Present:** David Rugh

**Executive Session:** *Josie Leavitt makes a motion that the board goes into executive session to discuss a litigation matter with the DRB Parizo appeal. Jen Morway seconds. No further Discussion. Josie Leavitt calls the vote which passes, Jeff Parizo abstains from the vote and exits the building.*

**Ellen Howrigan recognizes that they have returned from the executive session and makes a motion requesting the environmental division remand the Parizo subdivision appeal to the DRB and that we are waiving the fee for any other hearings on this application. Josie Leavitt seconds. No further discussion. Josie Leavitt calls the vote, which passes unanimously.**

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

**Community Members Present:** Denise Abbott-Douglass, Emily Clark, David Leake, Glenda Leake, Ronnie Bushway, Colleen Bushway, Lucille Campbell, Jean Prouty, Brian Elbrader, Timothy Maxham, Melissa Boutin, Sue Lawrence, Liliana Tschanett, Emily Clark, Rachael Griggs, Mike Donoghue, Kristiana Botala, Mary Parizo, Esther Blow, Joe Longo, Bianca Lafayette

**Add to Agenda:** SBA, Liliana Tschanett to New Business, Ellen Howrigan adds CDs to Old Business

**Administrative Check-In:** Josie Leavitt (Leavitt) explains that she would like the selectboard to get into the habit of checking-in with on-going tasks and items. Jeff Parizo (Parizo) asks if she would like this added to every agenda, Leavitt says she would like to have it added to one agenda per month. The selectboard agrees.

**Review and Approve Minutes:**

**August 7, 2023:** *Josie Leavitt makes a motion to approve the August 7<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes. Jen Morway seconds. Ellen Howrigan notes that there is a small typo. No further discussion. Jeff Parizo calls the vote which passes unanimously.*

**August 11, 2023:** *Jen Morway makes a motion to approve the minutes for Friday August 11<sup>th</sup>. Josie Leavitt seconds. No further discussion. Jeff Parizo calls the vote, Couper Shaw recuses himself, the vote passes.*

## Guests:

**Brian Elbrader- Town Sign:** Jeff Parizo (Parizo) explains that the north sign has some rot and they are trying to figure out what to do about it. Brian Elbrader (Elbrader) explains that it was not built to withstand the elements, that it does not have enough room to breathe, expand, and retract, and that it is starting to show that wear. Elbrader says that parts of it is salvageable, that it needs to be taken a part in order to rebuild it. Parizo asks if they should replace it. Elbrader says yes. Leavitt asks if he would like to build a new sign. Elbrader says it could be a winter project for him, but he is not sure how long it would take him due to other obligations. Parizo says that they should put out an RFP for a new sign.

**Melissa Boutin- Tax Rate:** Melissa Boutin (Boutin) says that she proposes the new tax rate to be 0.3723¢ based on expenditures and anticipated revenues. Boutin says she can share the spreadsheet she used to calculate this with anyone who would like to review it. Boutin says the tax rate for municipal is going up 0.0362¢, homestead is going up .0796, and non-residential is going up 0.0337¢. Parizo asks if she knows what the dollar amount would be if they wanted to off-set the taxes as they have done in the past. Boutin explains that the unassigned fund balance will be calculated once the adjustment from delinquent taxes comes through. Parizo says that the draft for the unassigned funds is \$181,647.60, the balance for the general balance is \$199,610.98, and the balance for pre-paid expenses is \$17,963.38. Boutin explains that the difference of the two produces the total for the unassigned funds. Boutin notes that she did calculate only what was used for the Old Town Garage demolition, which was \$49,495, rather than for the \$100,000 approved. Boutin says that if they give her an amount, she can calculate what the tax rate would be based on that amount. The selectboard discusses how much they should have Boutin calculate for. Parizo asks if she could calculate for \$25,000 and \$50,000, Boutin says she can. Boutin calculates and states that with \$50,000, the FY24 municipal tax rate would be \$0.3620, homestead education would be \$1.5632, and non-residential education would be \$1.5992. ***Josie Leavitt makes a motion to change the tax rate by giving \$50,000 from the unassigned funds to make the tax rate \$0.3620. Jen Morway seconds. No further discussion. Jeff Parizo calls the vote which passes unanimously.***

**Highway Department Update:** Ronnie Bushway (Bushway) says that they have been cutting grass on Bell Hill and changing the speed limit signs explaining that when they change those signs, they also must replace the posts per law. R. Bushway says they hired John Hemmingway for the Transfer Station position. Bushway says that one of the new stop signs on Pearl Street was hit last Thursday and needs to be replaced. Bushway says they believe a lawnmower is what hit the sign. Bushway says that the Transfer Station accident paperwork was sent out today, that Sue Moquin scanned and sent it to the USAA. Bushway says that it included pictures they requested and an estimate to fix the damage and was sent to a woman named Zennia.

**Buildings Facilities Manager Update:** Bushway says that an electrician from Hegeman Electric is coming out to inspect fire panels at the fire station and will then inspect the garage and the annex. Bushway explains that DC Energy used to do these inspections but they currently do not have anyone licensed to do them now. Sue Lawrence asks Bushway if there is an issue at the town office regrading the lights being affected when the air conditioning turns on, Bushway says there is and he is trying to expedite that issue with DC Energy.

**Transfer Station Credit Card Processing Hardware:** Emily Clark (Clark) explains that she further investigated the pricing for the hardware needed for the Transfer Station credit card system. Clark says

that the package that they originally looked at cost more than if they bought the items individually. Clark gives the selectboard a document showing what items the Transfer Station needs, totaling \$881.00. Leavitt asks if there is receipt paper included, Clark says yes. Bushway notes that he asked Clark what they would do in the event of a power outage, Clark recommending getting a TracFone to use as a hotspot in those situations. Parizo says he feels that they should move forward with the items Clark has presented, the selectboard agrees.

#### **New Business:**

**SBA- Liliana Tschanett:** Liliana Tschanett (Tschanett) presents the SBA Disaster Recovery & Resilience loans being offered to non-profits and small businesses of Grand Isle County. Tschanett goes over who qualifies for the SBA loans and the process to apply. Tschanett says that people can visit [disasterloanassistance.gov](https://disasterloanassistance.gov) or [www.sba.gov/disaster](https://www.sba.gov/disaster) or [call 800-659-2955](tel:8006592955) for more information. Tschanett says that people can apply up to April 15, 2024.

**DRB Alternate to Board Member- Lucas Campbell:** Parizo explains that the DRB would like to replace Robert Starbuck's position with Lucas Campbell. ***Josie Leavitt makes a motion to approve Lucas Campbell for the DRB. Jen Morway seconds.*** Ellen Howrigan asks who is Lucas Campbell. Parizo says the DRB has interviewed him and decided on him. Sue Lawrence explains that Lucas Campbell runs Green Mountain Marine Services. ***No further discussion. Jeff Parizo calls the vote which passes unanimously.***

**Meeting Minutes:** Jean Prouty (Prouty) says that there are three items she would like to discuss with the selectboard. Prouty explains that when attending the meetings via Zoom, it is often difficult to hear and requests that people speak up and that clearly saying yes and no would help attendees on Zoom. Prouty says the third item is the minutes, that she feels that when there is a heated discussion that it should be summarized and reflected in the minutes to help those who did not attend the meeting to better understand what has happened in the meeting. Leavitt says she understands where Prouty is coming from, however that is not the role of the minutes, that adding summarizations of those types of discussions would be subjective. Prouty says that she likes how the minutes are done, however she would like those summaries included in the minutes.

**Labor Day Meeting:** Parizo asks the selectboard members if they would like to reschedule the next meeting, which is currently scheduled on Labor Day, the selectboard members say yes. The selectboard discusses when they should hold the next meeting, agreeing on holding a special meeting on September 11<sup>th</sup> at 6pm. ***Jeff Parizo makes a motion to cancel the Labor Day meeting. Josie Leavitt seconds. No further discussion. Jeff Parizo calls the vote which passes unanimously.***

**Cash vs. Accrual Accounting:** Parizo says that one of the items the auditor brought up was that they should consider moving from accrual accounting to cash accounting. Ellen Howrigan (Howrigan) says

that Fred Duplessis (Duplessis) highly recommended moving to cash-based accounting, citing Duplessis as saying it would be easier for people to understand and that the books could be closed more quickly. Boutin explains that she disagrees that moving to a cash-based method of accounting would be beneficial to the town. Leavitt says they should invite Duplessis to the September 11<sup>th</sup> meeting to further discuss this item. The selectboard agrees. Parizo says that if Duplessis cannot make the September 11<sup>th</sup> meeting, they should invite him to the September 18<sup>th</sup> meeting. Jen Morway says that whichever meeting Duplessis can attend, they should make sure Boutin can also attend. Howrigan says she will contact Duplessis about attending the September 11<sup>th</sup> meeting and asks Boutin if she would be able to attend the September 11<sup>th</sup> meeting. Boutin says she will check her schedule.

**Selectboard Discussion to Tour Grand Isle Sheriff's Office & Emergency Operation Center:** Morway says that the selectboard has been invited to tour the Sheriff's office and the Emergency Operation Center. Morway explains that this would be beneficial towards the work for the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan. Leavitt asks if it would be possible for the selectboard to take the tour together as long as they do not discuss selectboard matters. Parizo says yes. Morway says she will get two possible dates for the tour from Ray Allen and work to schedule with the selectboard.

**Reminder about Community Planning Survey:** Clark reminds everyone to take a moment to fill out the community planning survey. Clark says that she is working on getting paper copies of the survey for those who are unable to take the survey online. Clark says the survey takes about 15 minutes and is available by going to <https://www.nrpcvt.com/grand-isle-community-planning-survey/> and clicking the 'take survey' button.

#### **Old Business:**

**CDs:** Howrigan asks Boutin if the ARPA fund CDs were collateralized, Boutin says yes. Howrigan asks what the rates were. Boutin says that she does not have that information with her, but will email them to the selectboard.

**Fraud Policy:** Leavitt recommends that they adopt the fraud policy that David Rugh annotated. Leavitt would like to add a second selectboard member to sign the policy along with the chair. The selectboard discusses and agrees that instead of saying "selectboard chair" it should say "a selectboard member" so that any of the selectboard members can respond to the matter. ***Jen Morway makes a motion to approve the Fraud Policy with corrections. Josie Leavitt seconds. No further discussion. Jeff Parizo calls the vote which passes unanimously.***

**Opioid Settlement:** Parizo says that the amount remaining after purchasing the sharps containers, liners, and the drug education curriculum is \$3,221.58. Morway explains that there are seven different settlements within the opioid settlement that are providing this funding. Morway explains that

payments will be recurring and the amounts will fluctuate. Morway reached out to the Sheriff's office, rescue, and the fire department to see what they might need from the settlement money. Morway reports that Adam White says that the fire department does not need funding and offered the fire department to be one of the locations for a sharps container, noting that there is a camera there which may make those using the sharps container uncomfortable. Morway also reports that Adam White recommends that they send out a postcard that provides information on the sharps container locations, where they can get NARCAN and list any other resources available. Morway says that she investigated how much it cost the Planning Commission to send a postcard to all households, finding that it cost about \$405 to print and mail 1,016 postcards. Morway recommends that the selectboard revisits this settlement item and reassess how the funds are being utilized once a quarter. Leavitt says she would like to see information on how to access test strips and how to obtain NARCAN broadcast to the community, Morway agrees and says that they could add that to the postcard. Leavitt says she would like to find out how to have NARCAN and test strips available at the food shelf. Morway says that she let Adam White know that if the fire department finds a future use for funds, to let the selectboard know. Morway asks if they can revisit this item at a December meeting, the selectboard agrees. The selectboard discusses locations for the 8 sharps containers. Leavitt says she will ask the church, where the food shelf currently resides, if they would like to have a sharps container there. David Leake says that he feels there should be containers at the Rescue and the Fire Department, that he will speak to the Rescue board regarding this. The selectboard agrees to start by hanging containers at a location on Donaldson Road, Fishing Access, Mary Crest Beach, Transfer Station, and the Town office. The selectboard says they will further discuss the other locations at a future meeting. The selectboard assigns the task of hanging the first 5 containers to Bushway. The selectboard discusses the needs of Rescue regarding settlement funds. The selectboard decides to give \$2,500 of the funds to Grand Isle Rescue. ***Jen Morway makes a motion to allocate \$2,500 of the opioid settlement funds to Grand Isle Rescue for the purposes of opioid abatement. Josie Leavitt seconds. No further discussion. Jeff Parizo calls the vote, which passes unanimously.***

**Internal Controls:** Howrigan explains that after reviewing the letters from Sullivan & Powers, that there is more work to do. Howrigan notes that the transfer station item is almost complete. Howrigan says the second item was 'fund balance entries' and says she is not sure if this has taken place. Howrigan says the third item was authorization of general journal entries, noting this has not happened yet. Boutin explains that she does not believe that the authorization of general journal entries was not meant to be by the selectboard, but rather someone that understands journal entries that can sign-off on them. Howrigan says she believes that the accountant said that it should be someone on the selectboard, that they should contact the accountant to clarify. Parizo reads from the letter from the accountant: *"internal controls should be in place that requires appropriate officials to authorize & review all adjustments to the books or original entry"* Parizo says he feels that "appropriate officials" means the selectboard. Boutin says that her assistant is who has been reviewing and approving. Morway says that they should compile a list of questions and items to clarify and invite the accountant to a meeting to answer them. Morway asks if the selectboard can go through the minutes of the internal controls meeting to find out who was assigned to each item from the accountant letters, check-off what they have completed, and clarify the steps of what they still must do. Parizo says he has his own list and reads off what he has, giving updates on what has been done. Leavitt asks Jeff to send the selectboard the list

he just read off. Howrigan notes that Fred Duplessis attended the March 27<sup>th</sup> meeting. Parizo says he believes the internal control meeting was held after the meeting with Duplessis, and believes it was April 24<sup>th</sup>. The selectboard agrees to invite Duplessis to the September 11<sup>th</sup> meeting, giving the September 18<sup>th</sup> meeting as a back-up date. Parizo reiterates that he will send the selectboard his to-do list from the internal control recommendations and that the selectboard members will each read over the minutes of the April 24<sup>th</sup> meeting to find what items were assigned to them and others as well as to generate a list of questions to ask Duplessis. Howrigan notes that one item that the accountant pressed for was to create an accounting procedures manual and asks Boutin how they are coming along with that. Boutin says they have been working on that.

**Local Hazard Mitigation Plan:** Morway corrects herself, explaining that she said the grant was approved in September 22, 2022, which is correct, but the portion that came to Grand Isle was not approved until May 2023. Morway says the current LHMP expired June 23, 2023. Morway notes that Grand Isle currently does not have a LHMP. Morway explains the process of creating a LHMP takes about 18 months and cannot be expedited due to the steps involved. Morway says there has to be an RFP created and it has to be posted to the Vermont Business Registry. Morway says she has sent the information on creating a Vermont Business Registry login to Parizo, noting that she was told it takes some time getting the login credentials. Morway explains the process of getting the login credentials, that Parizo and Boutin had to sign a document, mail it out to verified, then it will be mailed back to the selectboard. Morway says that once it is sent back to the selectboard they will then sign the RFP, have Parizo login and post the RFP to Vermont Business Registry. Morway explains that the rest of the process of creating a LHMP is a lot like the Town Plan process- sourcing input from the public, hold a public hearing, etc. Morway explains that the LHMP needs to be FEMA approved in order to lessen the financial obligation from 25% to 12%.

**Listers- Town Wide Reappraisal:** Sue Lawrence (Lawrence) says that the State of Vermont has notified the town that we must do a town-wide reappraisal. The selectboard discusses a town-wide reappraisal. Lawrence explains that the first step is to send out RFPs. Lawrence says that the RFPs from the last town-wide reappraisal specified roles and duties and explains that she would like to see a more generalized RFP this time with the ability to fine-tune the roles & duties once a company is selected. Leavitt agrees that making a more generalized RFP is a good idea. Lawrence and the selectboard discuss what took place at the last townwide reappraisal. ***Josie Leavitt makes a motion for the selectboard chair, Jeff Parizo, to sign the town-wide reappraisal letter. Jen Morway seconds. No further discussion. Jeff Parizo calls the vote, which passes unanimously.***

**Donaldson Letter:** Parizo explains that Howrigan has drafted a letter to Danielle Fitzko at the Department of Forests Parks & Rec addressing concerns of the trash being dumped on Donaldson Road. The selectboard discusses the letter. Morway notes that, in the letter, Fitzko is asked to attend a selectboard meeting before November 30, 2023 to address the issue and that the selectboard should follow-up at a future meeting. ***Josie Leavitt makes a motion that the selectboard sign the letter to Danielle Fitzko, Director of the Department of Forest Parks & Rec, about the illegal dumping of trash***

**on the land that borders the state park. Jen Morway seconds.** Howrigan asks if there is anyone else that the letter should be sent to. Leavitt says that Fitzko is the best person to send it to. **No further discussion. Jeff Parizo calls the vote which passes unanimously.**

**Time Cards:** Parizo explains that Adam White created time cards for all town employees to use and wants to check to see who is currently using the time card. Parizo asks Bushway if he is using the time card. Bushway says that some are and some are using two different time cards. Parizo asks Lawrence if the listers are using the new time cards, she says no. Parizo asks Boutin if she knows of anyone using the new time card, she says Scott Brown and Ron Bushway do. Lawrence notes that the new time card did not have all the fields that they needed, such as a missing total field. Clark asks if they have thought about using something universal like Clockify. Parizo says he has seen other towns use that and would like to investigate that. Leavitt mentions Homebase is also a virtual time clock that they should investigate, saying she will find out more information about Homebase and report back.

**Grand Isle Historical Society- Corner School:** Prouty explains that Parizo asked the Historical Society to get a bid on fixing up the Corner school. Prouty presents the selectboard with the bid to fix the Corner school, noting that the quote does not include the carpentry labor. Parizo reads from the quote, noting that it is for scraping, priming, and applying two coats of exterior paint and does not include labor for carpentry, totaling \$6,000. Leavitt asks Prouty if she got more quotes, Prouty says that is only bid she has. Morway asks if the previous paint was lead-based, R. Bushway says no. Prouty says that it is a special paint because they need a historical color. Bushway notes that the carpentry needs to be done first and is not included in that quote. Parizo explains that this project will have to be done in 2025 in order to budget for it. Parizo says they will need hard numbers for carpentry and painting in order to budget for this project in 2025. Parizo says they need to send out an RFP, that he will look into writing up an RFP. Morway asks if they investigated any grants for historical sites, Lucille Campbell says that the building is owned by the town and the town would have to look into grants. Prouty says that the trees around the school need to be trimmed due to them rubbing against the roof. Parizo asks R. Bushway to trim those trees. Morway says she will investigate to see if there are any grants that they might be available.

**MERP Grant:** Clark hands out a document and reads it aloud:

*The MERP grant was passed June 2, 2022. Clark explains that Act 172 authorized MERP \$45 million to support dependable and sustainable connections to critical municipal services for all Vermonters. Buildings owned by cities, towns, fire districts, incorporated villages, and all other governmental incorporated units except for school districts are eligible for the program. No local match is required for this funding. The program includes three main components: Community Capacity Grant, Free Energy Assessments of municipal buildings, and Implementation Funds. We understand that a variety of community members may participate in the application process for the MERP grant opportunities. To ensure the success of these grant proposals we ask that approval for the application to these grants be included in regular selectboard and public meeting minutes.*

*Community Capacity Grant (OPEN)- The Community Capacity Grants provide up to \$4,000 to support energy resilience community capacity building. This is a non-competitive grant, all towns that apply with an applicable project can expect to receive this grant. Funds granted must be expended by December of 2024. Selectboard approval for proposed projects is required. Potential uses include:*

- *Energy education and outreach materials and mailers*
- *Hire a consultant or grant writer*
- *Host a community energy fair or similar public energy event*
- *Start an energy committee*

Clark asks the selectboard to motion that the Grand Isle Selectboard appoint Emily Clark as a municipal representative with the authority to apply for the Municipal Energy Resilience Program Community Capacity Grant, with \$4,000, for the purpose of Grant Writing.

***Josie Leavitt makes a motion to appoint Emily Clark as a municipal representative with the authority to apply for the Municipal Energy Resilience Program Community Capacity Grant, with \$4,000, for the purpose of Grant Writing. Jen Morway seconds. No further discussion. Jeff Parizo calls the vote which passes unanimously.***

Clark continues reading:

*Free Energy Assessments (COMING SOON)*

*Through this portion of MERP towns can apply for energy assessments of any municipally owned building except schools. These assessments will provide recommendations and cost estimates for HVAC and thermal envelope improvements, weatherization, renewable energy equipment, battery storage and EV charging equipment. Two levels of assessment are available:*

- *Level 1: Walk-through assessment. Takes ~1.5 hours and goes beyond Efficiency VT assessment qualifies the building for MERP Implementation Funds.*
- *Level 2: Investment grade audit. Takes ~4 hours and qualifies the building for MERP implementation funds and other Federal and State funding sources. Additional information on the building is required, including utility bills, past energy audits, and architectural drawings.*

*The town may apply for assessments of multiple buildings but is asked to limit the number of Level 2 assessments requested. The town should also call out specific interest in EV Charger infrastructure, battery storage, or renewable energy in the assessment application.*

Clark asks the selectboard to appoint Emily Clark as a municipal representative with the authority to apply for the Municipal Energy Resilience Program Free Energy Assessment. The town agrees to apply for a level 2 assessment of the following municipal buildings: The Town Office, the Fire Station, the Library, the Town Garage, and the Annex Building.

***Josie Leavitt makes a motion to appoint Emily Clark as a municipal representative with the authority to apply for the Municipal Energy Resilience Program Free Energy Assessment. The town agrees to apply for a level 2 assessment of the following municipal buildings: The Town Office, the Fire Station,***



***the Library, the Town Garage, and the Annex Building. Jen Morway seconds. No further discussion. Jeff Parizo calls the vote which passes unanimously.***

***Review and Sign Warrants: Josie Leavitt makes a motion that the chair review and sign the warrants. Jen Morway seconds.*** Howrigan asks about an item regarding the wrong town of Grand Isle, Boutin explains that they sometimes get a payment sent to them that should go to a different Town of Grand Isle. Howrigan requests that the warrants be sent to the selectboard by the end of each week to ensure they have time to review them before Monday meetings. Boutin says she tries to do that, but sometimes she cannot get them out until the weekend. Boutin says she can send the paid ones as she gets them, Howrigan said that would be great. Howrigan asks why there are two different check sequences being used. Boutin explains one sequence is for accounts payable and the other is for payroll. ***No further discussion. Jeff Parizo calls the vote which passes unanimously.***

***Adjournment: Josie Leavitt makes a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:32pm. Jen Morway seconds. No further discussion. Jeff Parizo calls the vote which passes unanimously.***