

Grand Isle Select Board
Grand Isle Town Office 9 Hyde Rd, Grand Isle VT
Minutes of the Meeting for Monday October 2, 2023

CALL TO ORDER: The selectboard chair, Jeff Parizo, calls the meeting to order at 6pm.

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

Board Members via Zoom: Couper Shaw

Community Members Present: Jean Prouty, Ron Bushway, Lucille Campbell, Diane Cota, Sue Lawrence, Emily Clark, Maddie Yandow, Arleace Green

Community Members via Zoom: Joe Longo, Mike Donoghue, Marilyn Mahusky

Add to Agenda: Parizo adds Community Service to New Business, Diane Cota adds Town Office/Front to New Business

Review and Approve Minutes: *Josie Leavitt makes a motion to accept the meeting minutes of September 18th 2023, with corrections. Jen Morway seconds. No further discussion. Jeff Parizo calls the vote, which passes unanimously.*

Guests:

Arleace Green- SBA Disaster Loan Assistance: Arleace Green (Green) says she is a public affairs specialist from the office of Disaster Recovery & Resilience with the US Small Business Administration. Green gives an overview of the Economic Injury Disaster Loan. Green explains that there does not need to be physical damage to receive this loan, that the damage can be financial and often times it takes a time to see the financial damage transpire. Green explains details of the loan, that it is 12 months' interest free before needing to make a payment and the deadline for applying for the Economic Injury loan is April 15, 2024. Green says to apply, people can visit <https://disasterloanassistance.sba.gov/ela/s/> or call 800-659-295. Green says for those who had physical property damage, the deadline to apply is October 12, 2023.

Maddie Yandow- Northwest Regional Planning Commission: Maddie Yandow (Yandow) introduces herself as a project manager with the Northwest Regional Planning Commission. Yandow explains that NWRPC is doing a project aimed at improving private roads that may affect the lake with runoff. Yandow asks that if anyone knows of any private roads in Grand Isle that might need some attention, to let her know so that they can be assessed for this project. Yandow says that this project will have no cost to the municipality nor the landowner(s). Yandow can be contacted by her email myandow@nrpcvt.com or by phone 802-524-5958.

Marilyn Mahusky- Stitzel, Page & Fletcher: The selectboard discusses Paid Time Off with Marilyn Mahusky (Mahusky). Parizo explains that they would like to focus on ways to handle vacation and sick time. Mahusky explains Vermont's sick leave policy and says that they may want to convert allotted days of sick time and vacation time into hours rather than days. Mahusky says she will send the selectboard a

conversion chart for sick/vacation time. Mahusky says that the selectboard should determine how they would like to define paid time off, how to define sick leave, and how best to compensate those who have already accumulated leave time. Mahusky says they would need to decide if the accumulation time starts on the anniversary of the hire date or when the fiscal year begins. Mahusky says that one option for handling the accumulated time is to institute a use-it-or-lose-it policy, where an employee must use vacation time or it will be cashed out at the end of the year. Leavitt asks about an option to rollover unused time. Mahusky says that many employers want to encourage employees to take vacations, as it increases productivity in the long run, and so one option is to limit the amount of vacation time that can be rolled over. Mahusky gives the example of a 40-hour rollover limit per year with a maximum of 240 hours that can be saved a year and anything over that must be used or cashed out. Parizo says that one concern is that by rolling over time, if that time is cashed out, it is cashed out at whatever the employee's current payrate is rather than what it was when it was accumulated, giving an example of an employee who has currently accumulated 400 hours over several years. The selectboard and Mahusky discuss what happens when an employee terminates from their job, that right now the policy states that they can only be paid out for vacation time up to 240 hours. Melissa Boutin (Boutin) says that when accumulated time is paid out at the end of the year, it is at the prior year's wages. Parizo asks Boutin about the employee with 400 accumulated time, if she knows what rates were when time was originally rolled over. Boutin says that if it were paid out, the 80 hours that were rolled over from last year would be paid out at last year's wages and that the remainder is the 240 hours that can be saved. Mahusky says that paying out at the prior year's wages would need to be made into a policy, that without a policy typical practice says time should be paid at the current wage rate. The selectboard discusses the amount of work it would take to keep track of wage rate changes over years as an employee accumulates vacation time. Morway asks how the employee acquired 400 hours if vacation time for employees with longevity is 160 hours and the rollover limit is 80 hours. Boutin says that sick time is included in that 400 total, Morway says sick time is not included in that amount, Boutin says she will investigate that. Howrigan asks Mahusky to send them the Vermont Sick Leave Policy, Mahusky says she will. Howrigan asks Mahusky if it is possible for vacation time to accrue per pay period rather than as a lump sum at the beginning of the year, Mahusky says yes.

Highway Department Update:

Culvert East Shore South: Parizo explains that the Selectboard received an email from Norm Benoit regarding culverts on East Shore South. Parizo says that he would like permission to contact their civil engineer, Tyler Billingsly, to look at those culverts. Parizo says that Brad Sheridan (Sheridan) is considering changing one of the culverts and possibly adding another culvert to address the flooding issue, and that he would also live the civil engineer to assess the culverts before making changes. Bushway says that he and Sheridan looked at the culverts after flooding that occurred August 8th and they decided they need to do a hydraulic study as they did for a culvert on West Shore Road. Bushway says that Sheridan contacted John Bookins, the VTrans District 8 Supervisor, to schedule a hydraulic study. Bushway says the hydraulic study will give them the information they need.

Grand Isle North Sign: Bushway says he took a look at the sign and says that it's salvageable. Bushway says that Alan Landry is going to take a look at it and will most likely get to it over the winter.

Update Donaldson Road: Bushway says that barriers have been put in place and so far there have been no problems since.

Bushway says that they have been doing more mowing. Bushway says that they graveled & graded the Fish Hatchery.

Buildings Facilities Manager Update: Bushway says that he installed a sharp's container at the Town Office. Bushway says they took the sharp's container down at Vantines Access.

POS System Update: Bushway says that he and Emily Clark (Clark) will be meeting on Friday October 6th to customize the point-of-sale system and that Clark will train Bushway on it's use.

New Business:

Listers- E&O: Sue Lawrence (Lawrence) says she needs the Selectboard to sign off the Lister's Errors & Omissions report. Lawrence explains there was a camper that was pulled out in November, after the Lister's assessment last October, and put in a different camper after April 1st of the following year. Lawrence says that's why they had to do an E&O report. ***Jen Morway makes a motion to approve form #PVR427 Errors & Omissions certificate submitted by the Listers with a total amount of \$28,300 in difference. Josie Leavitt seconds. No further discussion. Jeff Parizo calls the vote, which passes unanimously.***

Standard Operating Procedure Discussion: Morway explains that they are slowly compiling procedures to be added to a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP). Morway says that Angela Low (Low) has been keeping track of what people have requested to be added to the SOP. Morway says they should review the list Low has compiled at the end of the year.

Community Service: Parizo says that there is a Grand Isle community member that was recently awarded 200 hours of community service and he would like that community service to take place in Grand Isle. Parizo would like to contact probation/parole about having this happen. Parizo says that this individual poisoned the kids of Grand Isle for over 30 years and should payback the community by doing tasks like picking up used needles. The selectboard discusses this notion. Leavitt agrees with Parizo, but is not sure that they can dictate to parole. Lawrence says that when she was involved with the Sheriff's department, they would have someone from the community supervise the community service. Parizo asks Leavitt to contact the town attorney in regards to this idea.

Town Office/Front: Diane Cota explains that power washing the front of the Town Office was discussed at a past selectboard meeting and would like to have it addressed again, as it is badly needed. Parizo agrees and says he will get a quote for it. Lawrence mentions that Silas Shepherd provides that service and has done a good job at the cemetery. Howrigan says she will get Silas Shepherd's contact information.

Old Business:

Local Hazard Mitigation Plan RFP Bids: Parizo says she received a proposal from Threat Owl, located in New Hampshire and a proposal from Exigency Consulting located in Arkansas. Parizo says they are both around the same price. Morway says that she's concerned about how quickly they both say that they can complete the work, that FEMA says it takes at least 18 months. Parizo says that Exigency quoted \$9,250 and Threat Owl quoted \$9,750. The selectboard discusses the pros and cons of both companies. Parizo comments that Exigency's proposal is very thorough, detailed and included the state statutes. Parizo says that most of the work will be done on their computers, so their location should not be an

issue. Leavitt comments that Threat Owl is in New Hampshire, is women owned, and had a great testimonial from Sharon, Vermont regarding their Local Hazard Mitigation Plan. Morway says that Threat Owl was the only one with Vermont references. Morway explains that whichever company they choose, they will have to facilitate working with us. Parizo asks about the work we need to do. Morway explains that in the past, there had been a steering committee that would take on the work for the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan. ***Josie Leavitt makes a motion to approve Threat Owl to do our Local Hazard Mitigation Plan pending successful completion of reference checks at a price of \$9,750. Jen Morway seconds. No further discussion. Jeff Parizo calls the vote, which passes unanimously.*** Leavitt says she will ask Threat Owl for a signature page and will check their references.

Planning Commission MERP Grant Paperwork: Emily Clark (Clark) says that MERP stands for Municipal Energy Resilience Program and they were awarded a mini grant for \$4,000 from them. Clark says that she needs the selectboard chair to sign the grant paperwork. ***Josie Leavitt makes a motion that Jeff Parizo signs the MERP Grant paperwork. Ellen Howrigan seconds. No further discussion. Jeff Parizo calls the vote, which passes unanimously.*** Parizo signs the paperwork.

Time Card Discussion: Morway explains that the town's pay period is Thursday to Wednesday and this is what the auditor has used for years. Morway says she does not believe they should change that. The selectboard agrees. Morway says that Melissa Boutin like all timesheets by noon on Thursdays and that she is working on direct deposit options. Parizo asks Morway if the payroll form will become a policy. Morway says that it would because it would be a part of Internal Controls. Morway explains the time cards she created. Morway proposes that they begin using the new time cards on November 1st. Morway says that stipend employees will be once a month on the first pay period for the prior month's work. The selectboard decides to move the stipend employees over to the new schedule on November 1st as well. ***Jeff Parizo makes a motion to approve the Payroll Policy and the Time Cards and have them start November 1, 2023. Jen Morway seconds.*** Bushway asks the Selectboard to notify the department heads and notify them about this. Parizo says he will.

IT Update: Leavitt gives a summary of a phone call she had with Rural Solutions. Leavitt explains that she requested information from Rural Solutions but has not received any yet. Leavitt explains that the original contract was for \$125/hr, but Rural Solutions has been overcharging the town since the beginning. Leavitt says she is unsure if anyone on the selectboard was shown the invoices from Rural Solutions as they were posted. Leavitt asks Shaw if he saw any of the bills or if they all went straight to Boutin. Shaw says he did not see any of the invoices. Leavitt notes that Boutin would not have known what the agreed upon rate was. Leavitt says that Rural Solutions corrected some of the invoices to reflect the agreed upon rate, but has not corrected all of them. Leavitt says after looking over the invoices, she feels as though there might be some double charges. Howrigan notes that there are things Rural Solutions charged for that were supposed to be included, such as password resets. Morway notes that it looks like they charged hourly for installing new desktops and also charged them a flat fee for the same installs. Leavitt notes that Rural Solutions charged \$1,250 for the website and claims to have had Shaw's verbal approval. Shaw says that is correct, that he decided to have them move the backend of the website to MacDragon and use the allocated funds for Rural Solutions for that. Leavitt says they may want to talk to the town attorney about the issue with being overcharged. Morway notes that on some of the invoices where the rate was corrected, the billable hours were increased. Leavitt says she would like to meet with Morway and Angie Low to go over all the invoices and the accepted proposal. Leavitt says she thinks that they should consider sending out a new RFP. The selectboard agrees. Shaw says he

will send everyone the old RFP. Morway says she will talk to Boutin about suspending payment to future invoices until everything is figured out. Jean Prouty (Prouty) comments that this issue has nothing to do with Boutin, that the responsibility of checking every invoice and checking on what work was done falls on the shoulders of whichever selectboard member was assigned to watch over IT. Prouty says that whomever is tasked with being the point person for IT in the future needs to check every invoice and check the work they are charged for. The selectboard agrees. Emily Clark asks if these invoices were in the warrants. Parizo explains that there are no invoices included with the warrants, only payments. Morway says she thinks that there should be invoices included with warrants. The selectboard agrees. Angie Low says they may want to consider reaching out the town's insurance company and see if they offer IT Security audits.

ADMINISTRATIVE CHECK-IN: Leavitt will contact the town attorney regarding community service, check Threat Owl's references and ask them for a signature page. Parizo will notify department heads about the new payroll policy, look for the old IT RFP, and get a quote for power washing the Town Office. Morway will find out who the town's insurance company is for a possible IT security audit, will contact Boutin about suspending payments to Rural Solutions, and will add the formulas to the time cards spreadsheets. Howrigan will find contact information for Silas Shepherd regarding power washing the town office.

Review and Sign Warrants: *Josie Leavitt makes a motion for the chair to review and sign the warrants. Jen Morway seconds. No further discussion. Jeff Parizo calls the vote, which passes unanimously.*

Adjournment: *Josie Leavitt makes a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:1pm. Jen Morway seconds. No further discussion. Jeff Parizo calls the vote, which passes unanimously.*