

Grand Isle Select Board
Grand Isle Town Office 9 Hyde Rd, Grand Isle VT
Minutes of the Meeting for Monday November 6, 2023

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

Board Members Present: Jeff Parizo, Jen Morway, Ellen Howrigan

Board Members via Zoom: Josie Leavitt, Couper Shaw

Community Members Present: Colleen Bushway, Jean Baker Prouty, Ron Bushway, Lucille Campbell, Melissa Boutin, Marie Prescott, Scott Brown, Tim Maxham, Roth Perry, Joe Steffen

Community Members via Zoom: Kristina Botala, Thomas Dukeshire, Joe Longo, Mike Donoghue, Deb Lang, Shannon Bundy, Esther Blow, Mary Parizo, Sue Lawrence

Add to Agenda: Jen Morway adds 'Announcement' to new business, Jeff Parizo adds 'Fire Department Tour Reminder' to new business, Jeff Parizo adds 'Howard Demars Letter' to be read before Guests.

Review and Approve Minutes: *Ellen Howrigan makes a motion to approve the meeting minutes of the October 16, 2023 with corrections. Jen Morway seconds.* No further discussion. **Jeff Parizo calls the vote which passes unanimously.**

Howard DeMars Letter: Jeff Parizo reads the following letter written by Howard Demars:

Dear Selectboard Members,

This letter is to inform you of my resignation from the Planning Commission. Please consider it effective immediately upon the Board's approval of my replacement. This is a very important and very busy time for the Planning Commission. Two members will not be seeking reappointment. There is a member of the community that has offered to fill a position, I feel they would do so admirably. In order to maintain cohesion of the Commission, I feel the sooner they get started the better it would be for our community. Thank you for giving me the ability to serve the town. It has been my pleasure.

Sincerely, Howard Demars

The selectboard shows gratitude to all the time and work Howard Demars has given to the Planning Commission over the years and thanks him for his service.

Guests:

Jean Prouty, Grand Isle Historical Society- Letter to the Selectboard: Jean Baker Prouty gives the following letter to Jeff Parizo:

Attn: Selectboard

The Grand Isle Historical Society has agreed to pay the Insurance Premium with Co-Operative Insurance of Middlebury on the Worthen Barn. The annual premium starting January 31, 2024 and January 31, 2025.

*The Grand Isle Historical Society
Jean Baker Prouty
President*

Thomas Dukeshire, Rural Solutions: Jen Morway (Morway) explains that Thomas Dukeshire (Dukeshire_ is here to discuss invoices, what is still needed, and how to handle charges and invoices going forward. Morway explains that Dukeshire has stated that in order for everyone to have a grandislevt.gov email address, they will need Microsoft Office 365 for each .gov email address and asks Dukeshire why that is the case. Dukeshire explains that it would be a hosted Microsoft email server. Morway says that at a minimum of \$6 per email address, with an email address for every town employee and each board member, that begins to add up quickly. Dukeshire says that there is a license that is a little lower than that but you would lose some functionality such as being unable to login with a mobile device. Dukeshire explains that the Microsoft pricing is industry standard and is the same everywhere. Morway asks about using a Google-based mail service. Dukeshire says they are not a Google shop, but does know that there would not be a cost savings, that the pricing is similar and also per user. Dukeshire says they could check to see if the town would be eligible for government-based licensing. Josie Leavitt (Leavitt) asks if the Microsoft licenses are \$22 per user. Dukeshire explains that would only be for town employees. Leavitt asks what the people with laptops would need. Dukeshire says that if they do not need the office suite and only need email, the \$6 per user license would cover Microsoft Exchange plus Security (email). Dukeshire goes on to explain that without that security piece, the town would not qualify for cybersecurity insurance. Morway asks if the town has reduced to the \$12.50 + \$2 per user license. Dukeshire explains that he credited the town for that price difference because Rural Solutions did not get that change in writing. Morway asks if going forward they will have the \$12.50 + \$2 per user license. Dukeshire says yes, they will have the Business Standard plus the Defender licenses. Morway asks what can be put in place to ensure the selectboard is aware of work being done/charges going forward. Dukeshire says it seems as though they have figured that out in the email conversations, he has had with her. Dukeshire says Rural Solutions can attend a meeting or provide a report quarterly if the selectboard chooses to do so, as he has offered last year. Leavitt says she feels that no changes should be made unless all selectboard members have agreed on them and have signed off. Jeff Parizo (Parizo) asks if the proposal he sent to Leavitt will be the proposal he submits to the new RFP. Dukeshire says it is a draft, that it is close to what it will be, though he is clarifying a few things before submitting to the RFP, such as a laptop count. Boutin says that they have 22 laptops in total, but not are currently being used, that she has a list she can provide the selectboard of who has signed out a laptop. Dukeshire says he has 4 laptops currently on his list of supported hardware. Dukeshire clarifies that he would want to be aware of laptops in use, even if they will not be issued a Microsoft license, so that he can be aware if someone where to call in to tech support with an issue. Parizo asks if the quarterly report could be monthly, or if that's overkill. Dukeshire says that some of his customers want them quarterly, some want them monthly, that it is up to the customer and whichever works best for them. Leavitt asks Dukeshire his thoughts on refurbished computers. Dukeshire says that they sell them all the time, that they have 3-year warranties. Leavitt says that in her reading that refurbished computers are not best practice because the hardware meets its end-of-life quicker. Dukeshire says that the life cycle for

desktops is between 5-7 years, laptops 3-5 years, and servers are between 7-10 years. Dukeshire says that the desktops he sold the town were only 1 year old. Dukeshire says refurbished computers are often an option for customers with a tighter budget. Ellen Howrigan (Howrigan) asks about the Ooma phone system, citing that it seems costly. Dukeshire explains that the Ooma phones replaced the Comcast phone system. Dukeshire explains the benefits of a VoIP phone system, such as having the phone system act as a virtual receptionist instead of needing Melissa Boutin to answer and redirect calls, and getting voicemails sent to users in an email. Morway further explains that the Ooma phone bill has replaced the Comcast phone bill. Morway says that the Ooma bills will be transferred to the town so that the town will be able to pay those directly and can be paid as the phone bill rather than out of the IT budget. Dukeshire notes that the town's Ooma phone subscription provides its users with 24/7 phone support through Ooma. Morway says that the selectboard will discuss the invoices later in the meeting so that they can then pay those invoices. Morway notes that the questions they have had about Rural Solutions has been related to billing and that the feedback from many Town Employees regarding Rural Solutions has been positive. Morway thanks Dukeshire for taking time to answer all of her questions to clarify the invoice issues.

Highway Department Update: Ron Bushway (Bushway) says all the sand and salt have been hauled and mixed. Bushway says that he gave the selectboard two quotes for generators and he is still waiting on one. Parizo asks about the quote from Roger Rock, that it states that if the town goes any larger, the two tanks will not be able to provide enough pressure to provide both heat and power. Parizo notes that the other quote does not address that. Bushway says that he does not like that quote, that they do not have two tanks. Parizo asks if with that one tank, will it be able to provide enough pressure for both heat and power. Bushway says he is not sure, that when he met with Brookfield that they never mentioned an issue like that. Parizo asks if Bushway can ask Brookfield about it, Bushway says that he does not believe that is issue, but he will ask Brookfield that question. Bushway mentions the grant Adam White notified them about. Morway says that she will look into that grant.

Buildings Facilities Manager Update: Bushway says the town office and Annex were pressure washed and they did a great job. Bushway says the tree near the Hyde cabin was cut and the benches were put away. Bushway says the septic tanks were pumped except for the one at the Town Garage, that it was pumped last year. Bushway says that the filters for the exhaust system at the Fire Station need to be replaced, that 4 filters total to about \$2,200. Parizo asks if they must be changed yearly, Bushway says they need to be changed every 2-3 years, that they are currently overdue by 3-4 years. Bushway says that he and Adam White have been looking for a cheaper price, that he will be speaking to someone at Chuck's tomorrow.

New Business:

Cost of Living Adjustment: Jen Morway makes a motion to approve the 3% Cost of Living increase for 2025. Josie Leavitt seconds. No further discussion. Jeff Parizo calls the vote which passes unanimously.

Budgets:

Recreation Committee: Roth Perry (Perry) goes over the programs the recreation committee has added and that they will be adding more. Perry says that they sometimes have donations come in or have a small fee in place. Perry says that they have retained sponsors for some teams to help with funding. Perry says they have been able to keep the net expenses for the sports programs between \$500-1000

after the local business help out. Perry says they asking for more money this year, that they are talking about getting a park ranger who would take care of the park and the town beach. Perry explains that the increase in budget would be to cover that cost. Perry says that they will be approaching the board about creating a designated area for swimmers at the town beach and that has some minor costs. Parizo says it looks like the increase would be \$4,780, that it was \$16,120 and it is now \$20,900. Perry says that is correct. Leavitt thanks Perry on all the work the recreation committee is doing and asks how much the buoys would cost for the designated swim area. Perry says that he is working with Emily White on that and that the prices are less than they originally thought they would be. Howrigan takes a moment to thank Perry on all the great work the recreation committee has been doing. **Jeff Parizo makes a motion to approve the Recreation Committee town appropriation of \$20,900 to be put on the ballot. Josie Leavitt seconds. No further discussion. Jeff Parizo calls the vote which passes unanimously.**

Zoning: Scott Brown (Brown) goes over expenses and changes that have been made. Brown explains there are a few times that he needs to contact the town attorney. Brown goes over the revenue for the zoning board. **Jen Morway makes a motion to approve the Zoning Board budget of \$34, 709 to be put on the ballot. Ellen Howrigan seconds. No further discussion. Jeff Parizo calls the vote which passes unanimously.**

Planning Commission: Jen Morway recuses herself as a selectboard member and presents the planning commission budget as a member of the planning commission. Morway explains that the main difference in the budget this year is the \$8,000 for grant matches for two grants. Morway explains that the bylaw plans pushed the budget from \$525 to \$1,000 due to the work required for the new town plan. Parizo explains that the budget for last year was \$8,553 and due to grant matches and the bylaw plans, they are now asking for \$17,355. **Jeff Parizo makes a motion to approve the Planning Commission budget of \$17,355 to be put on the ballot. Josie Leavitt seconds. No further Discussion. Jeff Parizo calls the vote- Josie Leavitt, Jeff Parizo, Couper Shaw, and Ellen Howrigan vote yes, Jen Morway abstains. The vote passes.**

Development Review Board: Marie Prescott (Prescott) says that the increase is for the DRB clerk salary to go along with the 3% COLA. Prescott says the next increase was for stipends, which were would account for 2 meetings a month. Prescott explains that this past year was slow and many meetings were cancelled, that they need to budget for a busier year next year. Prescott explains each line of the budget. Prescott mentions that they will need a new recorder. Prescott explains that legal fees went up keeping in mind they will have a busier year next year, that they want to ensure they have access to the town attorney. Prescott explains the small increases to the budget. Morway asks about professional education, noting that they have had new members and asks if they might need more for training for new members. Joe Steffen says they do not see a need for any further education or training at this time. Prescott explains that they give new members an extensive packet that covers everything. Parizo recommends that the DRB get in touch with Northwest Regional Planning Commission for training options. Howrigan asks why the DRB clerk fee went up so much, asking if its due to more hours or if there are a change in rates. Joe Steffen said part of it is the 3% COLA increase and that they budgeted for a full 20 hours a week, every week. Prescott says that she didn't work a lot last year and would like to budget for more hours for next year. **Jeff Parizo makes a motion to approve the Development Review Board budget of \$37,395 to be put on the ballot. Jen Morway seconds. No further discussion. Jeff Parizo calls the vote which passes unanimously.**

Fire Department Tour Reminder: Jeff Parizo says that the selectboard will be touring the Fire Department on November 20th at 5pm. Jeff Parizo says the selectboard will return to the town office for the 6pm selectboard meeting.

Announcement: Jen Morway says that Denise Abbott-Douglass wanted to remind people that it is hunting season and everyone should consider wearing orange if they are walking in the woods or along the roads.

Old Business:

Outstanding Rural Solutions Resource Invoices: Morway reviews the outstanding invoices with Rural Solutions, listing #3122, #3123, #3172, and #3185 totaling to \$5,087.59. Morway says she would like to have the VoIP phone system moved to a town expense so that the town can be responsible for that bill directly, that Boutin would need to be given the login information to log in to pay that bill with the town credit card. Morway explains that of the \$5,087.59 in outstanding invoices, \$4,248.25 is for IT and \$838.54 is for the phone system. Parizo asks if that is for FY24 and if we have the money for it, Morway says yes. Morway mentions that Rural Solutions has credited the town for the mischarges. Parizo asks Boutin if she is able to pay for that phone bill, Boutin says yes. Leavitt takes a moment to thank Morway for the time and effort out into deciphering the invoices and coming up with a solution. Howrigan takes a moment to thank Morway for the work she has done on this.

Jen Morway makes a motion to pay the outstanding invoices #3122, #3123, #3172, and #3185 totaling \$5,087.59 of which \$4,248.25 would be paid from IT and \$838.54 from Phones. Josie Leavitt seconds. No further discussion. Jeff Parizo calls the vote, which passes unanimously.

Jeff Parizo makes a motion for Rural Solutions to coordinate with Melissa Boutin to switch the phone system billing from Rural Solutions to the Town of Grand Isle to be paid with the town’s credit card. Jen Morway seconds. No further discussion. Jeff Parizo calls the vote which passes unanimously.

Morway makes a note that the selectboard should keep in mind, as they prepare to review proposals from the RFP, that they need to decide the number of users they would like to move to Microsoft 365 and which users they would like to have using the NEMRC cloud.

Personnel Policy Discussion: Parizo says he created a spreadsheet to compare what Alburgh, Milton, South Hero and Grand Isle currently have for vacation and sick time. Parizo reads the follow data from the spreadsheet

	Milton	South Hero	Alburgh	Grand Isle
Full Time	30 Hours	30 Hours	40 Hours	32 Hours
Vacation	0-4 Years: 10 Days	1 Year: 10 Days	1 Year: 5 Days	6 Months: 5 Days
	5-14 Years: 17 Days	1 Vacation Day/Year, Max of 20 Days	3 Years: 10 Days	1-5 Years: 10 Days
	15+ Years: 22 Days		6 Years: 15 Days	5-10 Years: 15 Days
			10 Years: 20 Days	10+ Years: 20 Days
Sick	12 Days/Year	6 Days/Year- may not be carried over or paid out	1 Hour of earned sick time for every 52 hours of actual work	12 Days/Year

Parizo says he is leaning towards shadowing what South Hero does, which is 6 days per year which cannot be carried over or paid out. Leavitt, Morway, and Howrigan say they agree. Morway says there may need to be a grandfather discussion with the town employee in regards to their current employees, with what they would do with their earned time. Howrigan and Leavitt agree. Parizo says he thinks they should do away with comp time, giving the example as: if an employee works 60 hours they would get paid for 20 hours of overtime. Leavitt, Howrigan, and Morway agree. Morway notes that she feels having to keep track of comp time can potentially leave them open to liability. Bushway asks when it would be implemented. Parizo says his opinion would be that it should begin July 1st of 2024, the next fiscal year. Parizo says that while he is ok with the current vacation hours, they currently have an employee with 320 vacation hours and if they enforce a limit of 240 which would leave 80 hours he would lose. Parizo explains that if they were to let employees cash out those extra hours, it would be a liability that is not budgeted. Parizo says that they should create a reserve account to budget for unused time that is rolled over to the next year. Parizo says they will need to decide is what they should allow employees to carry over for vacation time. Bushway asks, if they stop giving comp time, what would happen when an employee has to plow on a holiday that occurs at the end of a pay period. Parizo says he believes they would be paid double time and a half (holiday pay + time and a half) for working a holiday, but that he needs to verify that. The selectboard says they will continue working on this.

Administrative Check-In:

Jeff Parizo:

- Will remind the Fire Department, Rescue, and Cemetery of the November 16th budget deadline.
- Will continue to work on the personnel policy

Jen Morway:

- Will send Melissa Boutin the information needed to pay the Rural Solution invoices
- Will send Melissa Boutin the login information for the phone system
- Will work with Ron Bushway on the grant information Adam White sent for the generator

Josie Leavitt:

- Will ask those responding to the RFP about NEMRC
- Will work on creating a binder for all contracts for this fiscal year

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

Adjournment: *Josie Leavitt makes a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:07pm. Ellen Howrigan seconds. No further discussion. Jeff Parizo calls the vote which passes unanimously.*